

# Encyclopedia of Indian History 13th Century, Vol 1

**Matthew Workman**



**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF  
INDIAN HISTORY  
13TH CENTURY, VOL 1**



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Encyclopedia of Indian History: 13th Century, Vol 1  
by Matthew Workman

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Ebook ISBN: 9781984667991



Published by:

Bibliotex

Canada

Website: [www.bibliotex.com](http://www.bibliotex.com)

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## Chapter 1

# Qutb al-Din Aibak

**Qutb al-Din Aibak** (1150 - 1210) was a general of the Ghurid king Muhammad Ghori. He was in-charge of the Ghurid territories in northern India, and after Muhammad Ghori's death, he became the ruler of an independent kingdom that evolved into the Delhi Sultanate ruled by the Mamluk dynasty.

A native of Turkestan, Aibak was sold into slavery as a child. He was purchased by a Qazi at Nishapur in Persia, where he learned archery and horse-riding among other skills. He was subsequently resold to Muhammad Ghori in Ghazni, where he rose to the position of the officer of the royal stables. During the Khwarazmian-Ghurid wars, he was captured by the scouts of Sultan Shah; after the Ghurid victory, he was released and highly favoured by Muhammad Ghori.

After the Ghurid victory in the Second Battle of Tarain in 1192, Muhammad Ghori made Aibak in-charge of his Indian territories. Aibak expanded the Ghurid power in northern India by conquering and raiding several places in the Chahamana, Gahadavala, Chaulukya, Chandela, and other kingdoms.

When Muhammad Ghori died in 1206, Aibak fought with another former slave-general Taj al-Din Yildiz for control of Ghurid territories in north-western India. During this campaign, he advanced as far as Ghazni, although he later retreated and set up his capital at Lahore. He nominally acknowledged the suzerainty of Muhammad Ghori's successor Ghiyasuddin Mahmud, who officially recognized him as the



ruler of India. Aibak was succeeded by Aram Shah, and then by his son-in-law Iltutmish, who transformed the loosely-held Ghurid territories of India into the powerful Delhi Sultanate. Aibak is known for having commissioned the Qutb Minar in Delhi, and the Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra in Ajmer.

## **Early life**

Aibak was born in c. 1150. His name is variously transliterated as "Qutb al-Din Aybeg", "Qutbuddin Aibek", and "Kutb Al-Din Aybak". He came from Turkestan, and belonged to a Turkic tribe called Aibak. The word "Aibak", also transliterated as "Aibak" or "Aybeg", derives from the Turkic words for "moon" (*ai*) and "lord" (*bek*). As a child, he was separated from his family, and taken to the slave market of Nishapur. There, Qazi Fakhruddin Abdul Aziz Kufi, a descendant of the noted Muslim theologian Abu Hanifa, purchased him. Aibak was treated affectionately in the Qazi's household, and was educated with the Qazi's sons. He learned archery and horse-riding, besides Quran recital.

The Qazi or one of his sons sold Aibak to a merchant, who in turn, sold the boy to the Ghurid Sultan Muhammad Ghori in Ghazni. After being admitted to the Sultan's slave-household, Aibak's intelligence and kind nature attracted the Sultan's attention. Once, when the Sultan bestowed gifts upon his slaves, Aibak distributed his share among the servants. Impressed by this act, the Sultan promoted him to a higher rank.

Aibak later rose to the important position of *amir-i akhur*, the officer of the royal stables. During the Ghurid conflicts with

the Khwarazmian ruler Sultan Shah, Aibak was responsible for the general maintenance of the horses, as well as their fodder and equipment. One day, while foraging for horse fodder, he was captured by Sultan Shah's scouts, and was detained in an iron cage. After the Ghurids defeated Sultan Shah, Muhammad Ghori ad-Din saw him in the cage, and was deeply touched by his desperate condition. After he was released, the Sultan greatly favoured him. No information is available about Aibak's subsequent assignments until the First Battle of Tarain fought in India, in 1191-1192.

Aibak's career in India can be divided into three phases:

- Officer in charge of some of Sultan Muhammad Ghori territories in northern India (1192-1206)
- Informal sovereign who controlled Muhammad Ghori's former territories as a *Malik* and *Sipah Salar* of Delhi and Lahore (1206-1208)
- Sovereign ruler of an officially independent kingdom in India (1208-1210)

## **As the Ghurid Sultan's subordinate**

### **Campaign against the Chahamanas**

Aibak was one of the generals of Ghurid army that was defeated by the forces of the Chahamanas ruler Prithviraja III at the First Battle of Tarain in India. At the Second Battle of Tarain, where the Ghurids emerged victorious, he was in-charge of the general disposition of the Ghurid army, and kept close to Sultan Muhammad Ghori, who had placed himself at the center of the army.

After his victory at Tarain, Muhammad Ghori assigned the former Chahamana territory to Aibak, who was placed at Kuhram (present-day Ghuram in Punjab, India). The exact nature of this assignment is not clear: Minhaj describes it as an iqta', Fakhr-i Mudabbir calls it a "command" (*sipahsalari*), and Hasan Nizami states that Aibak was made the governor (*ayalat*) of Kuhram and Samana. After the death of Prithviraja, Aibak appointed his son Govindaraja IV as a Ghurid vassal. Sometime later, Prithviraja's brother Hariraja invaded the Ranthambore Fort, which Aibak had placed under his subordinate Qawamul Mulk. Aibak marched to Ranthambore, forcing Hariraja to retreat from Ranthambore as well as the former Chahamana capital Ajmer. In September 1192, a rebel named Jatwan besieged Hansi in the former Chahamana territory. Aibak marched to Hansi, forcing Jatwan to retreat to Bagar, where the rebel was killed in a battle.

### **Initial conquests in Doab**

After defeating Jatwan, he returned to Kuhram, and made preparations to invade the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. In 1192, he took control of Meerut and Baran (modern Bulandshahr), from where he would later launch attacks against the Gahadavala kingdom. He also took control of Delhi in 1192, where he initially retained the local Tomara ruler as a vassal. In 1193, he deposed the Tomara ruler for treason, and took direct control of Delhi.

### **Sojourn in Ghazni**

In 1193, Sultan Muhammad Ghori summoned Aibak to the Ghurid capital Ghazni. The near-contemporary chronicler

Minhaj does not elaborate why, but the 14th century chronicler Isami claims that some people had aroused the Sultan's suspicion against Aibak's loyalty. Historian K. A. Nizami finds Isami's account unreliable, and theorizes that the Sultan may have sought Aibak's help in planning further Ghurid expansion in India.

## **Return to India**

Aibak stayed in Ghazni for about six months. After his return to India in 1194, he crossed the Yamuna River, and captured Koil (modern Aligarh). Meanwhile, taking advantage of Aibak's absence in India,

Hariraja had regained control of a part of the former Chahamana territory.

After his return to Delhi, Aibak sent an army against Hariraja, who committed suicide when faced with a certain defeat. Aibak subsequently placed Ajmer under a Muslim governor, and moved Govindaraja to Ranthambore.

## **War against the Gahadavalas**

In 1194, Sultan Muhammad Ghori arrived in India to wage a war against the Gahadavala kingdom. Aibak, along with Izzuddin Husain ibn Kharmil, led the vanguard of his army at the Battle of Chandawar, which resulted in the defeat of the Gahadavala king Jayachandra. Although the Ghurids did not gain complete control over the Gahadavala kingdom, the victory provided an opportunity for them to establish military stations at many places in the region.

## **Other campaigns**

After the victory at Chandawar, Aibak turned his attention towards consolidating his position in Koil. Muhammad Ghori returned to Ghazni, but came back to India in 1195-96, when he defeated Kumarapala, the Bhati ruler of Bayana.

He then marched towards Gwalior, where the local Parihara ruler Sallakhanapala acknowledged his suzerainty.

Meanwhile, the Mher tribals, who lived near Ajmer, rebelled against the Ghurid rule. Supported by the Chaulukyas, who ruled Gujarat in the south, the Mhers posed a serious threat to Aibak's control of the region.

Aibak marched against them, but was forced to retreat to Ajmer. The Mhers were forced to retreat after reinforcements from the Ghurid capital Ghazni arrived in Ajmer.

In 1197, Aibak defeated the Chaulukya army at Mount Abu, thus avenging Muhammad Ghori's defeat at the Battle of Kasahrada nearly two decades earlier. Aibak's army then marched to the Chaulukya capital Anhilwara: the defending king Bhima II fled the city, which was plundered by the invaders.

Minhaj characterizes Aibak's raid of Anhilwara as "conquest of Gujarat", but it did not result in annexation of Gujarat to the Ghurid Empire. The 16th century historian Firishta states that Aibak appointed a Muslim officer to consolidate the Ghurid power in the region, while Ibn-i Asir states that Aibak placed the newly-captured territory under Hindu vassals. Whatever the case, the Ghurid control of the region did not last long,

and the Chaulukyas regained control of their capital soon after. In 1197-98, Aibak conquered Badaun in present-day Uttar Pradesh, and also re-took control of the former Gahadavala capital Varanasi, which had slipped out of the Ghurid control. In 1198-99, he captured Chantarwal (unidentified, possibly same as Chandawar) and Kannauj. Later, he captured Siroh (possibly modern Sirohi in Rajasthan). According to the Persian chronicler Fakhr-i Mudabbir (c. 1157-1236), Aibak also conquered Malwa in present-day Madhya Pradesh, in 1199-1200. However, no other historian refers to such a conquest; therefore, it is likely that Aibak merely raided Malwa.

Meanwhile, Baha' al-Din Toghril (also transliterated as Bahauddin Tughril) - another prominent Ghurid slave-general - besieged the Gwalior Fort. After being reduced to a dire situation, the defenders approached Aibak and surrendered the fort to him in 1200. As a result, tension developed between Toghril and Aibak, although Toghril's death prevented a military conflict between the two men.

In 1202, Aibak besieged Kalinjar, an important fort in the Chandela kingdom of central India. The Chandela ruler Paramardi initiated negotiations with Aibak, but died before a treaty could be finalized. The Chandela chief minister Ajayadeva resumed hostilities, but was forced to seek negotiations when the Ghurids cut off the water supply to the fort. As part of the truce, the Chandelas were forced to move to Ajaigarh. Their former strongholds of Kalinjar, Mahoba, and Khajuraho came under Ghurid control, governed by Hasan Arnal.

Meanwhile, the Ghurid commander Bakhtiyar Khalji subjugated the petty Gahadavala chiefs in eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar region. After his Bihar campaign, which involved destruction of Buddhist monasteries, Khalji arrived in Badaun to greet Aibak, who had just concluded his successful campaign at Kalinjar. On 23 March 1203, Khalji presented Aibak with war booty, including 20 captured elephants, jewels and cash. Aibak honoured Khalji, who went on to conquer a part of the Bengal region in the east. Bakhtiyar acted independently, and at the time of his death in 1206, was not a subordinate of Aibak.

In 1204, Muhammad Ghori suffered a defeat against the Khwarazmians at Andkhoy, followed by several challenges to his authority. Aibak helped him suppress a rebellion by the Khokhar chiefs of Lahore region, and then returned to Delhi. On 15 March 1206, Muhammad Ghori was assassinated: different sources variously attribute the act to Khokhars or Ismailis.

## **After Muhammad Ghori's death**

According to Minhaj's *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, Aibak had conquered territory up to the frontiers of Ujjain in the south. Minhaj states that at the time of Sultan Muhammad Ghori's death in 1206, the Ghurids controlled the following areas in India:

- Multan
- Uchch
- Nahrwala (Patan)
- Purshor
- Sialkot

- Lahore
- Tabarhinda
- Tarain
- Ajmer
- Hansi
- Sursuti
- Kuhram
- Meerut
- Koil
- Delhi
- Thankar
- Badaun
- Gwalior
- Bhera
- Banaras
- Kannauj
- Kalinjar
- Awadh
- Malwa
- Adwand (identity uncertain)
- Bihar
- Lakhnauti in Bengal

However, the Ghurid control was not equally effective in all these areas. In some of these places, such as Gwalior and Kalinjar, the Ghurid control had weakened or even ceased to exist.

## **Eastern India**

During Sultan Muhammad Ghori's reign, parts of the Bihar and Bengal area in eastern India had been conquered by the



Khalji clan, led by the Ghurid general Bakhtiyar Khalji. Bakhtiyar was killed by his subordinate Ali Mardan Khalji at Devkot in 1206, around same time Sultan Muhammad Ghori was assassinated. Subsequently, Muhammad Shiran Khalji, another subordinate of Bakhtiyar, detained Ali Mardan and became the leader of the Khaljis in eastern India. Ali Mardan escaped to Delhi, where he persuaded Aibak to intervene in the Khalji affairs. The Khaljis were not slaves of Muhammad Ghori, so Aibak had no legal authority in the matter. Nevertheless, he instructed his subordinate Qaimaz Rumi - the governor of Awadh - to march to Lakhnauti in Bengal, and assign suitable iqta's to the Khalji amirs.

Qaimaz Rumi assigned the iqta' of Devkot to Husamuddin Iwaz Khalji, another subordinate of Bakhtiyar. Muhammad Shiran and other Khalji amirs disagreed with this decision, and marched to Devkot. However, Rumi defeated them decisively, and Shiran was later killed in a conflict. Later, Aibak assigned Lakhnauti to Ali Mardan (see below).

## **Recognition as the ruler of Hindustan**

*Tajul-Ma'asir*, a contemporary chronicle by Hasan Nizami, suggests that Muhammad Ghori appointed Aibak as his representative in India after his victory at Tarain. Hasan Nizami also states that the *iyalat* (governorship) of Kuhram and Samana was entrusted to Aibak.

Fakhr-i Mudabbir, another contemporary chronicler, states that Muhammad Ghori formally appointed Aibak as the viceroy

of his Indian territories only in 1206, when he was returning to Ghazni after suppressing the Khokhar rebellion. According to this chronicler, Aibak was promoted to the rank of *malik* and appointed heir apparent (*wali-'ahd*) of the Sultan's Indian territories.

Historian K. A. Nizami theorizes that Sultan Muhammad Ghori never appointed Aibak as his successor in India: the slave-general acquired this position *after* the Sultan's death through use of diplomacy and military power.

The Sultan's unexpected death left three of his main slave-generals - Aibak, Taj al-Din Yildiz, and Nasir ad-Din Qabacha - in positions of power. During his last years, the Sultan was disappointed in his family and his chiefs, and trusted only his slaves, whom he thought of as his sons and successors.

At the time of Sultan's death, Aibak had his headquarters at Delhi. The citizens of Lahore requested him to assume sovereign power after the Sultan's death, and he moved his government to Lahore. He informally ascended the throne on 25 June 1206, but his formal recognition as a sovereign ruler happened much later, in 1208-1209.

Meanwhile, in and around Ghazni, the Sultan's slaves fought with his nobles for control of the Ghurid Empire, and helped his nephew Ghiyasuddin Mahmud ascend the throne. When Mahmud had consolidated his rule, Aibak and other slaves sent messengers to his court, seeking deeds of manumission and investitures for ruling over the various Ghurid territories. According to Minhaj, Aibak (unlike Yildiz) maintained the *khutba* and stuck's coins in Mahmud's name.

Yildiz, who was Aibak's father-in-law, sought to control the Ghurid territories in India. After Sultan Mahmud confirmed him as the ruler of Ghazni and manumitted him, Yildiz marched to Punjab, intending to take control of the region. Aibak marched against him, forced him to retreat to Kohistan, and took control of Ghazni. Aibak then sent his representative Nizamuddin Muhammad to Mahmud's headquarters at Firuz Kuh, seeking to expedite his request for the investiture.

In 1208-1209, Mahmud conferred a *chatr* (ceremonial parasol) on Aibak, and issued a deed of investiture recognizing him as the ruler of Hindustan. He may have also issued a deed of manumission for Aibak at this time. According to Minhaj's *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, Mahmud styled Aibak as a "Sultan"; chronicler Hasan Nizami also calls him a "Sultan". Nizami states that the *khutba* was read and coins were struck in Aibak's name, but no other source corroborates this claim. No coins issued by him have been found, and no extant coins describe him as a "Sultan".

According to Minhaj, Aibak became complacent, and devoted his time to pleasures and amusements in Ghazni. The people of Ghazni invited Yildiz to evict him from the city, and when Yildiz arrived in the vicinity of Ghazni, Aibak panicked and escaped to India via the narrow mountain pass of Sang-i Surkh. Subsequently, Aibak moved his capital to Lahore to safeguard his territories against Yildiz.

Ali Mardan Khalji, who had accompanied Aibak to Ghazni, was captured and imprisoned by Yildiz. He somehow secured his release, and returned to India. Aibak dispatched him to Lakhnauti in Bengal, where Husamuddin Iwaz agreed to be his

subordinate. Ali Mardan thus became the governor of Aibak's territories in eastern India, and brought the whole region under his control.

## **Death and legacy**

After being recognized as the ruler of India, Aibak focused on consolidating his rule in the territories already under his control, rather than conquering new territories. In 1210, he fell down from a horse while playing chovgan (a form of polo on horseback), and died due to the injuries sustained from the fall (fractured skull).

All contemporary chroniclers praise Aibak as a loyal, generous, courageous and just man. According to Minhaj, his generosity earned him the epithet *lakh-bakhs*, literally "giver of lakhs [of copper coins or *jitals*]". Fakhr-i Mudabbir states that Aibak's soldiers - who included "Turks, Ghurids, Khurasanis, Khaljis, and Hindustanis" - did not dare to forcibly take even a blade of grass or a morsel of food from the peasants. The 16th century Mughal chronicler Abu'l-Fazl criticizes Aibak's master Muhammad Ghori ad-Din for "shedding innocent blood", but praises Aibak stating that "he achieved things, good and great". As late as the 17th century, the term "Aibak of the time" was used to describe generous people, as attested by the chronicler Firishta.

Aibak's conquests involved large-scale capture of people as slaves. According to Hasan Nizami, his Gujarat campaign resulted in enslavement of 20,000 people; and his Kalinjar campaign resulted in enslavement of 50,000 people. According to Irfan Habib, Nizami's work is full of rhetoric and hyperbole,

so these numbers seem to be exaggerated, however the number of slaves collected must indeed have been vast and grew over time. Aibak, who died unexpectedly, had not appointed an heir apparent. After his death, the Turkic officers (*maliks* and *amirs*) stationed at Lahore appointed Aram Shah as his successor. No details about Aram Shah's life are available before his ascension to the throne. According to one theory, he was a son of Aibak, but this is unlikely (see #Personal life section.)

Aram Shah ruled for no more than eight months, during which various provincial governors started asserting independence. Some Turkic officers then invited Aibak's former slave Iltutmish, a distinguished general, to take over the kingdom. Aibak had purchased Iltutmish sometime after the conquest of Anhilwara in 1197. According to Minhaj, Aibak looked upon Iltutmish as the next ruler: he used to call Iltutmish his son, and had granted him the *iqta'* of Badaun. Consequently, the nobles appointed Iltutmish as Aram Shah's successor, and married Aibak's daughter to him. Aram Shah challenged Iltutmish's claim to the throne, but was decisively defeated and killed after a military conflict. Iltutmish subjugated the rebel governors, and transformed the loosely-held Ghurid territories of India into the powerful Delhi Sultanate.

Iltutmish was succeeded by his family members, and then by his slave Ghiyas ud din Balban. This line of kings is called Mamluk or Slave dynasty; however, this term is a misnomer. Only Aibak, Iltutmish, and Balban were slaves, and seem to have been manumitted before their ascension to the throne. The other rulers in this line were not slaves at any point in their life.

Today his tomb is located in Anarkali, Lahore. The tomb was built, in its present form, during the 1970s by the Department of Archaeology and Museums (Pakistan) which tried to emulate the Sultanate-era architecture. Prior to the modern construction, the Sultan's grave existed in a simple form and was enclosed by residential houses. Historians dispute whether a proper tomb ever existed over it (some historians claim that a marble dome did stand over it but was destroyed by the Sikhs).

## **Personal life**

Some manuscripts of Minhaj's *Tabaqat-i Nasiri* append the words *bin Aibak* ("son of Aibak") to the name of Aibak's successor of Aram Shah. However, this may have been an erroneous addition made by a careless scribe, as Alauddin Ata Malik-i-Juwayni's *Tarikh-i-Jahan-Gusha* chronicle explicitly mentions that Aibak had no son.

Minhaj refers to three daughters of Aibak. The first one was married to Nasir ad-Din Qabacha, the Ghurid governor of Multan. After her death, the second daughter was married to Qabacha as well. The third one was married to Aibak's slave Iltutmish, who succeeded Aram Shah on the throne of Delhi.

## **Religion**

Chronicler Hasan Nizami, who migrated from Nishapur to Delhi during Aibak's reign, characterizes Aibak as a devout Muslim who "uprooted idolatry" and "destroyed temples" at Kuhram. He also mentions that the Hindu temples at Meerut, Banaras, and Kalinjar were converted into mosques during Aibak's reign;

these included "a thousand temples" in Banaras alone. He further claims that Aibak freed the whole Kol (Aligarh) region from idols and idolatry.

Nizami's claim that remains of the demolished Hindu temples were used to built mosques is corroborated by architectural remains, such as those at the Qutb Minar complex in Delhi and the Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra in Ajmer. However, his other claims such as Aibak freeing Kol from idols are doubtful.

At some point, Aibak's army started recruiting Hindu soldiers. His army at the siege of Meerut (1192) is known to have included Hindu soldiers. Similarly, the "forces of Hindustan" (*Hasham-i Hindustan*) that accompanied him to Ghazni in 1206, included Hindu chiefs ("ranas" and "thakurs").

## **Cultural contributions**

The construction of the Qutb Minar in Delhi started during Aibak's reign. Aibak was also a patron of literature. Fakhr-i Mudabbir, who wrote *Adab al-harb* - etiquettes of war - dedicated his book of genealogies to Aibak. The composition of Hasan Nizami's *Tajul-Ma'asir*, which was completed during the reign of Iltutmish, probably began during Aibak's reign.

## Chapter 2

# Raja Prithu Defeats Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji

## Raja Prithu

**Raja Prithu** (also known as **Jalpeswara**) was a king of Kamarupa kingdom in north-eastern India in the present-day state of Assam, India. Archeological remains of a Shiva temple and extensive fortifications in present-day Jalpaiguri in India and present day Rangpur District of Bangladesh are also attributed to him.

## Controversy over the existence of king Prithu

Rai K.L. Barua Bahadur in his book *Early History of Kamrupa* claims that the throne of Kamrupa was occupied by a king named Prithu after the end of the Vaidyadeva line. He credits this Prithu with the achievement of having defeated Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar.

However, the historian N.K.Bhattacharya in his article published in the journal *The Indian Historical Quarterly* proved that the Prithu mentioned in the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* was in fact some other king from Awadh which K.L.Barua mistook to be a king of Kamrupa. He writes,"I am afraid, a mistake of Sir Wolsey Haig in the IIIrd volume of the Cambridge History of India misled



the Rai Bahadur(Barua) into taking Prithu to be a king of Kamrupa. It is, therefore, necessary here to discuss again the proofs on which the existence of this Prithu rests. The only authority for the existence of this Prithu is the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*,...I hope it is clear now, that Prithu must have been a man of Audh and not of Kamrupa, and Sir Wolsey Haig's erroneous conjecture led Rai Bahadur Barua into error."

## **Death**

Raja Prithu is believed to be killed in battle with Nasir-ud-din Mahmud in 1228 AD. Some accounts say that Raja Prithu jumped into a tank and killed himself to save dishonour. No reference to this expedition can be had from the Muslim chronicle *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* except the following: "*The accursed Bartu(Britu), beneath whose sword above a hundred and twenty thousand Musalmans had attained martyrdom, he(Nasiruddin) overthrew and sent to hell.*". However, as per the account of *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, this reference has been used for a king of Awadh, not Kamrupa.

## **Khalji's encounter with the Rai of Kamrup**

In 1206, Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji planned to invade Tibet, in order to plunder the treasures of the Buddhist monasteries and gain control of Bengal's traditional trade route with South East Asia for which he had to pass through the kingdom of Kamarupa and Sikkim. By this time Khalji had massacred 10,000 monks of Nalanda, and had burned it down.

Then he came to Bengal which was won without a fight as the king of Bengal Laksman Sena took flight and never to be heard of again. But he had heard of the valour of the Rai of Kamrud (as mentioned by Islamic chronicler Sirajuddin Minhajuddin in his *Tabaqat i Nasiri*) and how he led an army that would fight with almost demonic ferocity he thought it better to befriend him as he had to pass through the Rai's realm. So, he sent emissaries for forming an alliance.

The Kamrupa king told him that he too wanted to attack Southern Tibet as it was the way to control the Silk Route. So he proposed the idea of attacking Southern Tibet jointly. But then he informed Khalji's emissaries that the time was not right. As rainy season was about to start, leading to great hardship, and perilous ascent to the mountains it was advisable to start the campaign after one season. But Khalji by that time had already come and camping right in present day Siliguri in Northern Bengal.

So he found a local guide by the name of Mech who could show him a route through Bhutan, that could bypass Kamrud as the Islamic forces use to pronounce Kamrup. But at first Mech was converted to Islam and hence he was the first convert in the region, Ali Mech. So the latter took Khalji's army through the mountainous passes and defiles of Bhutan. At first after reaching Southern Tibet they had some degree of success as they looted the riches of the Buddhist gomphas or monastries. But then the Monpas described as Mongols, came and attacked them from all sides.

Their return journey was cut off. And in the meantime the rainy season started and many died due to pestilence and

diseases. Their rations were diminishing. A time came when they used to kill and eat their horses. Khalji then thought that since they cannot go back the way they had come they have to find a way to Kamrup and proceeded towards it. But when they were noticed by the spies of King Prithu they thought that Khalji had attacked their realm. So when Prithu was informed he made plans to lure them to the point where the Barnadi tributary fall into the Brahmaputra.

The Rai of Kamrupa allowed Bakhtiyar Khalji's army to advance unchecked into his kingdom, in order to draw him away from his base of operations. He followed a scorched earth strategy, denying his enemy the opportunity to replenish their supplies and destroyed a bridge across a deep river that Bakhtiyar Khalji's army had already crossed, thus cutting off their retreat. The invading force encountered stiff resistance upon entering the rough mountainous terrain of Tibet and decided to retreat. However, the retreat and the attempt to cross the river was disastrous as his forces were short on supplies and were attacked from all sides by Prithu's forces. He made stockades of phanjis or spiked bamboos and drew the whole surviving army of thirty thousand into a gully and attacked them and mercilessly cut them down. Practically his whole army of 12,000 horsemen and twenty thousand infantry were totally annihilated.

## **Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji**

**Ikhtiyār al-Dīn Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī**, also known as **Bakhtiyar Khalji**, was a Turk-Afghan military general who led the Muslim conquests of the eastern Indian regions of Bihar

and established himself as their ruler. He was brutally defeated by Bengal's king Gaudeshwara Lakshman Sen.

Khalji's invasions the Indian subcontinent between A.D. 1197 and 1206 led to mass flight and murder of Buddhist monks, and caused grave damage to the traditionally Buddhist institutions of higher learning in Northern India. In Bihar, Khalji's reign was responsible for displacement of Buddhism by Islam.

Bakhtiyar also launched the Tibet campaign, in which he died in 1206. He was succeeded by Muhammad Shiran Khalji.

## **Early life**

Bakhtiyar Khalji was born and raised in Garmsir, Helmand, in present-day southern Afghanistan. He was member of the Khalaj tribe, a tribe of Turkic origin that was going through a process of Pashtunization after being settled in south-eastern Afghanistan for over 200 years, which eventually led to the creation of the Ghilji tribe.

He was head of the military force that conquered parts of eastern India at the end of the 12th century and at the beginning of the 13th century.

## **Rise**

Tradition has it that Khalji's conquest of Bengal at the head of 18 horsemen was foretold. He was of common birth, had long arms extending below his knees, a short physical stature, and an unfavorable countenance. He was first appointed as the

*Dewan-i-Ard* at Ghor. Then he approached India in about the year 1193 and tried to enter in the army of Qutb al-Din Aibak, but was refused rank. Then he went further eastward and took a job under Malik Hizbar al-Din, then in command of a platoon at Badayun in northern India. After a short period he went to Oudh where Malik Husam al-Din, recognised him for his worth. Husam gave him a landed estate in the south-eastern corner of modern Mirzapur district. Khalji soon established himself there and carried out successful raids into weakly-defended regions to the east.

## Conquests

Khalji's career took a new turn when he subjugated Bihar in 1200. This effort earned him political clout in the court at Delhi. In the same year he took his forces into Bengal. In Bengal, Bakhtiyar had a frontal arrow war with King Lakshman Sen, where Khilji was brutally defeated & fled from Bengal. The Sena rulers ruled Gauda and had the title **Gaudeshwara** till Madhav Sen's rule. Then HinduDeva dynasty ruled Bengal.

Bakhtiyar Khalji's invasions are believed to have severely damaged the Buddhist establishments at Odantapuri, and Vikramashila which were thought to be fortifications by his army. Minhaj-i-Siraj's *Tabaqat-i Nasiri* suggests that Bakhtiyar Khalji destroyed a Buddhist monastery which the author equates in his description with a city he calls "Bihar", from what the soldiers learn is called a *vihara*. According to American scholar Hartmut Scharfe, the Tibetan sources suggest that this monastery was the one at Vikramashila; historian André Wink believes that this monastery must have been Odantapuri. According to the early 17th century Buddhist

scholar Taranatha, the invaders massacred many monks at Odantapuri, and destroyed Vikramashila. The Tibetan pilgrim Dharmasvamin, who visited the region in the 13th century, states that Vikramashila had been completely razed to the ground by the Turushka (Turkic) invaders, and Nalanda the world's first university was completely destroyed along with millions of books which were burnt. It is believed the library at Nalanda University burnt for 3 months. He is considered as the main reason for vanishing of Buddhism from India as he is considered to have destroyed all Buddhist universities for muslim radical and fanatical reasons. As described by Minhaz us siraz he not only destroyed universities and slaughtered monks and terrorised the people living there to establish his reign

## **Death and aftermath**

Ikhtiyar al-Dīn Muḥammad Khalji left the town of Devkot in 1206 to attack Tibet, leaving Ali Mardan Khalji in Ghoraghat Upazila to watch the eastern frontier from his headquarters at Barisal. Khalji's forces suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of king Prithu of Khen dynasty of the land Kamarupa at Chumbi Valley during his Tibetan expedition through an unfamiliar mountainous terrain, which forced him to retreat. Khalji then returned to Devkot with about one hundred surviving soldiers. Upon Ikhtiyar Khalji's return while he was lying ill at Devkot, he was assassinated by Ali Mardan.

The Khalji noblemen then appointed Muhammad Shiran Khalji as Bakhtiyar's successor. Loyal troops under Shiran Khalji avenged Ikhtiyar's death, imprisoning Ali Mardan. Eventually Ali Mardan fled to Delhi and provoked the Sultan of Delhi Qutb

al-Din Aibak to invade Bengal. Ali Mardan returned with the governor of Oudh, Kayemaz Rumi, and dethroned Shiran. Shiran fled to Dinajpur where he later died. Ghiyas-ud-din Iwaz Khalji became the successor. Ali Mardan escaped and was made Governor of Bengal by Qutb-ud-din Aibak, but was killed in 1212. Ghiyas-ud-din again assumed power and proclaimed his independence.

## **Legacy**

Al Mahmud, a leading Bangladeshi poet, composed a book of poetry titled *Bakhtiyarer Ghora (Horses of Bakhtiyar)* in the early 1990s. He depicted Khalji as the praiseworthy hero of Muslim conquest. During Bakhtiyar Khalji's reign, Islam gained a large number of converts in India. Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji had the Khutbah read and coins struck in his own name. Mosques, madrasas, and khanqahs arose in the new abode of Islam through Bakhtiyar's patronage, and his example was imitated by his Amirs.

## Chapter 3

# Iltutmish

**Shams ud-Din Iltutmish**, (r. 1211–1236) was the third of the Mamluk kings who ruled the former Ghurid territories in northern India. He was the first Muslim sovereign to rule from Delhi, and is thus considered the effective founder of the Delhi Sultanate.

Sold into slavery as a young boy, Iltutmish spent his early life in Bukhara and Ghazni under multiple masters. In the late 1190s, the Ghurid slave-commander Qutb al-Din Aibak purchased him in Delhi, thus making him the slave of a slave. Iltutmish rose to prominence in Aibak's service, and was granted the important iqta' of Badaun. His military actions against the Khokhar rebels in 1205-1206 gained attention of the Ghurid Emperor Mu'izz ad-Din, who manumitted him even before his master Aibak was manumitted.

After Mu'izz ad-Din's death in 1206, Aibak became a practically independent ruler of the Ghurid territories in India, with his headquarters at Lahore. After Aibak's death, Iltutmish dethroned his unpopular successor Aram Shah in 1211, and set up his capital at Delhi. He married a daughter of Aibak, subjugated several dissidents, and gained control over much of the territory that had been lost after Aibak's death. He did not immediately claim a sovereign status, acknowledging the nominal authority of Taj al-Din Yildiz, another former slave who had gained control of the Ghurid capital Ghazni. Subsequently, a Khwarazmian invasion prompted Yildiz to move from Ghazni to India, and to demand control of the



former Ghurid territories in India. Iltutmish refused to oblige, defeating and killing Yildiz at the Battle of Tarain in 1216. He also fought with Nasir ad-Din Qabacha, another former Ghurid slave, for control of Lahore. In 1221, a Mongol invasion prompted the Khwarazmian ruler Jalal ad-Din Mingburnu to move to the Indus Valley region, which became embroiled in conflicts involving Jalal ad-Din, Qabacha, and the Mongols. Iltutmish largely remained away from this region until the departure of the Mongols and Jalal ad-Din, engaging in minor skirmishes only when he saw a danger to his own territories in India.

After the departure of Jalal ad-Din from India in 1224, Iltutmish turned his focus towards eastern India, where Aibak's former subordinates had carved out an independent kingdom headquartered at Lakhnauti. Iltutmish extracted tribute from the local ruler Ghiyasuddin Iwaj Shah in 1225, and annexed the region in 1227 after an unsuccessful rebellion by Ghiyasuddin. During this period, he also asserted his authority over Ranthambore (1226) and Mandore (1227), whose Hindu chiefs had declared independence after Aibak's death.

In 1228, Iltutmish invaded the Indus Valley region, defeated Qabacha, and annexed large parts of Punjab and Sindh to his empire.

Subsequently, the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mustansir recognized Iltutmish's authority in India. Over the next few years, Iltutmish suppressed a rebellion in Bengal, captured Gwalior, raided the Paramara-controlled cities of Bhilsa and Ujjain in central India, and expelled Khwarazmian subordinates in the north-west. His officers also attacked and plundered the

Chandela-controlled Kalinjar area. Iltutmish organized the administration of the Sultanate, laying the foundation for its dominance over northern India until the Mughal invasion. He introduced the silver *tanka* and the copper *jital* - the two basic coins of the Sultanate period, with a standard weight of 175 grains. He set up the Iqtadari system: division of empire into Iqtas, which were assigned to the nobles and officers in lieu of salary. He erected many buildings, including mosques, *khanqahs* (monasteries), *dargahs* (shrines or graves of influential people) and a reservoir (*hawz*) for pilgrims.

## **Names and titles**

The name "Iltutmish" literally means "maintainer of the kingdom" in Turkic. Since vowel marks are generally omitted in the historical Persian language manuscripts, different 19th-20th century writers read Iltutmish's name variously as "Altamish", "Altamsh", "Iyaltimish", and "Iletmish". However, several verses by contemporary poets, in which the Sultan's name occurs, rhyme properly only if the name is pronounced "Iltutmish". Moreover, a 1425-1426 (AH 829) *Tajul-Ma'asir* manuscript shows the vowel "u" in the Sultan's name, which confirms that "Iltutmish" is the correct reading of the name.

Iltutmish's inscriptions mention several of his grandiloquent titles, including:

- *Maula muluk al-arab wa-l-ajam* ("King of the Kings of the Arabs and the Persians"), a title used by earlier Muslim kings including the Ghaznavid ruler Mas'ud
- *Maula muluk al-turk wa-l'ajam, Saiyid as-salatin al-turk wa-l'ajam, Riqab al-imam maula muluk al-turk*

*wa-l-ajam* ("Master of Kings of the Turks and the Persians")

- *Hindgir* ("Conqueror of Hind")
- *Saltan Salatin ash-Sharq* ("the Sultan of the Sultans of the East")
- *Shah-i-Sharq* ("King of the East")
- *Shahanshah* ("King of Kings"), a title of the emperors of Persia

In Sanskrit language inscriptions of the Delhi Sultanate, he has been referred to as "Lititmisi" (a rendering of "Iltutmish"); *Suritan Sri Samasadin* or *Samusdina* (a rendering of his title "Sultan Shamsuddin"); or *Turushkadhipamadaladan* ("the Turushka Lord").

## **Early life**

### **Outside India**

Iltutmish was born in an affluent family: his father Ilam Khan was a leader of the Ilbari Turkic tribe. According to Minhaj's *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, he was a handsome and intelligent boy, because of which his brothers grew jealous of him; these brothers sold him to a slave dealer at a horse show. Minhaj's narrative appears to be inspired by the Quranic story of Hazrat Yusuf (Joseph), who was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers.

According to Minhaj, as a young boy, Iltutmish was brought to Bukhara, where he was re-sold to the local *Sadr-i Jahan* (officer in charge of religious matters and endowments). There are several anecdotes about Iltutmish's childhood interest in

religious mysticism. According to a story narrated by Iltutmish himself in Minhaj's book, once a family member of the *Sadr-i Jahan* gave him some money and asked him to bring some grapes from the market. Iltutmish lost the money on the way to the market, and started crying fearing punishment from his master. A dervish (Sufi religious leader) noticed him, and bought the grapes for him in exchange for a promise that he would treat religious devotees and ascetics well upon becoming powerful. The writings of Isami and some other sources suggest that Iltutmish also spent some time in Baghdad, where he met noted Sufi mystics such as Shahab al-Din Abu Hafs Umar Suhrawardi and Auhaduddin Kermani.

Minhaj states that the family of *Sadr-i Jahan* treated Iltutmish well, and later sold him to a merchant called Bukhara Haji. Iltutmish was subsequently sold to a merchant called Jamaluddin Muhammad Chust Qaba, who brought him to Ghazni. The arrival of a handsome and intelligent slave in the town was reported to the Ghurid king Mu'izz ad-Din, who offered 1,000 gold coins for Iltutmish and another slave named Tamghaj Aibak. When Jamaluddin refused the offer, the king banned the sale of these slaves in Ghazni. A year later, Jamaluddin went to Bukhara, and stayed there for three years with the slaves.

### **In Qutb al-Din's service**

Subsequently, Iltutmish's master Jamaluddin returned to Ghazni, where Mu'izz ad-Din's slave-commander Qutb al-Din Aibak noticed Iltutmish. Qutb al-Din, who had just returned from a campaign in Gujarat (c. 1197), sought Mu'izz ad-Din's permission to purchase Iltutmish and Tamghaj. Since their

sale had been banned in Ghazni, Mu'izz ad-Din directed them to be taken to Delhi. In Delhi, Jamaluddin sold Iltutmish and Tamghaj to Qutb al-Din for 100,000 *jitals* (silver or copper coins). Tamghaj rose to the position of the muqta (provincial governor) of Tabarhinda (possibly modern Bathinda), while Iltutmish became the *sar-jandar* (head of bodyguard).

Iltutmish rose rapidly in Qutb al-Din's service, attaining the rank of *Amir-i Shikar* (superintendent of the hunt). After the Ghurid conquest of Gwalior in 1200, he was appointed the *Amir* of the town, and later, he was granted the iqta' of Baran.

His efficient governance prompted Qutb al-Din to grant him the iqta' of Badaun, which according to Minhaj, was the most important one in the Delhi Sultanate. In 1205-1206, Sultan Mu'izz ad-Din summoned Qutb al-Din's forces for his campaign against the Khokhar rebels. During this campaign, Iltutmish's Badaun contingent forced the Khokhars into the middle of the Jhelum river, and killed them there. Mu'izz ad-Din noticed Iltutmish, and made inquiries about him.

The Sultan subsequently presented Iltutmish with a robe of honour, and asked Aibak to treat him well. Minhaj states that Mu'izz ad-Din also ordered Iltutmish's deed of manumission to be drawn on this occasion, which would mean that Iltutmish - a slave of a slave until this point - was manumitted even before his own master Aibak had been manumitted. However, Iltutmish's manumission doesn't appear to have been well-publicized because Ibn Battuta states that at the time of his ascension a few years later, an ulama deputation led by Qazi Wajihuddin Kashani waited to find if he had obtained a deed of manumission or not.

## **Ascension and consolidation of power**

After Mu'izz ad-Din's death in 1206, Qutb al-Din became the ruler of the Delhi Sultanate, which evolved independent of the former Ghurid Empire. In 1210, when Qutb al-Din Aibak died unexpectedly in Lahore during a sport game, the local nobles appointed Aram Shah as his successor to prevent instability in the kingdom. However, the nobles in other parts of the Sultanate opposed this decision, and proposed Iltutmish as an alternative, because Aibak used to call him a son, and because he had a distinguished record of service. These nobles, led by the military justiciar (*Amir-i Dad*) Ali-yi Ismail, invited him to occupy the throne.

Iltutmish marched to Delhi, where he seized the power, and later defeated Aram Shah's forces. Some nobles rebelled against his seizure of power, but Iltutmish subjugated them, and had many of them beheaded.

Minhaj-i-Siraj states that after Aibak's death, the former Ghurid dominions of India (*Mamalik-i-Hindustan*) had been divided into four parts, centred at:

- Delhi, controlled by Iltutmish
- Sindh, controlled by Nasir ad-Din Qabacha, a former Ghurid slave, who had been muqta (provincial governor) of Uch since 1204
- Lakhnauti, controlled by Ali Mardan Khalji, a former governor who proclaimed independence and styled himself as Sultan Ala al-Din

- Lahore, contested between Qabacha, Yildiz, and Iltutmish

## **Delhi's dependencies**

Several Muslim officers, who administered Delhi's dependencies during Aibak's reign, did not recognize Iltutmish's authority. According to Minhaj, Iltutmish reasserted Delhi's control over Badaun, Awadh, Banaras, and Siwalik in a series of campaigns. For example, Iltutmish captured Banaras after defeating Qaymaz, who was presumably a former officer of Aibak.

By the time of Iltutmish's ascension, Delhi's hold over various Hindu chiefs had weakened, and some of them - such as those of Ranthambore and Jalor - had declared independence. During the first few years of his reign, Iltutmish other preoccupations appear to have prevented him from campaigning against these chiefs. Hasan Nizami refers to an undated expedition against Jalor, which may have taken place sometime after his victory over Aram Shah.

## **Defeat of Yildiz**

The Ghurid capital of Ghazni was controlled by Taj al-Din Yildiz, a former slave who claimed to be the rightful successor to the Ghurid emperor. After Iltutmish suppressed the rival claimants to the throne, Yildiz sent him a royal umbrella (*chatr*) and a baton (*durbash*): these gifts implied that Iltutmish was a subordinate ruler. Iltutmish did not want an immediate confrontation, and accepted these gifts. Iltutmish's earliest inscription, dated October 1211, styles him as a subordinate

king - *al-Malik al-Mu'azzam* ("the great chief"), rather than as an imperial *Sultan*. Meanwhile, taking advantage of the succession conflict between Aram Shah and Iltutmish, Qabacha had captured Lahore in 1211.

Shortly after this, a Khwarazmian invasion forced Yildiz to leave Ghazni. Yildiz migrated eastwards, displaced Qabacha from Lahore, and captured parts of the Punjab region. Iltutmish became concerned that Yildiz would ultimately try to occupy Delhi, and marched against him.

Yildiz sent a message to Iltutmish, declaring that he was the real successor of Mu'izz ad-Din and thus, had claims to the former Ghurid territories in India. According to Isami's *Futuh-us-Salatin*, Iltutmish replied that the days of such hereditary claims were over:

You know that today the dominion of the world is enjoyed by the one who possesses the greatest strength. The principle of hereditary succession is not extinct, [but] long ago destiny abolished this custom.

- —□ *Iltutmish*

Iltutmish offered to engage in a negotiation provided both men came to the meeting unaccompanied by any warriors. Yildiz refused the offer, resulting a battle at Tarain on 25 January 1216, which resulted in Iltutmish's victory. Isami states that Yildiz managed to escape to Hansi, while the earlier chronicler Hasan Nizami states that he was injured by an arrow and captured on the battlefield. Yildiz was later taken to Iltutmish's stronghold of Badaun, where he was killed.



Iltutmish's success in this conflict reinforced the Delhi Sultanate's independent status.

### **Initial conflict with Qabacha**

Iltutmish's victory over Yildiz did not result in any substantial increase in his territory. He did not immediately assert his control over the Punjab region, and Qabacha regained control of Lahore. By this time, Qabacha had assumed the sovereign title of Sultan, and controlled a vast territory that included coastal Sindh, Siwistan, Bhakkar, and Multan.

Subsequently, Qabacha tried to conquer a greater part of Punjab: according to Firishta, he sought to extend his authority as far as Sirhind in the east. This prompted Iltutmish to march against him in 1217. Qabacha initially retreated, but Iltutmish's army chased him and defeated him at a place called Mansura, which was located on the banks of the Chenab River.

Iltutmish then captured Lahore in the winter of 1216-1217, and appointed his son Nasiruddin Mahmud to govern it. Lahore remained contested in the subsequent years; for example, at the time of Khwarazmian invasion of the region (see below), it was under the control of Qabacha's son.

Qabacha seems to have posed a serious threat to Iltutmish, as suggested by Muhammad Afi in *Lubab ul-Albab*. Afi, writing shortly before the Khwarazmian invasion, expresses hope that his patron Qabacha will soon conquer the whole of Hindustan. Afi also mentions that Ahmad Jamaji, who was Iltutmish's governor of Bahraich, defected to Qabacha in 1220.

## **Khwarazmian threat**

The Khwarazmshahs, who had taken over the western part of the former Ghurid Empire, suffered a Mongol invasion in 1220. After being defeated at the Battle of Indus in 1221, the Khwarazmshah Jalal ad-Din Mingburnu escaped to the Punjab region. He entered into a matrimonial alliance with the local Khokhar chief Rai Khokhar Sankin, and defeated other regional rulers, including Qabacha.

The Mongol leader Genghis Khan briefly considered returning to Mongolia through a shorter route which involved crossing the Himalayan foothills. He sent envoys to Iltutmish, asking for the Delhi Sultan's permission to pass through India. No extant sources provide any information about the result of this embassy, but it appears that Genghis Khan abandoned his plan to pass through India. According to the Persian historian Ata-Malik Juvayni, Genghis Khan advanced eastwards into India, but failed to find a suitable route, and therefore, exited the country via Peshawar. It is possible that Genghis Khan, through his envoys, asked Iltutmish to not aid Jalal ad-Din: Iltutmish seems to have obliged.

Meanwhile, Jalal ad-Din established himself in the Sindh Sagar Doab in the Punjab region, and captured the fort of Pasrur. He sent his envoy Ainul Mulk to Iltutmish, seeking an alliance against the Mongols, and requesting for a safe place to stay. According to Juvayni, after deliberating over the matter for several days, Iltutmish refused to provide him a residence on the excuse that no place in his kingdom have a suitable climate or a locality fit for a king. Iltutmish also had the envoy killed, and sent troops to aid Qabacha against Jalal ad-Din .

Minhaj, another Persian historian, states that Iltutmish himself led an army against Jalal ad-Din. Only the vanguards of the two armies clashed, and the two rulers withdrew after exchanging friendly messages.

Meanwhile, Qabacha - who had earlier accepted Jalal ad-Din's suzerainty - rebelled against him, and this conflict kept Jalal ad-Din busy. Jalal-ad-Din carried out some more campaigns in India, including a raid in Gujarat, but none against Iltutmish. He left the Indian frontier in 1223-1224; according to his biographer Shihab al-Din Muhammad al-Nasawi, he did so because he received the news that Iltutmish, Qabacha, and several Hindu chiefs ("rais and thakurs") had formed an alliance against him. The Mongols also maintained a presence in the region: for example, Genghis Khan's general besieged Qabacha in Multan in 1224, before retreating because of hot weather.

Until Genghis Khan's death in 1227, Iltutmish chose not to get involved in the politics of the Indus valley region to avoid a potential conflict with the Mongols.

## **Territorial expansion**

### **Eastern India and Rajasthan**

Iltutmish's predecessor Aibak had appointed Ali Mardan Khalji as the governor of Sultanate's territories in eastern India. After Aibak's death, the region became independent, with Lakhnauti as its capital, and Ali Mardan's successor Ghiyasuddin Iwaj Shah (alias Husamuddin Iwaz Khalji) styled himself as a sovereign Sultan. While Iltutmish was busy at the north-

western frontier of his empire, Ghiyasuddin captured parts of present-day Bihar, and also extracted tribute from the smaller states of Jajnagar, Tirhut, Bang (in Bengal region), and Kamrup.

Iltutmish's forces captured Bihar in the 1210s, and invaded Bengal in 1225. Ghiyasuddin led an army to check Iltutmish's advance, but then decided to avoid a conflict by paying him tribute and accepting his suzerainty. Iltutmish accepted the offer, and returned to Delhi after appointing Malik Jani as the governor of Bihar.

In 1226, Iltutmish captured the Ranthambore Fort, which was reputed to be impregnable. The next year, he captured the fort of Mandore, also in present-day Rajasthan.

Meanwhile, in eastern India, Ghiyasuddin re-asserted his independence and occupied Bihar. In 1227, Iltutmish directed his son Nasiruddin Mahmud, who held the iqta' of neighbouring Awadh region at this time, to invade Bengal while Ghiyasuddin was away on a plundering campaign in Kamrup. Nasiruddin captured his capital Lakhnauti, and defeated and executed him on his return to Bengal. Following this conquest, the coinage in the Bengal region was issued in the name of Iltutmish, and the khutba in Lakhnauti was also read in his name.

### **Annexation of Qabacha's empire**

During the first half of the 1220s, Iltutmish had avoided Indus River Valley, which was contended by the Mongols, the Khwarazm kings, and Qabacha. After the decline of the Mongol and the Khwarazmian threat, Qabacha gained control over this

region. Shortly after, during 1228-1229, Iltutmish invaded Qabacha's territory. By this time, the conflicts the Khwarazmians and the Mongols had weakened Qabacha's power.

The writings of Hasan Nizami and Muhammad Aufi suggest that Qabacha had earlier signed some treaties with Iltutmish, probably to secure his support against the Khwarazm prince Jalal ad-Din. These treaties probably involved Qabacha's recognition of Iltutmish's sovereignty, or promises to surrender some territories to the Delhi Sultan. Qabacha's failure to abide by these treaties may have prompted Iltutmish to wage a war against him.

Iltutmish's forces captured Tabarhinda, Kuhram, Sarsati (or Sursuti), and Lahore from Qabacha. Iltutmish appointed Nasir al-Din Aytemur al-Baha'i as his provincial governor (*muqta*) of Lahore. He then sent Nasir al-Din to capture Multan, while he himself invaded Uch. Nasir al-Din captured Lahore, and Iltutmish captured Uch after a three-month long siege, on 4 May 1228.

Qabacha fled to Bhakkar, pursued by an army led by Iltutmish's wazir *Nizam al-Mulk* Junyadi. Finding himself in an unwinnable situation, Qabacha sent his son Malik Alauddin Bahram to Iltutmish, to negotiate a peace treaty. Iltutmish offered peace in exchange for Qabacha's unconditional surrender, but Qabacha preferred death to these terms, and committed suicide by drowning himself into the Indus River on the night of 26 May 1228. Iltutmish then placed Multan and Uch under his own governors, and had his forces occupy several strategic forces, expand his authority up to Makran in

the west. Malik Sinanuddin, the wāli (governor) of coastal Sindh, also recognized Iltutmish's authority, and thus Iltutmish's empire spread as far as the Arabian Sea. Qabacha's son and surviving followers also accepted Iltutmish's suzerainty.

## **Later years**

### **Caliph's recognition**

In 1220-, the Abbasid Caliph Al-Nasir sent his Indian-born ambassador Radi al-Din Abu'l-Fada'il al-Hasan bin Muhammad al-Saghani to Delhi. The ambassador returned to the Abbasid capital Baghdad in 1227, during the reign of Al-Mustansir. In 1228, the new Caliph sent the ambassador back to Delhi with robes of honour, recognizing Iltutmish's authority in India and conferring on him the titles *Yamin Khalifat Allah* ("Right Hand of the God's Deputy") and *Nasir Amir al-Mu'minin* ("Auxiliary of the Commander of the Faithful"). On 18 February 1229, the embassy arrived in Delhi with a deed of investiture.

Although the Caliphate's status as a pan-Islamic institution had been declining, the Caliph's recognition was seen as a religious and political legitimization of Iltutmish's status as an independent ruler rather than a Ghurid subordinate. The Caliph's recognition was a mere formality, but Iltutmish celebrated it in a big way, by decorating the city of Delhi and honouring his nobles, officers, and slaves. Iltutmish's own court poets eulogize the event, and the 14th century Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta describes him as the first independent ruler of Delhi. Iltutmish is the only ruler of India to have the

Caliph's recognition. Ghiyasuddin Iwaj Shah, the ruler of Bengal defeated by Iltutmish's forces, had earlier assumed the title *Nasir Amir al-Mu'minin*, but he did so unilaterally without the Caliph's sanction. The Caliph probably saw Iltutmish as an ally against his Khwarazmian rival, which may have prompted him to recognize Iltutmish's authority in India.

After the Caliph's recognition, Iltutmish began inscribing the Caliph's name on his coins, including the new silver *tanka* introduced by him.

### **Other campaigns**

In March–April 1229, Iltutmish's son Nasiruddin Mahmud, who had been governing Bengal since 1227, died unexpectedly. Taking advantage of this, [[Malik Balkha Khalji|officer of Iltutmish, usurped the authority in Bengal. Iltutmish invaded Bengal, and defeated him in 1230. He then appointed Malik Alauddin Jani as the governor of Bengal.

Meanwhile, Mangal Deva, the Parihara chief of Gwalior in central India, had declared independence. In 1231, Iltutmish besieged the city, and captured it after 11 months of conflict, on 12 December 1232. After Mangal Deva fled, and Iltutmish left the fort under the charge of his officers Majdul Mulk Ziyauddin.

In 1233-1234, Iltutmish placed Gwalior under Malik Nusratuddin Taisi, who was also assigned the iqta's of Sultankot and Bayana, and made in-charge of the military contingents at Kannauj, Mehr, and Mahaban. Shortly after, Taisi attacked the Chandela fort of Kalinjar, and subsequently plundered the area for around 50 days. During this campaign,

he acquired a large amount of wealth: Iltutmish's share (one-fifth) of the loot amounted to 2.5 million *jitals*. While Taisi was returning to Gwalior, the Yajvapala ruler Chahada-deva (called Jahar by Minhaj) ambushed him, but Taisi able to fend off the attack by dividing his army into three contingents.

Subsequently, Iltutmish raided the Paramara-controlled cities of Bhilsa and Ujjain in 1234-35. Iltutmish's army occupied Bhilsa, and destroyed a temple whose construction - according to Minhaj - had taken three hundred years. At Ujjain, his forces damaged the Mahakaleshwar temple and obtained rich plunder, but made little effort to annex the Paramara territory. The jyotirlinga at the site was dismantled and believed to be thrown into a nearby 'Kotiteerth Kunda' (a pond neighboring the temple) with the Jaladhari (a structure supporting the Lingam) stolen during the invasion.

By 1229-1230, the north-western boundary of Iltutmish's kingdom appears to have extended up to the Jhelum River, as Nasawi states that he controlled the area "up to the neighbourhood of the gates of Kashmir". During this period, Iltutmish invaded the territories controlled by the Khwarazmian subordinate Ozbeg-bei, in present-day Pakistan. Ozbeg-bei fled to the Khwarazmian ruler Jalal-ad-Din in Iraq, while Other local commanders - including Hasan Qarluq - surrendered to Iltutmish. Qarluq later changed his allegiance to the Mongols. During his last days, in 1235-1236, Iltutmish is known to have aborted a campaign in the Binban area: this campaign was probably directed against Qarluq.

*Hammira-mada-mardana*, a Sanskrit play by Jayasimha Suri, mentions that a mlechchha (foreigner) called Milachchhrikara



invaded Gujarat during the Chaulukya reign. The Chaulukya minister Vastupala used diplomatic tactics to create many difficulties for the invader, who was ultimately defeated by the general Viradhavala. Some historians have identified Milachchhrikara with Iltutmish, thus theorizing that Iltutmish unsuccessfully tried to invade Gujarat. However, others have dismissed this identification as inaccurate.

## **Death and succession**

In 1236, Iltutmish fell ill during a march towards Qarluq's stronghold of Bamyan, and returned to Delhi on 20 April, at the time chosen by his astrologers. He died shortly after, on 30 April 1236. He was buried in the Qutb complex in Mehrauli.

The death of Iltutmish was followed by years of political instability at Delhi. During this period, four descendants of Iltutmish were put on the throne and murdered. In the 1220s, Iltutmish had groomed his eldest son *Malikus Sa'id* Nasiruddin Mahmud as his successor, but Nasiruddin died unexpectedly in 1229. While leaving for his Gwalior campaign in 1231, Iltutmish had left Delhi's administration to his daughter Razia. Her effective administration prompted him to declare her as his heir apparent in 1231, upon his return from Gwalior. However, shortly before his death, Iltutmish seems to have chosen his surviving eldest son Ruknuddin Firuz as his successor. When Iltutmish died, the nobles unanimously appointed Ruknuddin as the new king.

During Ruknuddin's reign, his mother Shah Turkan took control of the state affairs, and started mistreating her rivals. Their execution of Qutubuddin, a popular son of Iltutmish, led

to rebellions by several nobles, including Malik Ghiyasuddin Muhammad Shah - another son of Iltutmish. Amid these circumstances, Razia seized the throne in November 1236, with support of the general public and several nobles, and Ruknuddin was executed. Razia also faced rebellions, and was deposed and killed in 1240. The nobles then appointed Muizzuddin Bahram - another son of Iltutmish - on the throne, but subsequently deposed and killed him in 1242. Next, the nobles placed Ruknuddin's son Alauddin Masud on the throne, but he too, was deposed in 1246.

Order was re-established only after Iltutmish's grandson Nasiruddin-Mahmud became Sultan with Iltutmish's prominent slave, Ghias-ud-din-Balban as his deputy (*Naib*) in 1246. Balban held all the power at the time and became Sultan in 1266. Balban's descendants ruled Delhi until they were overthrown by the Khaljis.

## **Religion**

Iltutmish was a devout Muslim, and spent considerable time praying at night. His court poet Amir Ruhani describes him as a "holy warrior and Ghazi". He revered several Sufi saints, including Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki, Hamiduddin Nagauri, Jalaluddin Tabrizi, Bahauddin Zakariya, and Najibuddin Nakhshabi.

Iltutmish held religious discourses by orthodox ulama - such as Sayyid Nuruddin Mubarak Ghaznavi - in his court, but disregarded their advice while formulating the imperial policies. He understood the limits to which the Islamic shariah law could be implemented in largely non-Muslim India. When a

group of ulama advised him to vigorously pursue the religious conversion of Hindus, he dismissed the idea as impractical. He did not consult the ulama while making the unorthodox decision of nominating his daughter Raziya as his successor. This balance between the shariah and the practical needs of the time became a feature of Turkic rule in Delhi.

## **Legacy**

Iltutmish laid down the foundation of the Delhi Sultanate as a truly independent kingdom, freeing it from a subordinate position to Ghazni. The Caliph's investiture, although a mere formality, reaffirmed his status as an independent sovereign among the Muslims. By the time of his death, the Delhi Sultanate had emerged as the largest and the most powerful kingdom in northern India.

Iltutmish was most probably the first ruler to organize a centrally recruited, centrally paid and centrally managed army in the Delhi Sultanate. His courtier Fakhr-e Mudabbir composed *Adab al-harb wa-l-shaja'a*, a book on the art of warfare.

## **Iqtas**

Iltutmish implemented the *iqta* system of administrative grants in the Delhi Sultanate. This system, borrowed from the earlier Islamic dynasties of the Middle East, involved dedicating the revenues from a certain region to a subordinate in exchange for military service and political loyalty. Iltutmish used this *iqtas* to consolidate his empire by dismantling the existing feudal order of the Indian society.

Iltutmish assigned several regions to his Turkic subordinates in form *iqtas*. The larger *iqtas* - which were effectively provinces of the empire - were assigned to high-ranking men, who were expected to administer the regions, maintain local law and order, and supply military contingents in times of need. The holders of the smaller *iqtas* were only expected to collect revenues from their regions, in exchange for providing military service to the emperor. To ensure that this *iqta* system remained bureaucratic - rather than feudal - in nature, Iltutmish transferred the *iqta* holders from one region to another, refused to grant them legal immunity, and discouraged localism in administration.

Both free amirs as well as *bandagan-i-shamsi* (as opposed to *bandagan-i-khass* during Mu'izz ad-Din's times) were used by Iltutmish over an extended, long process involving rotation of the *iqtas* assigned to each noble every once in a while to ensure that there was no question of claims on a specific region by a specific noble. Besides these, princes were used as well in almost the same capacity, but in more important roles.

## **Coinage**

Iltutmish introduced two coins that became the basis for the subsequent coinage of the Delhi Sultanate: the silver *tanka* and the copper *jital*.

His predecessors, including the Ghurid rulers, had maintained the local coinage system based on the Hindushahi bull-and-horseman coins minted at Delhi. Dehliwala, the standard coin, was a silver-copper alloy with a uniform weight of 3.38 grams, of which 0.59 grams was Silver. The major source of silver for

the Delhi mint were coin hoards from Central Asia. Another source was European silver which made its way to Delhi via the Red Sea, Persian Gulf through the ports of Gujarat. By the 1220s, supply from Central Asia had dried up and Gujarat was under control of hostile forces.

In response to the lack of silver, Iltutmish introduced a new bimetallic coinage system to Northern India consisting of an 11 grams silver *tanka* and the billon *jital*, with 0.25 grams of silver. The Dehliwala was devalued to be on par with the *jital*. This meant that a Dehliwala with 0.59 grams of silver was now equivalent to a coin with 0.25 grams of silver. Each Dehliwala paid as tax, therefore produced an excess 0.34 grams of silver which could be used to produce *tankas*. The new system served as the basis for coinage for much of the Sultanate period and even beyond, though periodic shortages of silver caused further debasement. The *tanka* is a forerunner to the Rupee.

## **Islamic culture**

During Iltutmish's reign, the city of Delhi emerged as the centre of Islamic power and culture in India. He patronized several scholars, including historian Minhaj-i-Siraj and the Sufi mystic Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki. Minhaj states that Iltutmish's patronage attracted several scholars and other prominent people to Delhi, especially from Persia, which had fallen to the Mongols. Iltutmish's court to have had raised seats for distinguished scholars and saints, as opposed to lower seats for others. This is suggested by *Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, a near-contemporary work, which describes a quarrel between Shaikh Nizamuddin Abul Muwayyid and Sayyid Nuruddin Mubarak Ghaznavi over choice of seats in Iltutmish's presence.

*Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad* mentions an anecdote about Iltutmish's patronage to scholars: Nasiri, a poet in need of a royal award, composed a *qasida* in praise of Iltutmish. However, while he was in the middle of reciting the poem, Iltutmish left the recital to attend an urgent administrative matter. A dismayed Nasiri thought Iltutmish would forget him, and lost all hope of getting the royal award. But as soon as Iltutmish was free, he came to Nasiri, recited the first line of the *qasida* from his memory, and asked Nasiri to complete his recital.

## **Architecture**

Iltutmish invested in numerous waterworks, mosques, and civil amenities in Delhi. He completed the construction of the Qutb Minar, which had been started by Qutb al-din Aibak. He also commissioned the Hauz-i-Shamsi reservoir to the south of Qutb Minar, and the madrasa (school) around it.

He built several khanqah (monasteries) and dargahs (graves) for Sufi saints. He commenced the structure of Hamid ud-din's Khanaqa, and built the *Gandhak ki Baoli*, a stepwell for the Sufi saint, Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki, who moved to Delhi during his reign.

In 1231, he built the Sultan Ghari funerary monument for his eldest son Nasiruddin, who had died two years earlier. This was the first Islamic mausoleum in Delhi, and lies within fortified grounds, which also include the graves of other relatives of Iltutmish.

## Chapter 4

# Delhi Sultanate

The **Delhi Sultanate** was an Islamic empire based in Delhi that stretched over large parts of the Indian subcontinent for 320 years (1206–1526). Five dynasties ruled over the Delhi Sultanate sequentially: the Mamluk dynasty (1206–1290), the Khalji dynasty (1290–1320), the Tughlaq dynasty (1320–1414), the Sayyid dynasty (1414–1451), and the Lodi dynasty (1451–1526). It covered large swathes of territory in modern-day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh as well as some parts of southern Nepal.

As a successor to the Ghurid dynasty, the Delhi Sultanate was originally one among a number of principalities ruled by the Turkic slave-generals of Muhammad Ghori (who had conquered large parts of northern India), including Yildiz, Aibek and Qubacha, that had inherited and divided the Ghurid territories amongst themselves. After a long period of infighting, the Mamluks were overthrown in the Khalji revolution which marked the transfer of power from the Turks to a heterogeneous Indo-Muslim nobility. Both of the resulting Khalji and Tughlaq dynasties respectively saw a new wave of rapid Muslim conquests deep into South India. The sultanate finally reached the peak of its geographical reach during the Tughlaq dynasty, occupying most of the Indian subcontinent. This was followed by decline due to Hindu reconquests, Hindu kingdoms such as the Vijayanagara Empire and Mewar asserting independence, and new Muslim sultanates such as the Bengal Sultanate breaking off. In 1526, the Sultanate was conquered and succeeded by the Mughal Empire.

The sultanate is noted for its integration of the Indian subcontinent into a global cosmopolitan culture (as seen concretely in the development of the Hindustani language and Indo-Islamic architecture), being one of the few powers to repel attacks by the Mongols (from the Chagatai Khanate) and for enthroning one of the few female rulers in Islamic history, Razia Sultana, who reigned from 1236 to 1240. Bakhtiyar Khalji's annexations were responsible for the large-scale desecration of Hindu and Buddhist temples (leading to the decline of Buddhism in East India and Bengal), and the destruction of universities and libraries. Mongolian raids on West and Central Asia set the scene for centuries of migration of fleeing soldiers, intelligentsia, mystics, traders, artists, and artisans from those regions into the subcontinent, thereby establishing Islamic culture in India and the rest of the region.

## **History**

### **Background**

The context behind the rise of the Delhi Sultanate in India was part of a wider trend affecting much of the Asian continent, including the whole of southern and western Asia: the influx of nomadic Turkic peoples from the Central Asian steppes. This can be traced back to the 9th century when the Islamic Caliphate began fragmenting in the Middle East, where Muslim rulers in rival states began enslaving non-Muslim nomadic Turks from the Central Asian steppes and raising many of them to become loyal military slaves called Mamluks. Soon, Turks were migrating to Muslim lands and becoming Islamicized. Many of the Turkic Mamluk slaves eventually rose



up to become rulers, and conquered large parts of the Muslim world, establishing Mamluk Sultanates from Egypt to present-day Afghanistan, before turning their attention to the Indian subcontinent.

It is also part of a longer trend predating the spread of Islam. Like other settled, agrarian societies in history, those in the Indian subcontinent have been attacked by nomadic tribes throughout its long history. In evaluating the impact of Islam on the subcontinent, one must note that the northwestern subcontinent was a frequent target of tribes raiding from Central Asia in the pre-Islamic era. In that sense, the Muslim intrusions and later Muslim invasions were not dissimilar to those of the earlier invasions during the 1st millennium.

By 962 AD, Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms in South Asia faced a series of raids from Muslim armies from Central Asia. Among them was Mahmud of Ghazni, the son of a Turkic Mamluk military slave, who raided and plundered kingdoms in north India from east of the Indus river to west of Yamuna river seventeen times between 997 and 1030. Mahmud of Ghazni raided the treasuries but retracted each time, only extending Islamic rule into western Punjab.

The series of raids on north Indian and western Indian kingdoms by Muslim warlords continued after Mahmud of Ghazni. The raids did not establish or extend the permanent boundaries of the Islamic kingdoms. In contrast, the Ghurid Sultan Mu'izz ad-Din Muhammad Ghori (commonly known as Muhammad of Ghor) began a systematic war of expansion into north India in 1173. He sought to carve out a principality for himself and expand the Islamic world. Muhammad of Ghor

created a Sunni Islamic kingdom of his own extending east of the Indus river, and he thus laid the foundation for the Muslim kingdom called the Delhi Sultanate. Some historians chronicle the Delhi Sultanate from 1192 due to the presence and geographical claims of Muhammad Ghorī in South Asia by that time.

Ghorī was assassinated in 1206, by Ismā'īlī Shia Muslims in some accounts or by Khokhars in others. After the assassination, one of Ghorī's slaves (or mamluks, Arabic: مملوك), the Turkic Qutb al-Din Aibak, assumed power, becoming the first Sultan of Delhi.

## **Dynasties**

### **Mamluk dynasty**

Qutb al-Din Aibak, a former slave of Mu'izz ad-Din Muhammad Ghorī (known more commonly as Muhammad of Ghor), was the first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate. Aibak was of Cuman-Kipchak (Turkic) origin, and due to his lineage, his dynasty is known as the Mamluk (Slave origin) dynasty (not to be confused with the Mamluk dynasty of Iraq or the Mamluk dynasty of Egypt). Aibak reigned as the Sultan of Delhi for four years, from 1206 to 1210. Aibak was known for his generosity and people called him Lakhdatta

After Aibak died, Aram Shah assumed power in 1210, but he was assassinated in 1211 by Aibak's son-in-law, Shams ud-Din Iltutmish. Iltutmish's power was precarious, and a number of Muslim amirs (nobles) challenged his authority as they had been supporters of Qutb al-Din Aibak. After a series of

conquests and brutal executions of opposition, Iltutmish consolidated his power. His rule was challenged a number of times, such as by Qubacha, and this led to a series of wars. Iltutmish conquered Multan and Bengal from contesting Muslim rulers, as well as Ranthambore and Siwalik from the Hindu rulers. He also attacked, defeated, and executed Taj al-Din Yildiz, who asserted his rights as heir to Mu'izz ad-Din Muhammad Ghori. Iltutmish's rule lasted till 1236. Following his death, the Delhi Sultanate saw a succession of weak rulers, disputing Muslim nobility, assassinations, and short-lived tenures.

Power shifted from Rukn ud-Din Firuz to Razia Sultana and others, until Ghiyas ud-Din Balban came to power and ruled from 1266 to 1287. He was succeeded by 17-year-old Muiz ud-Din Qaiqabad, who appointed Jalal ud-Din Firuz Khalji as the commander of the army. Khalji assassinated Qaiqabad and assumed power, thus ending the Mamluk dynasty and starting the Khalji dynasty.

Qutb al-Din Aibak initiated the construction of the Qutub Minar. It is known that Aibak started the construction of Qutub Minar but died without completing it. It was later completed by his son-in-law, Iltutmish. The Quwwat-ul-Islam (Might of Islam) Mosque was built by Aibak, now a UNESCO world heritage site. The Qutub Minar Complex or Qutb Complex was expanded by Iltutmish, and later by Ala ud-Din Khalji (the second ruler of the Khalji dynasty) in the early 14th century. During the Mamluk dynasty, many nobles from Afghanistan and Persia migrated and settled in India, as West Asia came under Mongol siege.

## **Khalji dynasty**

The Khalji dynasty was of Turko-Afghan heritage. They were originally of Turkic origin. They had long been settled in present-day Afghanistan before proceeding to Delhi in India. The name "Khalji" refers to an Afghan town known as Qalati Khalji ("Fort of Ghilji"). They were treated by others as Afghan due to adoption of some Afghan habits and customs. As a result of this, the dynasty is referred to as "Turko-Afghan". The dynasty later also had Indian ancestry, through Jhatyapali (daughter of Ramachandra of Devagiri), wife of Alauddin Khalji and mother of Shihabuddin Omar.

The first ruler of the Khalji dynasty was Jalal ud-Din Firuz Khalji. He came to power after the Khalji revolution which marked the transfer of power from the monopoly of Turkic nobles to a heterogeneous Indo-Muslim nobility. The Khalji and Indo-Muslim faction had been strengthened by an ever-increasing number of converts, and took power through a series of assassinations. Muiz ud-Din Kaiqabad was assassinated and Jalal-ad din took power in a military coup. He was around 70 years old at the time of his ascension, and was known as a mild-mannered, humble and kind monarch to the general public. Jalal ud-Din Firuz ruled for 6 years before he was murdered in 1296 by his nephew and son-in-law Juna Muhammad Khalji, who later came to be known as Ala ud-Din Khalji.

Ala ud-Din began his military career as governor of Kara province, from where he led two raids on Malwa (1292) and Devagiri (1294) for plunder and loot. His military campaigning returned to these lands as well other south Indian kingdoms

after he assumed power. He conquered Gujarat, Ranthambore, Chittor, and Malwa. However, these victories were cut short because of Mongol attacks and plunder raids from the northwest. The Mongols withdrew after plundering and stopped raiding northwest parts of the Delhi Sultanate.

After the Mongols withdrew, Ala ud-Din Khalji continued to expand the Delhi Sultanate into southern India with the help of generals such as Malik Kafur and Khusro Khan. They collected much war booty (anwatan) from those they defeated. His commanders collected war spoils and paid ghanima (Arabic: *الغَنِيْمَة*, a tax on spoils of war), which helped strengthen the Khalji rule. Among the spoils was the Warangal loot that included the famous Koh-i-Noor diamond.

Ala ud-Din Khalji changed tax policies, raising agriculture taxes from 20% to 50% (payable in grain and agricultural produce), eliminating payments and commissions on taxes collected by local chiefs, banned socialization among his officials as well as inter-marriage between noble families to help prevent any opposition forming against him, and he cut salaries of officials, poets, and scholars.

These tax policies and spending controls strengthened his treasury to pay the keep of his growing army; he also introduced price controls on all agriculture produce and goods in the kingdom, as well as controls on where, how, and by whom these goods could be sold. Markets called "shahana-i-mandi" were created. Muslim merchants were granted exclusive permits and monopoly in these "mandis" to buy and resell at official prices. No one other than these merchants could buy from farmers or sell in cities. Those found violating these

"mandi" rules were severely punished, often by mutilation. Taxes collected in the form of grain were stored in the kingdom's storage. During famines that followed, these granaries ensured sufficient food for the army.

Historians note Ala ud-Din Khalji as being a tyrant. Anyone Ala ud-Din suspected of being a threat to this power was killed along with the women and children of that family. He grew to eventually distrust the majority of his nobles and favored only a handful of his own slaves and family. In 1298, between 15,000 and 30,000 people near Delhi, who had recently converted to Islam, were slaughtered in a single day, due to fears of an uprising. He is also known for his cruelty against kingdoms he defeated in battle.

After Ala ud-Din's death in 1316, his eunuch general Malik Kafur, who was born to a Hindu family but converted to Islam, assumed de facto power and was supported by non-Khalaj nobles like the Pashtuns, notably Kamal al-Din Gurg. However he lacked the support of the majority of Khalaj nobles who had him assassinated, hoping to take power for themselves. However the new ruler had the killers of Karfur executed.

The last Khalji ruler was Ala ud-Din Khalji's 18-year-old son Qutb ud-Din Mubarak Shah Khalji, who ruled for four years before he was killed by Khusro Khan, another slave-general with Hindu origins, who reverted from Islam and favoured his Hindu Baradu military clan in the nobility. Khusro Khan's reign lasted only a few months, when Ghazi Malik, later to be called Ghiyath al-Din Tughlaq, defeated him with the help of Punjabi Khokhar tribesmen and assumed power in 1320, thus ending the Khalji dynasty and starting the Tughlaq dynasty.

## **Tughlaq dynasty**

The Tughlaq dynasty lasted from 1320 to nearly the end of the 14th century. The first ruler Ghazi Malik renamed himself Ghiyath al-Din Tughlaq and is also referred to in scholarly works as Tughlak Shah. He was of "humble origins" but generally considered of a mixed Turko-Indian people. Ghiyath al-Din ruled for five years and built a town near Delhi named Tughlaqabad. According to some historians such as Vincent Smith, he was killed by his son Juna Khan, who then assumed power in 1325. Juna Khan renamed himself Muhammad bin Tughlaq and ruled for 26 years. During his rule, Delhi Sultanate reached its peak in terms of geographical reach, covering most of the Indian subcontinent.

Muhammad bin Tughlaq was an intellectual, with extensive knowledge of the Quran, Fiqh, poetry and other fields. He was also deeply suspicious of his kinsmen and wazirs (ministers), extremely severe with his opponents, and took decisions that caused economic upheaval. For example, he ordered minting of coins from base metals with face value of silver coins - a decision that failed because ordinary people minted counterfeit coins from base metal they had in their houses and used them to pay taxes and jizya.

- Muhammad bin Tughlaq chose the city of Deogiri in present-day Indian state of Maharashtra (renaming it to Daulatabad), as the second administrative capital of the Dehli Sultanate. He ordered a forced migration of the Muslim population of Dehli, including his royal family, the nobles, Syeds, Sheikhs and 'Ulema to settle in Daulatabad. The purpose of transferring

the entire Muslim elite to Daulatabad was to enroll them in his mission of world conquest. He saw their role as propagandists who would adapt Islamic religious symbolism to the rhetoric of empire, and that the Sufis could by persuasion bring many of the inhabitants of the Deccan to become Muslim. Tughluq cruelly punished the nobles who were unwilling to move to Daulatabad, seeing their non-compliance of his order as equivalent to rebellion. According to Ferishta, when the Mongols arrived to Punjab, the Sultan returned the elite back to Dehli, although Daulatabad remained as an administrative centre. One result of the transfer of the elite to Daulatabad was the hatred of the nobility to the Sultan, which remained in their minds for a long time. The other result was that he managed to create a stable Muslim elite and result in the growth of the Muslim population of Daulatabad who did not return to Dehli, without which the rise of the Bahmanid kingdom to challenge Vijayanagara would not have been possible. Muhammad bin Tughlaq's adventures in the Deccan region also marked campaigns of destruction and desecration temples, for example, the Swayambhu Shiva Temple and the Thousand Pillar Temple. Revolts against Muhammad bin Tughlaq began in 1327, continued over his reign, and over time the geographical reach of the Sultanate shrunk. The Vijayanagara Empire originated in southern India as a direct response to attacks from the Delhi Sultanate., and liberated south India from the Delhi Sultanate's rule. In the 1330s, Muhammad bin Tughlaq ordered an invasion



of China, sending part of his forces over the Himalayas. However, they were defeated by the Kangra State . During his reign, state revenues collapsed from his policies such as the base metal coins from 1329 to 1332. Famines, widespread poverty, and rebellion grew across the kingdom. In 1338 his own nephew rebelled in Malwa, whom he attacked, caught, and flayed alive. By 1339, the eastern regions under local Muslim governors and southern parts led by Hindu kings had revolted and declared independence from the Delhi Sultanate. Muhammad bin Tughlaq did not have the resources or support to respond to the shrinking kingdom. The historian Walford chronicled Delhi and most of India faced severe famines during Muhammad bin Tughlaq's rule in the years after the base metal coin experiment. By 1347, the Bahmani Sultanate had become an independent and competing Muslim kingdom in the Deccan region of South Asia.

Muhammad bin Tughlaq died in 1351 while trying to chase and punish people in Gujarat who were rebelling against the Delhi Sultanate. He was succeeded by Firuz Shah Tughlaq (1351–1388), who tried to regain the old kingdom boundary by waging a war with Bengal for 11 months in 1359. However, Bengal did not fall. Firuz Shah ruled for 37 years. His reign attempted to stabilize the food supply and reduce famines by commissioning an irrigation canal from the Yamuna river. An educated sultan, Firuz Shah left a memoir. In it he wrote that he banned the practice of torture, such as amputations, tearing out of eyes, sawing people alive, crushing people's bones as punishment, pouring molten lead into throats, setting people on fire, driving

nails into hands and feet, among others. He also wrote that he did not tolerate attempts by Rafawiz Shia Muslim and Mahdi sects from proselytizing people into their faith, nor did he tolerate Hindus who tried to rebuild temples that his armies had destroyed. Firuz Shah Tughlaq also lists his accomplishments to include converting Hindus to Sunni Islam by announcing an exemption from taxes and jizya for those who convert, and by lavishing new converts with presents and honours. Simultaneously, he raised taxes and jizya, assessing it at three levels, and stopping the practice of his predecessors who had historically exempted all Hindu Brahmins from the jizya. He also vastly expanded the number of slaves in his service and those of Muslim nobles. The reign of Firuz Shah Tughlaq was marked by reduction in extreme forms of torture, elimination of favours to select parts of society, but also increased intolerance and persecution of targeted groups, the latter of which resulting in conversion of significant parts of the population to Islam.

The death of Firuz Shah Tughlaq created anarchy and disintegration of the kingdom. The last rulers of this dynasty both called themselves Sultan from 1394 to 1397: Nasir ud-Din Mahmud Shah Tughlaq, the grandson of Firuz Shah Tughlaq who ruled from Delhi, and Nasir ud-Din Nusrat Shah Tughlaq, another relative of Firuz Shah Tughlaq who ruled from Firozabad, which was a few miles from Delhi. The battle between the two relatives continued till Timur's invasion in 1398. Timur, also known as Tamerlane in Western scholarly literature, was the Turkicized Mongol ruler of the Timurid Empire. He became aware of the weakness and quarreling of the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate, so he marched with his army to Delhi, plundering and killing all the way. Estimates for the

massacre by Timur in Delhi range from 100,000 to 200,000 people. Timur had no intention of staying in or ruling India. He looted the lands he crossed, then plundered and burnt Delhi. Over five days, Timur and his army raged a massacre. Then he collected wealth, captured women, and enslaved people (particularly skilled artisans), and returning with this loot to Samarkand.

The people and lands within the Delhi Sultanate were left in a state of anarchy, chaos, and pestilence. Nasir ud-Din Mahmud Shah Tughlaq, who had fled to Gujarat during Timur's invasion, returned and nominally ruled as the last ruler of Tughlaq dynasty, as a puppet of various factions at the court.

### **Sayyid dynasty**

The Sayyid dynasty ruled the Delhi Sultanate from 1415 to 1451. The Timurid invasion and plunder had left the Delhi Sultanate in shambles, and little is known about the rule by the Sayyid dynasty. Annemarie Schimmel notes the first ruler of the dynasty as Khizr Khan, who assumed power by claiming to represent Timur. His authority was questioned even by those near Delhi. His successor was Mubarak Khan, who renamed himself Mubarak Shah and unsuccessfully tried to regain lost territories in Punjab from Khokhar warlords. With the power of the Sayyid dynasty faltering, Islam's history on the Indian subcontinent underwent a profound change, according to Schimmel. The previously dominant Sunni sect of Islam became diluted, alternate Muslim sects such as Shia rose, and new competing centers of Islamic culture took roots beyond Delhi. The Sayyid dynasty was displaced by the Lodi dynasty in 1451.

## **Lodi dynasty**

The Lodi dynasty belonged to the Pashtun (Afghan) Lodi tribe. Bahlul Khan Lodi started the Lodi dynasty and was the first Pashtun, to rule the Delhi Sultanate. Bahlul Lodi began his reign by attacking the Muslim Jaunpur Sultanate to expand the influence of the Delhi Sultanate, and was partially successful through a treaty. Thereafter, the region from Delhi to Varanasi (then at the border of Bengal province), was back under influence of Delhi Sultanate.

After Bahlul Lodi died, his son Nizam Khan assumed power, renamed himself Sikandar Lodi and ruled from 1489 to 1517. One of the better known rulers of the dynasty, Sikandar Lodi expelled his brother Barbak Shah from Jaunpur, installed his son Jalal Khan as the ruler, then proceeded east to make claims on Bihar. The Muslim governors of Bihar agreed to pay tribute and taxes, but operated independent of the Delhi Sultanate. Sikandar Lodi led a campaign of destruction of temples, particularly around Mathura. He also moved his capital and court from Delhi to Agra, an ancient Hindu city that had been destroyed during the plunder and attacks of the early Delhi Sultanate period. Sikandar thus erected buildings with Indo-Islamic architecture in Agra during his rule, and the growth of Agra continued during the Mughal Empire, after the end of the Delhi Sultanate.

Sikandar Lodi died a natural death in 1517, and his second son Ibrahim Lodi assumed power. Ibrahim did not enjoy the support of Afghan and Persian nobles or regional chiefs. Ibrahim attacked and killed his elder brother Jalal Khan, who was installed as the governor of Jaunpur by his father and had

the support of the amirs and chiefs. Ibrahim Lodi was unable to consolidate his power, and after Jalal Khan's death, the governor of Punjab, Daulat Khan Lodi, reached out to the Mughal Babur and invited him to attack the Delhi Sultanate. Babur defeated and killed Ibrahim Lodi in the Battle of Panipat in 1526. The death of Ibrahim Lodi ended the Delhi Sultanate, and the Mughal Empire replaced it.

## **Government and politics**

### **Political system**

Scholars such as Isami and Barani suggested that the prehistory of the Delhi Sultanate lay in the Ghaznavid state and that its ruler, Mahmud Ghaznavi, provided the foundation and inspiration integral in the making of the Delhi regime. The Mongol and infidel Hindus were the great "Others" in these narratives and the Persianate and class conscious, aristocratic virtues of the ideal state were creatively memorialized in the Ghaznavid state, now the templates for the Delhi Sultanate. Cast within a historical narrative it allowed for a more self-reflective, linear rooting of the Sultanate in the great traditions of Muslim statecraft. Over time, successive Indo-Muslim dynasties created a 'centralized structure in the Persian tradition whose task was to mobilize human and material resources for the ongoing armed struggle against both Mongol and Hindu infidels'. The monarch was not the Sultan of the Hindus or of, say, the people of Haryana, rather in the eyes of the Sultanate's chroniclers, the Muslims constituted what in more recent times would be termed a "Staatsvolk". For many Muslim observers, the ultimate justification for any ruler

within the Islamic world was the protection and advancement of the faith. For the Sultans, as for their Ghaznavid and Ghurid predecessors, this entailed the suppression of heterodox Muslims, and Firuz Shah attached some importance to the fact that he had acted against the *ashab-i ilhad-u ibahat* (deviators and latitudinarians). It also involved plundering, and extorting tribute from, independent Hindu principalities.

The Hindu polytheists who submitted to Islamic rule qualified as "protected peoples" according to the wide spectrum of the educated Muslim community within the subcontinent. The balance of the evidence is that in the latter half of the fourteenth century, if not before, the *jizyah* was definitely levied as a discriminatory tax on non-Muslims, although even then it is difficult to see how such a measure could have been enforced outside the principal centres of Muslim authority. The Delhi Sultanate also continued the governmental conventions of the previous Hindu polities, claiming paramountcy of some of its subjects rather than exclusive supreme control. Accordingly, it did not interfere with the autonomy and military of certain conquered Hindu rulers, and freely included Hindu vassals and officials.

### **Economic policy and administration**

The economic policy of the Delhi Sultanate was characterized by greater government involvement in the economy relative to the Classical Hindu dynasties, and increased penalties for private businesses that broke government regulations. Alauddin Khalji replaced the private markets with four centralized government-run markets, appointed a "market controller", and implemented strict price controls on all kinds

of goods, "from caps to socks; from combs to needles; from vegetables, soups, sweetmeats to chapatis" (according to Ziauddin Barani (c. 1357)). The price controls were inflexible even during droughts. Capitalist investors were completely banned from participating in horse trade, animal and slave brokers were forbidden from collecting commissions, and private merchants were eliminated from all animal and slave markets. Bans were instituted against hoarding and regrating, granaries were nationalized and limits were placed on the amount of grain that could be used by cultivators for personal use.

Various licensing rules were imposed. Registration of merchants was required, and expensive goods such as certain fabrics were deemed "unnecessary" for the general public and required a permit from the state to be purchased. These licenses were issued to *amirs*, *maliks*, and other important persons in government. Agricultural taxes were raised to 50%.

Traders regarded the regulations as burdensome, and violations were severely punished, leading to further resentment among the traders. A network of spies was instituted to ensure the implementation of the system; even after price controls were lifted after Khalji's death, Barani claims that the fear of his spies remained, and that people continued to avoid trading in expensive commodities.

## **Social policies**

The sultanate enforced Islamic religious prohibitions of anthropomorphic representations in art.

## **Military**

The army of the Delhi sultans initially consisted of nomadic Turkic Mamluk military slaves belonging to Muhammad of Ghor.

The Alai era ended the Turkic monopoly over the state. The army of the Alai era of the Delhi Sultanate had an Indian military style of warfare which had replaced the Ilbari Mamluk style. There are hardly any more references to newly recruited Turkic slaves in historical accounts, as the new nobility wished to reduce the power of the Turkic slaves after the overthrow of the Mamluks.

A major military contribution of the Delhi Sultanate was their successful campaigns in repelling the Mongol Empire's invasions of India, which could have been devastating for the Indian subcontinent, like the Mongol invasions of China, Persia and Europe. Were it not for the Delhi Sultanate, it is possible that the Mongol Empire may have been successful in invading India. The strength of the armies changes according to time.

## **Attacks on civilians**

### **Destruction of cities**

While the sacking of cities was not uncommon in medieval warfare, the army of the Delhi Sultanate also often completely destroyed cities in their military expeditions. According to Jain chronicler Jinaprabha Suri, Nusrat Khan's conquests destroyed hundreds of towns including Ashapalli (modern-day



Ahmedabad), Vanthali and Surat in Gujarat. This account is corroborated by Ziauddin Barani.

## **Massacres**

- Ghiyas ud din Balban wiped out the Rajputs of Mewat and Awadh, killing approximately 100,000 people.
- Alauddin Khalji ordered the killing of 30,000 people at Chittor.
- Alauddin Khalji ordered the killing of several prominent Brahmin and merchant civilians during his raid on Devagiri.
- According to a hymn, Muhammad bin Tughlaq is said to have killed 12,000 Hindu ascetics during the sacking of Srirangam.
- Firuz Shah Tughlaq killed 180,000 people during his invasion of Bengal.

## **Desecration of temples, universities and libraries**

Historian Richard Eaton has tabulated a campaign of destruction of idols and temples by Delhi Sultans, intermixed with certain years where the temples were protected from desecration. In his paper, he has listed 37 instances of Hindu temples being desecrated or destroyed in India during the Delhi Sultanate, from 1234 to 1518, for which reasonable evidences are available. He notes that this was not unusual in medieval India, as there were numerous recorded instances of temple desecration by Hindu and Buddhist kings against rival Indian kingdoms between 642 and 1520, involving conflict between devotees of different Hindu deities, as well as between

Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. He also noted there were also many instances of Delhi sultans, who often had Hindu ministers, ordering the protection, maintenance and repairing of temples, according to both Muslim and Hindu sources. For example, a Sanskrit inscription notes that Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq repaired a Siva temple in Bidar after his Deccan conquest. There was often a pattern of Delhi sultans plundering or damaging temples during conquest, and then patronizing or repairing temples after conquest. This pattern came to an end with the Mughal Empire, where Akbar's chief minister Abu'l-Fazl criticized the excesses of earlier sultans such as Mahmud of Ghazni.

In many cases, the demolished remains, rocks and broken statue pieces of temples destroyed by Delhi sultans were reused to build mosques and other buildings. For example, the Qutb complex in Delhi was built from stones of 27 demolished Hindu and Jain temples by some accounts. Similarly, the Muslim mosque in Khanapur, Maharashtra was built from the looted parts and demolished remains of Hindu temples. Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji destroyed Buddhist and Hindu libraries and their manuscripts at Nalanda and Odantapuri Universities in 1193 AD at the beginning of the Delhi Sultanate.

The first historical record of a campaign of destruction of temples and defacement of faces or heads of Hindu idols lasted from 1193 to 1194 in Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh under the command of Ghuri. Under the Mamluks and Khaljis, the campaign of temple desecration expanded to Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra, and continued through the late 13th century. The campaign extended to

Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu under Malik Kafur and Ulugh Khan in the 14th century, and by the Bahmanis in the 15th century. Orissa temples were destroyed in the 14th century under the Tughlaqs.

Beyond destruction and desecration, the sultans of the Delhi Sultanate in some cases had forbidden reconstruction of damaged Hindu, Jain and Buddhist temples, and they prohibited repairs of old temples or construction of any new temples. In certain cases, the Sultanate would grant a permit for repairs and construction of temples if the patron or religious community paid *jizya* (fee, tax). For example, a proposal by the Chinese to repair Himalayan Buddhist temples destroyed by the Sultanate army was refused, on the grounds that such temple repairs were only allowed if the Chinese agreed to pay *jizya* tax to the treasury of the Sultanate. In his memoirs, Firoz Shah Tughlaq describes how he destroyed temples and built mosques instead and killed those who dared build new temples. Other historical records from *wazirs*, *amirs* and the court historians of various Sultans of the Delhi Sultanate describe the grandeur of idols and temples they witnessed in their campaigns and how these were destroyed and desecrated.

## **Economy**

Many historians argue that the Delhi Sultanate was responsible for making India more multicultural and cosmopolitan. The establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in India has been compared to the expansion of the Mongol Empire, and called "part of a larger trend occurring throughout

much of Eurasia, in which nomadic people migrated from the steppes of Inner Asia and became politically dominant".

According to Angus Maddison, between the years 1000 and 1500, India's GDP, of which the sultanates represented a significant part, grew nearly 80% to \$60.5 billion in 1500. However, these numbers should be viewed in context: according to Maddison's estimates, India's population grew by nearly 50% in the same time period, amounting to a per-capita GDP growth of around 20%. World GDP more than doubled in the same period, and India's per-capita GDP fell behind that of China, with which it was previously at par. India's GDP share of the world declined under the Delhi Sultanate from nearly 30% to 25%, and would continue to decline until the mid-20th century.

In terms of mechanical devices, later Mughal emperor Babur provides a description of the use of the water-wheel in the Delhi Sultanate, which some historians have taken to suggest that the water-wheel was introduced to India under the Delhi Sultanate. However this has been criticized e.g. by Siddiqui, and there is significant evidence that the device existed in India prior to this. Some have also suggested that the spinning wheel was introduced to India from Iran during the Delhi Sultanate, though most scholars believe that it was invented in India in the first millennium. The worm gear roller cotton gin was invented in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries: however, Irfan Habib states that the development likely occurred in Peninsular India, which was not under the rule of the Delhi Sultanate (except for a brief invasion by Tughlaq between 1330 and 1335).

Although India was the first region outside China to use paper and papermaking reached India as early as the 6th to 7th centuries, its use only became widespread in Northern India in the 13th century, and Southern India between the 15th and 16th centuries. However, it is not clear if this change can be attributed to the Delhi Sultanate, as 15th century Chinese traveler Ma Huan remarks that Indian paper was white and made from "bark of a tree", similar to the Chinese method of papermaking (as opposed to the Middle-Eastern method of using rags and waste material), suggesting a direct route from China for the arrival of paper.

## **Society**

### **Demographics**

According to one set of the very uncertain estimates of modern historians, the total Indian population had largely been stagnant at 75 million during the Middle Kingdoms era from 1 AD to 1000 AD. During the Medieval Delhi Sultanate era from 1000 to 1500, India as a whole experienced lasting population growth for the first time in a thousand years, with its population increasing nearly 50% to 110 million by 1500 AD.

### **Culture**

While the Indian subcontinent has had invaders from Central Asia since ancient times, what made the Muslim invasions different is that unlike the preceding invaders who assimilated into the prevalent social system, the successful Muslim conquerors retained their Islamic identity and created new

legal and administrative systems that challenged and usually in many cases superseded the existing systems of social conduct and ethics, even influencing the non-Muslim rivals and common masses to a large extent, though the non-Muslim population was left to their own laws and customs. They also introduced new cultural codes that in some ways were very different from the existing cultural codes. This led to the rise of a new Indian culture which was mixed in nature, different from ancient Indian culture. The overwhelming majority of Muslims in India were Indian natives converted to Islam. This factor also played an important role in the synthesis of cultures.

The Hindustani language (Hindi/Urdu) began to emerge in the Delhi Sultanate period, developed from the Middle Indo-Aryan *apabhramsha* vernaculars of North India. Amir Khusro, who lived in the 13th century CE during the Delhi Sultanate period in North India, used a form of Hindustani, which was the *lingua franca* of the period, in his writings and referred to it as *Hindavi*.

## **Architecture**

The start of the Delhi Sultanate in 1206 under Qutb al-Din Aibak introduced a large Islamic state to India, using Central Asian styles. The types and forms of large buildings required by Muslim elites, with mosques and tombs much the most common, were very different from those previously built in India. The exteriors of both were very often topped by large domes, and made extensive use of arches. Both of these features were hardly used in Hindu temple architecture and other indigenous Indian styles. Both types of building

essentially consist of a single large space under a high dome, and completely avoid the figurative sculpture so important to Hindu temple architecture.

The important Qutb Complex in Delhi was begun under Muhammad of Ghor, by 1199, and continued under Qutb al-Din Aibak and later sultans. The Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, now a ruin, was the first structure. Like other early Islamic buildings it re-used elements such as columns from destroyed Hindu and Jain temples, including one on the same site whose platform was reused. The style was Iranian, but the arches were still corbelled in the traditional Indian way.

Beside it is the extremely tall Qutb Minar, a minaret or victory tower, whose original four stages reach 73 meters (with a final stage added later). Its closest comparator is the 62-metre all-brick Minaret of Jam in Afghanistan, of c. 1190, a decade or so before the probable start of the Delhi tower. The surfaces of both are elaborately decorated with inscriptions and geometric patterns; in Delhi the shaft is fluted with "superb stalactite bracketing under the balconies" at the top of each stage. In general minarets were slow to be used in India, and are often detached from the main mosque where they exist.

The Tomb of Iltutmish was added by 1236; its dome, the squinches again corbelled, is now missing, and the intricate carving has been described as having an "angular harshness", from carvers working in an unfamiliar tradition. Other elements were added to the complex over the next two centuries.

Another very early mosque, begun in the 1190s, is the Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra in Ajmer, Rajasthan, built for the same Delhi

rulers, again with corbelled arches and domes. Here Hindu temple columns (and possibly some new ones) are piled up in threes to achieve extra height. Both mosques had large detached screens with pointed corbelled arches added in front of them, probably under Iltutmish a couple of decades later. In these the central arch is taller, in imitation of an iwan. At Ajmer the smaller screen arches are tentatively cusped, for the first time in India.

By around 1300 true domes and arches with voussoirs were being built; the ruined Tomb of Balban (d. 1287) in Delhi may be the earliest survival. The Alai Darwaza gatehouse at the Qutb complex, from 1311, still shows a cautious approach to the new technology, with very thick walls and a shallow dome, only visible from a certain distance or height. Bold contrasting colours of masonry, with red sandstone and white marble, introduce what was to become a common feature of Indo-Islamic architecture, substituting for the polychrome tiles used in Persia and Central Asia. The pointed arches come together slightly at their base, giving a mild horseshoe arch effect, and their internal edges are not cusped but lined with conventionalized "spearhead" projections, possibly representing lotus buds. Jali, stone openwork screens, are introduced here; they already had been long used in temples.

### **Tughlaq architecture**

The tomb of Shah Rukn-e-Alam (built 1320 to 1324) in Multan, Pakistan is a large octagonal brick-built mausoleum with polychrome glazed decoration that remains much closer to the styles of Iran and Afghanistan. Timber is also used internally. This was the earliest major monument of the Tughlaq dynasty



(1320–1413), built during the unsustainable expansion of its massive territory. It was built for a Sufi saint rather than a sultan, and most of the many Tughlaq tombs are much less exuberant. The tomb of the founder of the dynasty, Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq (d. 1325) is more austere, but impressive; like a Hindu temple, it is topped with a small amalaka and a round finial like a kalasha. Unlike the buildings mentioned previously, it completely lacks carved texts, and sits in a compound with high walls and battlements. Both these tombs have external walls sloping slightly inwards, by 25° in the Delhi tomb, like many fortifications including the ruined Tughlaqabad Fort opposite the tomb, intended as the new capital.

The Tughlaqs had a corps of government architects and builders, and in this and other roles employed many Hindus. They left many buildings, and a standardized dynastic style. The third sultan, Firuz Shah (r. 1351-88) is said to have designed buildings himself, and was the longest ruler and greatest builder of the dynasty. His Firoz Shah Palace Complex (started 1354) at Hisar, Haryana is a ruin, but parts are in fair condition. Some buildings from his reign take forms that had been rare or unknown in Islamic buildings. He was buried in the large Hauz Khas Complex in Delhi, with many other buildings from his period and the later Sultanate, including several small domed pavilions supported only by columns.

By this time Islamic architecture in India had adopted some features of earlier Indian architecture, such as the use of a high plinth, and often mouldings around its edges, as well as columns and brackets and hypostyle halls. After the death of Firoz the Tughlaqs declined, and the following Delhi dynasties

were weak. Most of the monumental buildings constructed were tombs, although the impressive Lodi Gardens in Delhi (adorned with fountains, *charbagh* gardens, ponds, tombs and mosques) were constructed by the late Lodi dynasty. The architecture of other regional Muslim states was often more impressive.

## Chapter 5

# Mamluk Dynasty (Delhi)

- The **Mamluk dynasty** was directed into Northern India by Qutb ud-Din Aibak, a Turkic Mamluk general from Central Asia. The Mamluk dynasty ruled from 1206 to 1290; it was the first of five unrelated dynasties to rule as the Delhi Sultanate till 1526. Aibak's tenure as a Ghurid dynasty administrator lasted from 1192 to 1206, a period during which he led invasions into the Gangetic heartland of India and established control over some of the new areas.

## History

A Mamluk was a soldier of slave origin who had converted to Islam. The phenomenon started in the 9th century and gradually the Mamluks became a powerful military class in various Muslim societies. Mamluks held political and military power most notably in Egypt, but also in the Levant, Iraq, and India.

In 1206, Muhammad of Ghor, Sultan of the Ghurid Empire, was assassinated. Since he had no children, his empire split into minor sultanates led by his former Mamluk generals. Taj-ud-Din Yildoz became the ruler of Ghazni, Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji got Bengal and Nasir-ud-Din Qabacha became the sultan of Multan. Qutb ud-Din Aibak became the sultan of Delhi, and that was the beginning of the Slave dynasty.

Aibak rose to power when a Ghurid superior was assassinated. However, his reign as the Sultan of Delhi was short lived as he died in 1210 and his son Aram Shah rose to the throne, only to be assassinated by Iltutmish in 1211.

The Sultanate under Iltutmish established cordial diplomatic contact with the Abbasid Caliphate between 1228–29 and had managed to keep India unaffected by the invasions of Genghis Khan and his successors. Following the death of Iltutmish in 1236 a series of weak rulers remained in power and a number of the noblemen gained autonomy over the provinces of the Sultanate. Power shifted hands from Rukn ud din Firuz to Razia Sultana until Ghiyas ud din Balban rose to the throne and successfully repelled both external threats to the Sultanate from the Chagatai Khanate invasions and internal threats from the rebellious sultanate nobles. The Khalji dynasty came into being when Jalal ud din Firuz Khalji overthrew the last of the Slave dynasty rulers, Muiz ud din Qaiqabad, the grandson of Balban, and assumed the throne at Delhi.

## **Sultans**

The first Sultan of the Mamluk dynasty was Qutb ud-Din Aibak (قطب الدين ايبك), who had the titular name of *Sultan* (سلطان) and reigned from 1206 to 1210. He temporarily quelled the rebellions of Nasir-ud-Din Qabacha of Multan and Tajuddin Yildoz of Ghazni. Making Lahore his capital, he consolidated his control over North India through an administrative hold over Delhi. He also initiated the construction of Delhi's earliest Muslim monuments, the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque and the

Qutb Minar. In 1210, he died due to injuries received from an accident while playing a game of polo in Lahore; his horse fell and he was impaled on the pommel of his saddle. He was buried near the Anarkali Bazaar in Lahore.

The second Sultan was Aram Shah (آرام شاه), who had the titular name of *Sultan* and reigned from 1210 to 1211. An elite group of forty nobles named *Chihalgani* ("the Forty") conspired against Aram Shah and invited Shams-ud-din Iltutmish, then Governor of Badaun, to replace Aram. Iltutmish defeated Aram in the plain of Jud near Delhi in 1211. It is not quite certain what became of Aram.

The third Sultan was Shams-ud-din Iltutmish (شمس الدين التتمش), who had the titular name of *Nasir Amir-ul-Mu'minin* (ناصر امير المؤمنين) and reigned from 1211 to 1236. He shifted the capital from Lahore to Delhi and trebled the exchequer. He defeated Nasir-ud-Din Qabacha of Multan and Tajuddin Yildoz of Ghazni, who had declared themselves contenders of Delhi. Mongols invaded India in pursuit of Jalal-ud-din Mangabarni who was defeated at the Battle of Indus by Genghis Khan in 1221. After Genghis Khan's death, Iltutmish consolidated his hold on northern India by retaking many of the lost territories. In 1230, he built the Hauz-i-Shamsi reservoir in Mehrauli, and in 1231 he built Sultan Ghari, which was the first Islamic mausoleum in Delhi.

The fourth Sultan was Rukn-ud-din Feroze (رکن الدین فیروز), who had the titular name of *Sultan* and reigned from April 1236 to November 1236. He ruled for only seven months and his mother, Shah Turkan, for all practical purposes was running the government. He abandoned himself to the pursuit of personal pleasure and debauchery, to the considerable outrage

of the citizenry. On 9 November 1236, both Rukn-ud-din Feroze and his mother Shah Turkan were assassinated by the Chihalgani.

The fifth Sultana was Razia al-Din (رضية الدين), who had the titular name of *Jalâlat-ud-dîn Raziya Sultana* (جلالة الدين رضية سلطانة) and reigned from 1236 to 1240. As the first female Muslim ruler in India, she initially managed to impress the nobles and administratively handled the Sultanate well. However, she began associating with the African Jamal-ud-Din Yaqut, provoking racial antagonism amongst the nobles and clergy, who were primarily Central Asian Turkic and already resented the rule of a female monarch. She was defeated by the powerful nobleman Malik Altunia whom she agreed to marry. Her half-brother Muiz-ud-din Bahram, however, usurped the throne with the help of the Chihalgani and defeated the combined forces of the Sultana and her husband. The couple fled and reached Kaithal, where their remaining forces abandoned them. They both fell into the hands of Jats and were robbed and killed on 14 October 1240.

The sixth Sultan was Muiz-ud-din Bahram (معز الدين بهرام), who had the titular name of *Sultan* and reigned from 1240 to 15 May 1242. During his reign, the Chihalgani became disorderly and constantly bickered among each other. It was during this period of unrest that the Mongols invaded the Punjab and sacked Lahore. Muiz-ud-din Bahram was too weak to take any action against them, and the Chihalgani besieged him in the White Fort of Delhi and put him to death in 1242.

The seventh Sultan was Ala-ud-din Masud (علاء الدين مسعود), who had the titular name of *Sultan* and reigned from 1242 to 1246. He

was effectively a puppet for the Chihalgani and did not actually have much power or influence in the government. Instead, he became infamous for his fondness of entertainment and wine. By 1246, the chiefs had become upset with Ala-ud-din Masud's increasing hunger for more power and replaced him with his cousin Nasiruddin Mahmud, who was another grandson of Iltutmish.

The eighth Sultan was Nasiruddin Mahmud (نصير الدين محمود), who had the titular name of *Nasir-ud-din Feroze Shah* (نصير الدين فيروز شاه) and reigned from 1246 to 1266. As a ruler, Mahmud was known to be very religious, spending most of his time in prayer and was renowned for aiding the poor and the distressed. It was his Deputy Sultan, Ghiyath-ud-din Balban, who primarily dealt with state affairs.

The ninth Sultan was Ghiyath-ud-din Balban (غياث الدين بلبن), who had the titular name of *Sultan* and reigned from 1266 to 1287. Balban ruled with an iron fist and broke up the Chihalgani group of noblemen. He tried to establish peace and order in India and built many outposts with garrisons of soldiers in areas where there had been disorder. Balban wanted to make sure everyone was loyal to the crown, so he established an efficient espionage system. He also fought against the Mongols and repelled many invasions by them. He lost his favourite son Prince Muhammad in a battle against the Mongols

The tenth and final Sultan was Muiz-ud-din Muhammad Qaiqabad (معز الدين قيق آباد), who had the titular name of *Sultan* and reigned from 1287 to 1290. Being still young at the time, he ignored all state affairs. After four years, he suffered a paralytic stroke and was later murdered in 1290 by a Khalji

chief. His three-year-old son Kayumars nominally succeeded him, but the Slave dynasty had ended with the rise of the Khaljis.

## **Architecture**

The architectural legacy of the dynasty includes the Qutb Minar by Qutb ud-Din Aibak in Mehrauli, the Mausoleum of Prince Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud, eldest son of Iltumish, known as *Sultan Ghari* near Vasant Kunj, the first Islamic Mausoleum (tomb) built in 1231, and Balban's tomb, in the Mehrauli Archaeological Park.



## Chapter 6

# Anangabhima Deva III

**Anangabhima Deva III** was a powerful Odia ruler and reformist of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty that ruled an early medieval Odisha centered empire in eastern India from the year 1211-1238 A.D. He was successful in maintaining a large extent of territory that stretched from the river Ganga in the north to Godavari in the South. He had successfully defeated the Kalachuris on the western frontiers of the empire and established a matrimonial alliance with them. His brother or brother in law, Rajaraja II became the ruler of the Dynasty in 1198. When Anangabhima III came into power, in 1211, he expelled the Muslims of Bengal from his kingdom. He had a son, Narasingha Deva I, who would later invade Bengal in 1244, and captured the capital city, Gauda. He was a reformist in the social and spiritual structure of the Odia society as the vaishnavite deity Jagannath was declared as the supreme ruler of the empire and the emperor as the deputy under him. The Madala Panji records he claiming himself as Shri Purushottama dedicating everything to lord Jagannath.

## Foundation of Bidanasi Katak or Cuttack City

Ananga Bhima Deva III became the ruler of the ancient land of Kalinga in the year 1211 A.D. At the time of his coronation, his kingdom faced repeated attacks from the Muslim forces of Ghiyasuddin Iwaj Shah, the ruler of Bengal. The Kalachuri

kings had been struggling to take over the territory of Odisha from the times of the Somavanshi rulers and the western frontier of Anangabhima's kingdom was repeatedly violated by them. Anangabhima chose the strategic location on the bifurcation of rivers Mahanadi and Kathajodi for the site of his new capital and moved his capital to Baranasi Katak. In 1230 A.D he moved his headquarters to the new capital. Katak literally means a fortification. The city was named as Bidanasi Katak (new Varanasi fort) and a new fort complex called Barabati was constructed to build up his military force under the guidance of his able Brahman minister and military adviser named as Vishnu.

## **Military Career and Achievements**

Anangabhima Deva III was the most successful achiever of military objectives after a long line of limited rulers in the region. While regaining lost territories, he also managed to defend his kingdom from greater threats of the Bengal Muslim rulers by crossing over into their territory and also expanded his empire in southern India till Srirangam that is situated in the heart land of today's Tamil Nadu state.

### **Victory Over the Kalachuris at Seori Narayana**

Anangabhima Deva III was at the threshold of the continuous conflict with the eventually depleting Ratnapura Kalachuri dynasty which had defeated the Somavamshis and occupied the western tracts of ancient Kalinga kingdom at its height in the past or the complete Tri Kalinga region. The southern Haihaya kings of Tumana in modern Bilaspur district were also to a

certain extent fighting against the Ganga forces. Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva , the ancestor of Anangabhimadeva III was unsuccessful in reclaiming these lost territories despite his numerous military achievements. The Kalachuri king, Pratapmalla continued his attempts to invade the frontiers of the Ganga territory along with his son Paramardi Dev. Anangabhima send a large force under the command of his able Brahman commander, Vishnu. The two forces met face to face at the Seori Narayana village in undivided Sambalpur district on the banks of the river called Bhima near the Vindhya hills and the Kalchuris were defeated for the first time in a major way by the Gangas.

According to the Chateswara Temple Inscription of Anangabhima mentions that Vishnu terrorized the Kalachuri king to an extent when he lost his psychological balance.

- Vindhyadreradhisima-Bhimatatini-kunje....Vishnu-Vishnu-.
- Rasavasaviti-Bhayadvai-Tandisah-Pasyatah....Visvam-
- Visnumayam Yatha Parinatam Tummana Prithivipateh

Which means: *Vishnu, the Brahmin minister and general of Anangabhima Deva III frightened the king of Tummana on the bank of the Bhima river near Vindhya so much so that the latter perceived Vishnu every where through out his kingdom.*

Pratapmalla was taken prisoner and forced to cede the Sambalpur-Sonepur-Bolangir tracts along with parts of what is now Chhattishgarh state to the Ganga kingdom. Later with the advise of his minister Vishnu, Anangabhima established a

diplomatic and matrimonial alliance with the Kalachuris by offering the hand of his daughter Chandrika in marriage to the Kalachuri prince, Parmardi Dev. Once the alliance was secured, the Ganga forces multiplied in strength. This diplomatic decision was made keeping in eye the long term prospects of a major threat from the Muslim rulers of Bengal.

### **Chandrika, the Ganga Princess**

Chandrika, the daughter of Anangabhima III was an expert in music and dance. She was a devout Vaishnavite and later built the Ananta Vasudeva temple at Bhubaneswar with the permission of his brother Narasingha Deva I after he inherited the throne. She was married to the Haihaya prince Parmardi Deva by the wishes of her father for the foundation of a military alliance through a marital relation between the Eastern Gangas and the Kalachuri-Haihaya princedoms of Tumana. She lost her gallant Haihaya husband in the final recorded battle of Narasingha Deva I's invasion of Bengal at Umurdan (Amarda in Mayurbhanj district). Paramardi Deva had led the Eastern Ganga forces with possibly the other conscript soldiers from the independent and Semi independent Hindu kingdoms in Eastern India against the Muslim rulers of Bengal under the command of his Eastern Ganga brother in law.

### **War with the Invading Khilji Malik of Bengal (1223-1225 A.D.)**

After defeating the Kalchuris, Anangabhima faced a major threat from the invading Muslim forces of Khilji Maliks from Bengal. His prime enemy Ghiyasuddin Iwaj Shah, the ruler of

Bengal was a successor of Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji who was a successful military general of Qutb Ud Din Aibak. Ghiyassuddin had built a powerful navy and set out for conquest of neighboring kingdoms like Kamarupa and Odisha. He invaded the northern territories and also sent naval armadas over the river Mahanadi to capture his newly founded capital, destabilize his military strength and occupy lands. During the series of these events the newly built Barabati Fort was successfully used to repulse the enemy attacks from the river. His able minister and military adviser, Vishnu commanded a force that chased the invading Muslims on the land out of northern Odisha. The inscriptions of Chateswar temple (Salepur in Cuttack district) and Ananta Vasudeva temple confirm that the Muslim forces of Bengal were defeated by the able commander Vishnu who was able to pull his bow string until his ears and shot arrows killing many enemy soldiers. Odia forces are noted to have crossed over into Bengal, giving chase to the fleeing Yavanas during the conflict as mentioned in the inscriptions.

Chateswara Temple Inscription Statements Indicating the Role of Vishnu in the Battle Against the Yavanas (Muslims) :

- Karnottam- Sita-Savakasya-Subhata-Nekakina  
Nighnatah
- Kimbruna-Yavanavanindra-Samare Tattasaya-  
Varabratam
- Anantavasudeva Temple Inscription Statements:
- Yadvamse-Vaijayanti-Patamiva-Subhato-  
Anangabhimah Pravavah
- -Pradhvastaratiraja Vraja -Yuvati-Yanodgita  
Gambhirasarah

- Asidasivisire-Radhikataratarasta  
Drugarvorugarobah-Svante
- Svantapasarpata Yavamapi Yavanam Sangare  
Sanjahara.

*Which Means: In Chodaganga Deva's lineage was like a flag the heroic Anangabhima, whose profound strength was celebrated by the damsels of a multitude of hostile kings destroyed by his power, and who was exceedingly proud of his swift horses, the speed of which surpassed that of snakes' foes Garuda. He made an end of the war by defeating the Yavanas with impetuosity after entering into their territory beyond the frontier.*

### **Conflicts in Southern India and Conquests till Kanchi and Srirangam (1230 A.D.)**

In the first stage of this campaign on his southern rival Ganapatideva, Anangabhima advanced until the Krishna river and camped there. The territories were included in the Odisha in the year 1230 A.D. However, in the second stage the Kakatiya king by the name Narasimha II defeated his forces and the territories until East Godavari were lost to the Kakatiyas. Taking advantage of the Kakatiya king Ganapati Deva's invasion on the Chola territory and according to Allalanatha temple inscription, Anangabhima III overran the Kanchipuram and Srirangam towns in south India. His queen Somaladevi Mahadevi is recorded to have made a valuable gift to the temple of Allalanatha. Anangabima became the first Eastern Ganga ruler to place his inscription in the Simhanchalam temple.

Historian T.V. Mahalingam states that Anangabhima Deva III took the advantage of political situation in the Chola kingdom during the rule of Rajaraja III and occupied Kanchipuram. Anangabhimadeva might have been invited by the rebellious vassal of the Chola ruler Kopperunjinga who had imprisoned Rajaraja III at Sandamangalam in the south Arcot district. Vira Narasimha II of the Hoysala dynasty who reinstated Rajaraja III back on the throne has also inscribed that he uprooted a contingent of Kalingan forces from the city of Kanchipuram. This eventful conflicts in the southern regions let the Odishan forces extend their hegemony till the Krishna river in the south.

## **Personality, Constructive Activities and Cultural Contribution**

- Srikumam and Draksarama inscriptions mention that Anangabhima was a devout Vaishnavite and extremely spiritual person. The Allalnath Perumal inscription at Kanchipuram of his wife Somaladevi says he used to follow the fasting ritual of Ekadasibrata of Vaishnavism and was the son of Purrushottama (a name of Vishnu). He assumed the title of Anangabhima-Rauta-Deva (Rauta meaning deputy) and declared himself as the sole deputy of Lord Purushottama or Lord Jagannath. He also assumed the titles of Parama Vaishnava and Parama Mahesvara to legalize his higher spiritual position in the state. It was during his rule that Lord Jagannath of Puri was officially accepted as the national deity.

In the year 1238 A.D. he declared his regnal year or Anka as the regnal year of Lord Purushottama.

He is speculated to have build a new Jagannath temple at Cuttack, his newly founded capital city along with two Shiva temples like Meghesvara at Bhubaneswar. Anangbhima Deva III is also credited for the construction of the Chateswara Shiva temple situated near Salepur in Cuttack district along with the Jagannath temple at Jajpur town that was destroyed by the invading forces of Suleiman Karani in the sixteenth century and was later rebuild by Maratha ruler Raghuji Bhonsle I of Nagpur in the eighteenth century. He had also erected the original Baladevjew temple at Tulasi Khetra in Kendrapada and it was later demolished by the Mughal subedar of Aurangzeb named as Khan-I- Dwina in 1663 to erect a Mosque. The original deities were taken into hiding by the priests and later restored to a new location and in a new temple erected after a century by local Zamindars and rulers with the permission of the Maratha ruler Janoji. The later temple is still existing while the Mosque stands on the original site. During his rule the leaning temple of Huma at Sambalpur was also built which was later renovated or reconstructed by Chauhan kings in seventeenth century. Anangabhima Deva financed and monitored constructions along with serious maintenance activities of the old structures within the Jagannath temple complex at Puri. Some four inscriptions recording details about daily food offerings and land donations to lord Jagannath has been found in the entrance walls of Pataleswara temple inside the complex.

Anangabhima Deva declared himself as Purushottamaputra, Rudraputra and Durgaputra in his Draksarama inscription.



This indicates the state policy of all the three Brhaminical cults came together under a harmonious unified spiritual structure during his rule. He donated to multiple Shaiva shrines across his empire. He completed the construction of Puri Jagannath temple. He introduced the Chattishaniyoga or 36 types of services to the lord Jagannath. Some four recorded inscriptions of the Ganga king has been found inside the Jagannath temple of Puri and in which mentions about huge land grants to the temple and lord Jagannath. He had also introduced the 'Panda' or priest care system at the Puri shrine. The Draksarama Nagari plate inscription also credits him for making many land grants to the Brahmins. His Chatesvara temple inscription states that he undertook numerous public welfare projects for construction of roads, tanks, houses and temples for the people. As per the Madalapanji temple records of Puri Jagannath, the king undertook a land settlement by the assistance of his two revenue ministers Damodar Badapanda and Isana Pattanayak. The total revenue collected during his rule was four crores and forty-three lakhs of tankas. He also ordered repairing of old temples and places of historical significance.

## **Temples built**

- Chateshwar Temple
- Original Baladevjew Temple in Kendrapara (Demolished by Mughals in 1663 and a Masjid erected on its foundation)
- Original Jagannath Temple in Jajpur Town (Damaged by invading Muslim army of Suleiman Karani from Bengal 1568-1569)

- Original Shaivite temple at Huma in Sambalpur (It was rebuilt from its ruins by Chauhan king Baliar Singh who ruled from 1660 to 1690 A.D.)
- Meghesvara Temple
- Jagannath Temple at Cuttack (No more existing)
- Renovations or construction of additional structures at Puri Jagannath temple. Completion of the sanctum happened during this time.

## Chapter 7

# Eastern Ganga Dynasty

The **Eastern Ganga dynasty** also known as Rudhi Gangas or Prachya Gangas were a large medieval era Indian royal dynasty that reigned from Kalinga from as early as the 5th century to the early 15th century. The territory ruled by the dynasty consisted of the whole of the modern-day Indian state of Odisha as well as major parts of West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. The early rulers of the dynasty ruled from Dantapuram; the capital was later moved to Kalinganagara (modern Mukhalingam), and ultimately to Kataka (modern Cuttack). Today, they are most remembered as the builders of the world renowned Puri Jagannath Temple and Konark Sun Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage site at Konark, Odisha.

The rulers of Eastern Ganga dynasty defended their kingdom from the constant attacks of the Muslim rulers. This kingdom prospered through trade and commerce and the wealth was mostly used in the construction of temples. The rule of the dynasty came to an end under the reign of King Bhanudeva IV (1414–34), in the early 15th century. Their currency was called Ganga fanams and was similar to that of the Cholas and Eastern Chalukyas of southern India.

## Origin

The origin of the Later Eastern Gangas is not clearly established. It is erratically summarized that they were an offshoot of the Western Ganga dynasty who were a south

Indian dynasty but there is no evidence of architectural, linguistic and patterns of nomenclature of the kings having similarity between the Ganga kings of Karnataka and that of Odisha. Also, while the bardic traditions of the Western Ganga dynasty claim descent from the Sun through the Ikshavaku dynasty, the Eastern Ganga genealogies ascribe descent from the Moon; the *Chandravamsa* lineage. Unlike the Western Ganga Dynasty who traced their lineage to the Solar Dynasty, the Later Eastern Gangas claimed a lunar descent from Vishnu through Brahma,

Atri and Chandra (moon). The Eastern Ganga king Indravarman III in his Andhavaram copperplate inscription has mentioned that the Gangas are described as the descendants of the Tumbura dynasty. In the Vayu Purana references are made that at the foothills of the Vindhya, there was a Janapada named Tumura, Tumbura. Odia historian Jagabandhu Singh citing references from Padma Purana and Brahmavaibarta Purana has identified Tumbura being ruled by the Mahisya race of Khshetriyas who were maritally either related to the Kaivartta community or were born from marriages between Khshetriyas and Vaishya women.

Five prominent dominions of the Kalingan Prachya Ganga family are identified from five different administrative centers namely - Kalinganagara (Srikakulam), Svetaka Mandala (Ganjam), Giri Kalinga (Simhapur), Ambabadi Mandala (Gunupur, Rayagada) and Vartanni Mandala (Hinjilikatu, Ganjam) . The heartland of the Prachya Gangas had three parts of Kalinga namely, Daksina Kalinga (Pithapura), Madhya Kalinga (Yellamanchili Kalinga or Visakhapatnam) and Uttara Kalinga (districts of Srikakulam, Ganjam, Gajapati and

Rayagada). The earliest known prominent king was Indravarman who is known from his Jiringi copper plate grant. The Godavari grant of Raja Prthivimalla and the Ramatirtham grant of Vishnukundina king Indrbhattaraka refer to a war of four tusked elephants or Chaturdanta Samara in which Indravarman I the son of Mitavarman, a Ganga general of Vakataka king and a local ruler of Dantapura commanded an alliance of small South Kalingan kingdoms against the powerful Vishnukundina king Indrabhattaraka, defeated and killed him. The Vishnukundins returned with a vengeance, defeated the Vakataka King and members of the alliance while Indravarman declared himself as Tri-Kalingadhipati (the lord of the three Kalingas) rising from obscurity and moving his capital northwards away from the attacking Vishnukundins. His son Hastivarman found himself stuck between two Gupta feudal dynasties of Odisha, the Vigrahas of South Toshali and Mudgalas. Joining the onslaught like his father, he commanded major battles against the Vigrahas and won territories in the northern parts of ancient Kalinga and declared himself as Sakala-Kalingadhipati (the ruler of whole Kalinga). The dynasty though remaining to be a strong ruling family in ancient Odisha and North Andhra Pradesh continued to remain as vassal rulers under the central authority of the Bhauma-Kara dynasty which is proven by the fact that a smaller Eastern Ganga king belonging to the clan and named as Jayavarmadeva mentioned himself as the vassal of Sivakara Deva I in his Ganjam grant and by whose permission he gave away the grants.

It was during the rule of Anantavarman Vajrahasta V in the mid eleventh century that the clan started emerging as a major military power challenging the authority of the Somavanshi

Dynasty at their northern frontiers and allying with their arch rivals the Kalchuris. After a series of victories in battle and making land grants to three hundred Brahmin families in his kingdom, Vajrahasta V assumed the titles as Trikalingadhipati (lord of the three Kalingas) and Sakalakalingadhipati (lord of complete Kalinga) challenging the centralized authority of the Somavanshis and laying the foundation to an imperial era for the Eastern Gangas. In the later years of the century, Devendravarman Rajaraja I defeated the Somavanshi king Mahasivagupta Janmenjaya II completely while challenging the Cholas in battle, along with establishing authority in the Vengi region. The Cholas were defeated by Rajaraja I and Chola princess, Rajasundari, was married off to the Eastern Ganga king as a goodwill gesture for settlement of affairs between the Cholas and the Gangas.

The identification of the father of Rajasundari is a matter of great controversy and some scholars like K. A. Nilakanta Sastri identify the king as Virarajendra Chola. After the sudden death of Rajaraja I, his underage sons Chodaganga Deva ascended the throne, losing the many parts of his ancestral kingdom to the Cholas who were now in an advantageous position. However, Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva not only lived a young life of prolonged struggles and setbacks but finally managed to completely remove the Chola presence from the region and finally securing Utkala, Kalinga, Gauda, Radha and Vengi as one kingdom. While many of his inscriptions are found inside the limits of former Vengi kingdom, this large extent of his empire from Bengal to Vengi is clearly stated in his Korni grant inscriptions. In the Sri Kurmam temple grant of Chodaganga, it is clearly stated that he has extended his territory from Bhagirathi Ganga to Gautami Ganga rivers which

literally the region between river Ganga and Godavari. The only front where he faced setbacks is against his western rivals the Kalachuris where he was unsuccessful. His descendant Anangabhim Deva III gradually completed the task of defeating the Kalachuris completely. In his Korni copper plate grant he mentions himself to be the lord of 99,000 war elephants which while counting military strength according to the ancient Gulma system of military divisions, puts his strength to a million men and half a million animals employed to his command. Due to his maternal relation with the Cholas, a Chola uncle of Chodaganga by the name Virachoda had sided by him as a protective guardian against the invading Cholas since his childhood. Chodaganga was married to the daughter of this uncle and also had Tamil officers serving him during his lifelong affairs of war and administration. Chodaganga Deva not only reunited most of ancient Kalinga stretching from the rivers Ganga to Godavari but led the foundation to the imperial hegemony of the Eastern Gangas in the Eastern coast of India. Chodaganga Deva was a strong king and was the son of Rajaraja Devendravarman and grandson of Vajrahasta Anantavarman of the Imperial Gangas of Kalinganagara. His mother was princess Rajasundari of the Chola dynasty.

## **Background**

After the fall of Mahameghavahana dynasty, Kalinga was divided into different kingdoms under feudatory chiefs. Each of these chiefs bore the title Kalingadhipathi (Lord of Kalinga). The beginnings of what became the Eastern Ganga dynasty came about when Indravarman I defeated the Vishnukundin king, Indrabhattaraka and established his rule over the region

with Kalinganagara (or Mukhalingam) as his capital, and Dantapuram as a secondary capital. The Ganga kings assumed various titles viz. *Trikalingadhipathi* or *Sakala Kalingadhipathi* (Lord of three Kalinga or all three Kalingas namely Kalinga proper (South), Utkala (North), and Dakshina Kosala (West)).

Mukhalingam near Srikakulam of Andhra Pradesh bordering Odisha has been identified as Kalinganagara, the capital of the early Eastern Gangas.

After the decline of the early Eastern Gangas reign, the Chalukyas of Vengi took control of the region. The first monarch of the dynasty Vajrahastha Aniyakabhima I (980-1015 A.D), took advantage of the internal strife and revived the power of the Ganga dynasty. It was during their rule that Shaivism took precedence over Buddhism and Jainism. The magnificent Srimukhalingam Temple at Mukhalingam was built during this period.

In the 11th century, the Cholas brought the Ganga Kingdom under their rule with the sudden death of Devendravarman Rajraja I. His son Chodaganga Deva who ascended the throne at the age of five under the protection provide by one of his maternal uncles from the Chola family had to overcome multiple obstacles before securing Kalinga, Vengi, Utkala, Odra and parts of Bengal as one kingdom.

### **Intermarriage**

The Eastern Gangas were known to have intermarried with the Cholas, Chalukyas. The early state of the dynasty may have started from the early 5th century.



## **Anantavarman Chodaganga**

The dynasty, towards the end of eleventh century came to be known as Chodaganga dynasty after its founder Anantavarman Chodaganga. He was the son of Rajaraja Deva, the ruler of Kalinga kingdom centered around the region of Southern Odisha and northern Andhra coast, while his mother was the Chola princess, Rajasundari, daughter of the Chola emperor Virarajendra Chola.

He is believed to have ruled from the Ganges River in the north to the Godavari River in the south, thus laying the foundation of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty. Also during his rule, the great Jagannath Temple at Puri was built. He assumed the title of Trikingadhipathi (ruler of the three Kalingas which comprise Kalinga proper, Utkala north and Koshala west) in 1076 CE, resulting in him being the first to rule all three divisions of Kalinga.

Anantavarman was a religious person as well as a patron of art and literature. He is credited for having built the famous Jagannath Temple of Puri in Odisha. King Anantavarman Chodagangadeva was succeeded by a long line of illustrious rulers such as Narasingha Deva I (1238–1264).

## **Intrudes**

Rajaraja III ascended the throne in 1198 and did nothing to resist the Muslims of Bengal, who invaded Orissa in 1206. Rajaraja's son Anangabhima III, however, repulsed the Muslims and built the temple of Megheshvara at Bhuvaneshvara. Narasimhadeva I, the son of Anangabhima, invaded southern

Bengal in 1243, defeated its Muslim ruler, captured the capital (Gauda), and built the Sun Temple at Konark to commemorate his victory. Narasimhadeva I was also the first king to use the title of **Gajapati** or *Lord of war elephants* or *King with an army of elephants* among the Odishan kings in the 1246 CE inscription at the Kapilash Temple. With the death of Narasimha in 1264, the Eastern Gangas began to decline; the sultan of Delhi, Firuz Shah Tughlaq, invaded Odisha in between 1353 and 1358, and levied tribute on the Ganga king. The Musunuri Nayaks defeated the Odishan powers in 1356. Narasimha IV, the last known king of the Eastern Ganga dynasty, ruled until 1425. The "mad king," Bhanudeva IV, who succeeded him, left no inscriptions; his minister Kapilendra usurped the throne and founded the Suryavamsha dynasty in 1434–35.

## **List of Rulers**

Indravarman I is earliest known Independent king of the dynasty. He is known from the *Jirjingi Copper Plate Grant*.

### **Kalinga Rulers (c. 505 – 1038 CE)**

- Mittavarman (c. 505–520)

*(Eastern Ganga king, feudal under Vakataka rule)*

- Indravarman I (c. 520–537)

*(Real founder of dynasty)*

- Samantavarman (c. 537–562)

- Hastivarman (c. 562–578)
- Indravarman II (c. 578–589)
- Danarnava (c. 589–652)
- Indravarman III (c. 652–682)
- Gunarnava (c. 682–730)
- Devendravarman I (c. 730–780)
- Anantavarman III (c. 780–812)
- Rajendravarman II (c. 812–840)
- Devendravarman V (c. 840–895)
- Gunamaharnava I (c. 895–910)
- Vajrahasta II (or Anangabhimadeva I) (c. 910–939)
- Gundama - (c. 939–942)
- Kamarnava I (c. 942–977)
- Vinayaditya (c. 977–980)
- Vajrahasta IV (c. 980–1015)
- Kamarnava II (c. 1015–6 months after)
- Gundama II (c. 1015–1038)

### **Trikalinga Rulers (c. 1038 – 1434 CE)**

- Vajrahasta V (c. 1038–1070)
- Rajaraja Deva I (c. 1070–1077)
- Anantavarman Chodaganga (c. 1077–1147)
- Jatesvaradeva (c. 1147–1156)
- Raghava Deva (c. 1156–1170)
- Rajaraja Deva II (c. 1170–1190)
- Anangabhima Deva II (c. 1190–1198)
- Rajraja Deva III (c. 1198–1211)
- Anangabhima Deva III (c. 1211–1238)
- Narasimha Deva I (1238–1264)
- Bhanu Deva I (1264–1278)
- Narasimha Deva II (1279–1306)

- Bhanu Deva II (1306–1328)
- Narasimha Deva III (1328–1352)
- Bhanu Deva III (1352–1378)
- Narasimha Deva IV (1378–1414)
- Bhanu Deva IV (1414–1434)

*(Last ruler of dynasty)*

## **Regnal year system (Anka year)**

The Anka year (Odia: ଅଙ୍କାଅଁକା) system is a unique regnal year system instituted by the kings of the Eastern Ganga dynasty for dating their reigns. It has a number of unique features that calculates the regnal year different from that actual duration of the year elapsed during the reign. The system still survives today and is used in the Odia calendar (panjis) and the regnal year is marked by the titular reign of the current Gajapati Maharaja of the House of Gajapati at Puri.

## **Coinage**

The Eastern Ganga coinage consisted of gold fanams. The obverse typically depicts a couchant bull along with other symbols. The reverse features a symbol which represents the letter *sa* (for samvat, which means year) flanked by elephant goads or an elephant goad with a battle axe, along with a number below, which depicts the regnal year(anka year) of the reigning monarch. Some coins also carry the legend *śrīrāma* on the reverse above the letter *sa*.

An interesting aspect of the Eastern Ganga coin dates is that these coins may be the earliest Hindu coins using decimal numbers for dating. Earlier dated coins, such as those of the Western Satraps, the Guptas etc., used the old Brahmic numbering system with separate symbols representing each of the single digits, separate symbols representing two-digit multiples of ten, such as 20, 30, 40, and so on, and further separate symbols representing three-digit numbers such as 100, 200, etc. Thus a number like 123 was written as 100-20-3. But the Eastern Ganga coins were written using the symbols for the single digits, with the position of the number indicating the value such as tens or hundreds, thus effectively using the Zero-place holder system.

## **Legacy**

By successfully defeating the invasion attempts of Muslim invaders, the Eastern Ganga Empire is attributed to have served as the conservatory of the Hindu religion, art and culture at a time when India's indigenous civilization was endangered through the large scale massacre of Hindus, plundering of cities, desecration and destruction of temples and forcible conversions of the Hindu populace. The Ganga Empire also harbored the fleeing culture and art from other parts of India.

The Eastern Gangas were great patrons of religion and the arts, and the temples of the Ganga period rank among the masterpieces of Kalinga and Hindu architecture.

## **Puri branch (House of Gajapati)**

The title of Gajapati was held by the rulers of Bhoi dynasty who ruled as the chiefs of the Khurda kingdom, following the 1804 rebellion when they were exiled to Puri.

In 1859, the childless king of Puri Birakesari Deva II adopted a prince from the Badakhemundi branch of Eastern Ganga dynasty, who upon accession to the throne as Gajapati Dibyasingha Deva III established the Puri branch of the Eastern Gangas.

On 2 October 1918, his son Mukundeva Deva III adopted Lal Mohini Mohan Deb, the third son of Raja Satchidananda Tribhuban Deb of the Bamra State. Lal Mohini Mohan Deb took the regnal name of Gajapati Ramachandra Deb IV upon accession to the throne of Puri and Gajapati on 14 February 1926 and established the current House of Gajapati with the Puri branch as the ruling dynasty. The current titular Gajapati and King of Puri is held by his grandson, Dibyasingha Deb.

- Dibyasingha Deva III (1859-1882) (adopted from Badakhemundi branch)
- Mukundeva Deva III (1882-1926)
- Ramchandra Deva IV (14 February 1926 - 15 November 1956) (adopted from Bamra branch)
- Birakisore Deva III (15 November 1956 - 8 June 1970)
- Dibyasingha Deva IV (8 June 1970 - current, Current King of Puri and Titular Gajapati)

## **Paralakhemundi branch**

A branch of the Eastern Ganga dynasty survived as the kings of the Paralakhemundi state, currently part of the Gajapati district, Odisha. It was established in 14th century when Narashingha Deba, a son of the Eastern Ganga monarch Bhanudeva II established the Khemudi kingdom. Scions of this line include,

- Jagannatha Gajapati Narayana Deo II (Reign: 1751 CE - 1771 CE)- who ascended to the throne at a time when Odisha was torn apart due conflicts between external powers like the Mughals, Marathas, French and British for control of the territory in 18th century.
- Krushna Chandra Gajapati (Reign as Maharaja of Paralakhemundi: 26 April 1913 - 25 May 1974)- who was a key personality and regarded as the architect of an Independent united Odisha State and went on to become the first Prime Minister of Orissa province formed in 1936. Prime Minister in office from 1 April 1937 to 19 July 1937 and 2nd time from 29 November 1941 to 29 June 1944. The present-day Gajapati District of Odisha which was earlier a part of the historic Ganjam district was named after him.
- Gopinath Gajapati (Titular Maharaja: 25 May 1974 - 10 January 2020)- served as the member of the 9th and 10th Lok Sabha of India and represented the Berhampur constituency of Odisha.
- Kalyani Gajapati (Titular Maharani since 10 January 2020)- current head of the dynasty.

## **Badakhemundi and Sanakhemundi branch**

This line descends from the Paralakhemundi Ganga branch. In 16th century, the Raja of Parlakhemundi, Subarnalinga Bhanu Deba granted parts of the Khimedi areas to his son Ananga Kesari Ramachandra Deba, whose descendants in turn divided the zamindari into two branches- Pedda Khimedi (Badakhemundi) and Chinna Khimedi (Sanakhemundi).

## **Hindol branch**

The Hindol princely state was established in 1554 by two brothers, Chandradeva Jenamani and Udhavadeva Jenamani belonging to the family of the Pedda Khimedi (Bodo Khemudi) Raja of Ganjam.

The kingdom acceded to India and merged into the state of Odisha following independence in 1947.

## **Bamanda branch**

The Bamra kingdom was established by Saraju Gangadeb who was the son of the local Eastern Ganga administrator of Patna region Hattahamir Deb, who was the son of Eastern Ganga ruler Bhanudeva II. Hattahamir Deb was overthrown in 1360 CE by Ramai Deva of the Chauhan dynasty who led the foundation of Patna state, while the tribal chieftains installed Saraju Gangadeb as the ruler of Bamanda region. This laid the foundation of the Bamanda branch of the Eastern Ganga dynasty. The kingdom acceded to India and merged into the state of Odisha following independence in 1947.



## **Chikiti branch**

This branch were the descendants of the ancient branch of Svetaka mandala of the Early Gangas which became the Chikiti zamindari. Historians conclude that the rulers of Chikiti were from the line of Ganga ruler Hastivarman.

## Chapter 8

# Iwaz Khalji

- **Ghiyāth ad-Dīn ‘ Iwaz Khalji** known in his second term with his birth name **Husām ad-Dīn ‘ Iwaz Khalji** was a governor of Bengal under the Delhi Sultanate in 1208-1210 and again in 1212–1227.

## History

During the infighting of the Khalji Maliks he assumed power in 1208 and ruled for two years until being dethroned by Ali Mardan Khalji in 1210. But after the death of Ali Mardan Khalji he once again took power in 1212 and styled himself as *Ghiyas-ud-din Iwaz Shah*.

Ghiyas-ud-din Iwaz Khalji ruled for 15 long years and established peace in Bengal. He transferred the capital from Devkot to Gauṛa. He prepared a powerful navy for Bengal. Ghiyas-ud-din Iwaz Khalji carried out invasions into neighboring regions and made Vanga (Eastern Bengal), Tirhut (Northern Bihar) and Utkala (Northern Orissa) his tributary states.

Ghiyas-ud-din Iwaz Khalji's conquest of Bihar was considered as a threat to the Mamluk Sultanate (Delhi) and the Sultan of Delhi Iltutmish decided to reduce him. In 1224 Iltutmish invaded Bengal. The two armies confronted in Teliagarh of Bihar. Ghiyas-ud-din Iwaz Khalji's navy and infantry were defeated by the Delhi army. He gave 8,000,000 *taka* and 38 war elephants to Iltutmish and was compelled to strike coins

at the name of Iltutmish. But with the withdrawal of Iltutmish, Ghiyas-ud-din Iwaz Khalji once again declared independence and invaded eastern Bengal to crush a rebellion. Iltutmish once again invaded Bengal in 1226 and defeated him. Ghiyas-ud-din Iwaz Khalji and his courtiers were killed in the battle and Bengal became a province of the Mamluk Sultanate (Delhi).

## **Details**

Iwaz Khalji (H 609-624/1212-1227 AD) sultan of the kingdom of lakhnauti (gaur) from 609-624 AH corresponding to 1212 to 1227AD. Son of Hussain and a humble native of Garamsir in northern Afghanistan, his original name was Husamuddin Iwaz Khalji. It is said that in his early life he was an ass-driver carrying loads to distant places. During one such travels he pleased some saints with food and drink and they blessed him and bade him to go to Hindustan.

On the way Iwaz met bakhtiyar khalji and they reached India in 1195 AD. He took a leading part in the sack of the Odandapura Vihara as the deputy of Bakhtiyar. His exploits in Bihar drew the attention of Bakhtiyar who, after the conquest of Lakhnauti granted Iwaz the jagir of Kangori, which lay southeast of devkot (Deokot or Devikot).

Bakhtiyar's death was followed by an internal feud among his lieutenants. At this critical juncture Qaimaz Rumi, governor of Oudh invaded Bengal under the order of Sultan Qutbuddin Aibak. Iwaz, a practical man of politics, welcomed the imperial army. Rumi, after successfully settling the affairs of Bengal installed him as a vassal of Delhi and departed for Oudh. Iwaz retained this position till ali mardan khalji's reappearance in

Bengal in 1210 as the viceroy of the Delhi Sultanate. On Ali Mardan's arrival, Iwaz retired to his post making over the charge of the province to Ali Mardan. His policy of blood and iron, however, soon made Ali Mardan unpopular. Taking advantage of this situation Iwaz organised the discontented Khalji nobles, killed Ali Mardan and ascended the throne of Bengal with the title of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaz Khalji in 1212 AD.

Soon Iwaz Khalji consolidated his authority at Lakhnauti. He recalled the Khalji nobles exiled by Ali Mardan, redressed their sufferings and succeeded in winning over the Turkish soldiers to his side. One of his earliest steps was retransferring of the capital from Devkot to Lakhnauti where he built entirely a new city. By the west of this city a river then flowed. For the sake of defence Iwaz Khalji enclosed the other three sides of the capital by a high earthen rampart. Besides, with the same purpose, he built a fort-town at Basankot adjacent to the capital city. Iwaz was the first to realise the importance of a navy for a riverine country like Bengal and built a flotilla of war-boats to face any aggression. For defence as well as for administrative purposes, he connected the capital city with the outlying towns of Devkot and Lakhnur by an embankment with ferries on the Ganges and other rivers. In order to protect his kingdom from the annual floods he constructed a series of dykes with arched bridges.

After establishing peace in Lakhnauti, Iwaz Khalji turned his attention towards the expansion of his kingdom towards the south and the east. Minhaj-i-siraj says that he conquered and annexed Lakhnur to his Kingdom and captured many elephants, much wealth and treasures came to his hand and he

posted his own Amirs there. It appears that the neighbouring states of Jaj Nagar, Bang, Kamrup and Tirhut all sent tributes to Ghiyasuddin Iwaz Khalji.

Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaz Khalji issued coins and read the Khutbah in his own name. In order to stabilise his political position against Sultan Iltutmish he tried to show his connection with the Ghurid ruling family of Ghazna. Besides, he also invoked the name of the Khalifah of Baghdad on his coins. The main objective of invoking the name of the Khalifah was to enhance his position in the eyes of the local people and to place himself equal to the sultan of Delhi. Equally important were his measures for the promotion of Islam in the country. On the coins he described himself as the 'Helper of the Commander of the faithful'. He also extended patronage to men of learning and built a number of mosques. He gave pensions to good men among the ulama, the mashaikh and the sayyads.

The sultans of Delhi always cast their suspicious eyes towards Bengal. Hence, when Iwaz started functioning as an independent ruler, Iltutmish got annoyed. No sooner had he freed himself from his pre-occupations with the internal troubles and Mongol invasions than Iltutmish marched with a large army to bring Bihar and Bengal under his control. He took possession of Bihar without opposition in 1225. Iwaz Khalji rose to the occasion and moved out from his capital with his army and fleet to prevent the imperial army from crossing the Ganges. Perhaps he gave resistance to the imperial army at the Teliagarhi pass of the Rajmahal hills. According to Minhaj a treaty was concluded between the two sides and Iwaz had to pay an indemnity of eighty lakh tankas and thirty-eight elephants. Iwaz acknowledged the authority of the Delhi sultan

and undertook to read the Khutbah and issue coins in his name. The Delhi sultan, on the other hand, allowed Iwaz Khalji to retain the government of Lakhnauti.

Leaving Alauddin Khan in charge of Bihar Iltutmish returned to Delhi. But hardly had he turned his back when Iwaz expelled Alauddin Khan from Bihar and made further aggressions. Iwaz Khalji rightly realised that Iltutmish would certainly come back to attack Bengal again. In the meantime, there arose a chaotic condition in Oudh due to the serious upsurge of the Hindus. Iltutmish sent his eldest son Nasiruddin Mahmood to quell down the rebellion. Supposing that it would take time for the prince to attack Bengal due to his preoccupations in Oudh, Iwaz marched towards eastern Bengal in 1227 AD leaving his capital unprotected. Nasiruddin, however, made a sudden dash for Bengal from Oudh. Iwaz Khalji hurriedly returned and fought a pitched battle with the Delhi forces near Lakhnauti but was defeated. Thus came to an end the significant and constructive regime of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaz Khalji who had contributed to the consolidation of Muslim rule in Bengal in its early phase.

## Chapter 9

# Genghis Khan Invades Punjab

## Genghis Khan

**Genghis Khan** (c. 1158 – August 18, 1227), born **Temüjin**, was the founder and first Great Khan (Emperor) of the Mongol Empire, which became the largest contiguous empire in history after his death. He came to power by uniting many of the nomadic tribes of Northeast Asia. After founding the Empire and being proclaimed *Genghis Khan* (an honorary title possibly derived from the Turkic "*tengiz*" — sea, meaning "the oceanic, universal ruler"), he launched the Mongol invasions that conquered most of Eurasia, reaching as far west as Poland in Europe and the Levant in the Middle East. Campaigns initiated in his lifetime include those against the Qara Khitai, Khwarezmia, and the Western Xia and Jin dynasties, and raids into Medieval Georgia, the Kievan Rus', and Volga Bulgaria.

Contemporary and modern sources describe Genghis Khan's conquests as wholesale destruction on an unprecedented scale, causing great demographic changes and a drastic decline of population as a result of mass exterminations and famine. A conservative estimate amounts to about four million civilians (whereas other figures range from forty to sixty million), who lost their lives as a consequence of Genghis Khan's military campaigns. In contrast, buddhist Uyghurs of the Kingdom of Qocho, who willingly left the Qara Khitai empire to become Mongol vassals, viewed him as a liberator. Genghis Khan was also portrayed positively by early Renaissance sources due to

the incredible spread of culture, science and technological ideas by the Mongol Empire. By the end of his life, the Mongol Empire occupied a substantial portion of Central Asia and China. Due to his exceptional military successes, Genghis Khan is often considered to be one of the greatest conquerors of all time.

Before Genghis Khan died, he assigned Ögedei Khan as his successor. Later his grandsons split his empire into khanates. Genghis Khan died in 1227 after defeating the Western Xia. By his request, his body was buried in an unknown location somewhere in Mongolia. His descendants extended the Mongol Empire across most of Eurasia by conquering or creating vassal states in all of modern-day China, Korea, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and substantial portions of Eastern Europe and Southwest Asia. Many of these invasions repeated the earlier large-scale slaughters of local populations. As a result, Genghis Khan and his empire have a fearsome reputation in local histories.

Beyond his military accomplishments, Genghis Khan also advanced the Mongol Empire in other ways. He decreed the adoption of the Uyghur script as the Mongol Empire's writing system. He also practised meritocracy and encouraged religious tolerance in the Mongol Empire, unifying the nomadic tribes of Northeast Asia. Present-day Mongolians regard him as the founding father of Mongolia. He is also credited with bringing the Silk Road under one cohesive political environment. This brought relatively easy communication and trade between Northeast Asia, Muslim Southwest Asia, and Christian Europe, expanding the cultural horizons of all three areas.



## Early life

### Lineage

Genghis Khan was related on his father's side to Khabul Khan, Ambaghai, and Hotula Khan, who had headed the Khamag Mongol confederation and were descendants of Bodonchar Munkhag (c. 900). When the Jurchen Jin dynasty switched support from the Mongols to the Tatars in 1161, they destroyed Khabul Khan.

Genghis Khan's father, Yesügei (leader of the Kiyat-Borjigin clan and nephew to Ambaghai and Hotula Khan), emerged as the head of the ruling Mongol clan. This position was contested by the rival Tayichi'ud clan, who descended directly from Ambaghai. When the Tatars grew too powerful after 1161, the Jin switched their support from the Tatars to the Keraites.

### Birth

Little is known about Genghis Khan's early life, due to the lack of contemporary written records. The few sources that give insight into this period often contradict.

Temüjin means "blacksmith". According to Rashid al-Din Hamadani, *Chinos* constituted that branch of the Mongols which existed from Ergenekon through melting the iron mountain side. There existed a tradition which viewed Genghis Khan as a blacksmith. Genghis's given name was Temüjin was equated with Turco-Mongol *temürči(n)*, "blacksmith". Paul Pelliot saw that the tradition according to which Genghis was a

blacksmith was unfounded though well established by the middle of the 13th century.

Genghis Khan was probably born in 1162 in Delüün Boldog, near the mountain Burkhan Khaldun and the rivers Onon and Kherlen in modern-day northern Mongolia, close to the current capital Ulaanbaatar.

*The Secret History of the Mongols* reports that Temüjin was born grasping a blood clot in his fist, a traditional sign that he was destined to become a great leader. He was the first son of Hoelun, second wife of his father Yesügei, who was a Kiyad chief prominent in the Khamag Mongol confederation and an ally of Toghrul of the Keraite tribe.

According to the *Secret History*, Temüjin was named after the Tatar chief Temüjin-üge whom his father had just captured.

Yesukhei's clan was Borjigin (Боржигин), and Hoelun was from the Olkhunut sub-lineage of the Khongirad tribe. Like other tribes, they were nomads. Temüjin's noble background made it easier for him to solicit help from and eventually consolidate the other Mongol tribes.

### **Early life and family**

Temüjin had three brothers Hasar, Hachiun, and Temüge, one sister Temülen, and two half-brothers Begter and Belgutei. Like many of the nomads of Mongolia, Temüjin's early life was difficult. His father arranged a marriage for him and delivered him at age nine to the family of his future wife Börte of the tribe Khongirad. Temüjin was to live there serving the head of the household Dai Setsen until the marriageable age of 12.

While heading home, his father ran into the neighboring Tatars, who had long been Mongol enemies, and they offered him food that poisoned him. Upon learning this, Temüjin returned home to claim his father's position as chief. But the tribe refused this and abandoned the family, leaving it without protection.

For the next several years, the family lived in poverty, surviving mostly on wild fruits, ox carcasses, marmots, and other small game killed by Temüjin and his brothers. Temüjin's older half-brother Begter began to exercise power as the eldest male in the family and would eventually have the right to claim Hoelun (who was not his own mother) as a wife. Temüjin's resentment erupted during one hunting excursion when Temüjin and his brother Khasar killed Begter.

In a raid around 1177, Temüjin was captured by his father's former allies, the Tayichi'ud, and enslaved, reportedly with a cangue (a sort of portable stocks). With the help of a sympathetic guard, he escaped from the ger (yurt) at night by hiding in a river crevice. The escape earned Temüjin a reputation. Soon, Jelme and Bo'orchu joined forces with him. They and the guard's son Chilaun eventually became generals of Genghis Khan.

At this time, none of the tribal confederations of Mongolia were united politically, and arranged marriages were often used to solidify temporary alliances. Temüjin grew up observing the tough political climate, which included tribal warfare, thievery, raids, corruption, and revenge between confederations, compounded by interference from abroad, such as from China to the south. Temüjin's mother Hoelun taught him many

lessons, especially the need for strong alliances to ensure stability in Mongolia.

## **Wives, concubines, and children**

As was common for powerful Mongol men, Genghis Khan had many wives and concubines. He frequently acquired wives and concubines from empires and societies that he had conquered, these women were often princesses or queens that were taken captive or gifted to him. Genghis Khan gave several of his high-status wives their own *ordos* or camps to live in and manage. Each camp also contained junior wives, concubines, and even children. It was the job of the Kheshig (Mongol imperial guard) to protect the yurts of Genghis Khan's wives. The guards had to pay particular attention to the individual yurt and camp in which Genghis Khan slept, which could change every night as he visited different wives. When Genghis Khan set out on his military conquests, he usually took one wife with him and left the rest of his wives (and concubines) to manage the empire in his absence.

### **Börte**

The marriage between Börte and Genghis Khan (then known as Temüjin) was arranged by her father and Yesügei, Temüjin's father, when she was 10 and he was 9 years old. Temüjin stayed with her and her family until he was called back to take care of his mother and younger siblings, due to the poisoning of Yesügei by Tatar nomads. In 1178, about 7 years later, Temüjin traveled downstream along the Kelüren River to find Börte. When Börte's father saw that Temüjin had returned to

marry Börte, he had the pair "united as man and wife". With the permission of her father, Temüjin took Börte and her mother to live in his family yurt. Börte's dowry was a fine black sable jacket. Soon after the marriage between them took place, the Three Merkits attacked their family camp at dawn and kidnapped Börte. She was given to one of their warriors as a spoil of war. Temüjin was deeply distressed by the abduction of his wife and remarked that his "bed was made empty" and his "breast was torn apart". Temüjin rescued her several months later with the aid of his allies Wang Khan and Jamukha. Many scholars describe this event as one of the key crossroads in Temüjin's life, which moved him along the path towards becoming a conqueror.

“As the pillaging and plundering went on, Temüjin moved among the people that were hurriedly escaping, calling, ‘Börte, Börte!’ And so he came upon her, for Lady Börte was among those fleeing people. She heard the voice of Temüjin and, recognizing it, she got off the cart and came running towards him. Although it was still night, Lady Börte and Qo’aqčın both recognized Temüjin’s reins and tether and grabbed them. It was moonlight; he looked at them, recognized Lady Börte, and they fell into each other’s arms.” -*The Secret History of the Mongols*

Börte was held captive for eight months, and gave birth to Jochi soon after she was rescued. This left doubt as to who the father of the child was, because her captor took her as a "wife" and could have possibly impregnated her. Despite this, Temüjin let Jochi remain in the family and claimed him as his own son. Börte had three more sons, Chagatai (1183–1242), Ögedei (1186–1241), and Tolui (1191–1232). Temüjin had many

other children with other wives, but they were excluded from the succession, only Börte's sons could be considered to be his heirs. Börte was also the mother to several daughters, Kua Ujin Bekhi, Alakhai Bekhi, Alaltun, Checheikhen, Tümelün, and Tolai. However, the poor survival of Mongol records means it is unclear whether she gave birth to all of them.

## **Yesugen**

During his military campaign against the Tatars, Temüjin fell in love with Yesugen and took her in as a wife. She was the daughter of a Tatar leader named Yeke Cheren that Temüjin's army had killed during battle. After the military campaign against the Tatars was over, Yesugen, one of the survivors went to Temüjin, who slept with her. According to the Secret History of the Mongols, while they were having sex Yesugen asked Temüjin to treat her well and to not discard her. When Temüjin seemed to agree with this, Yesugen recommended that he also marry her sister Yesui.

Being loved by him, Yisügen Qatun said, 'If it pleases the Qa'an, he will take care of me, regarding me as a human being and a person worth keeping. But my elder sister, who is called Yisüi, is superior to me: she is indeed fit for a ruler.'

- —□ *The Secret History of The Mongols*

Both the Tatar sisters, Yesugen and Yesui, became a part of Temüjin's principal wives and were given their own camps to manage. Temüjin also took a third woman from the Tatars, an unknown concubine.

## **Yesui**

At the recommendation of her sister Yesugen, Temüjin had his men track down and kidnap Yesui. When she was brought to Temüjin, he found her every bit as pleasing as promised and so he married her. The other wives, mothers, sisters and daughters of the Tatars had been parceled out and given to Mongol men. The Tatar sisters, Yesugen and Yesui, were two of Genghis Khan's most influential wives. Genghis Khan took Yesui with him when he set out on his final expedition against the Tangut empire.

## **Khulan**

Khulan entered Mongol history when her father, the Merkit leader Dayir Usan, surrendered to Temüjin in the winter of 1203–04 and gave her to him. But at least according to the Secret History of the Mongols, Khulan and her father were detained by Naya'a, one of Temüjin's officers, who was apparently trying to protect them from Mongol soldiers who were nearby.

After they arrived three days later than expected, Temüjin suspected that Naya'a was motivated by his carnal feelings towards Khulan to help her and her father. While Temüjin was interrogating Naya'a, Khulan spoke up in his defense and invited Temüjin to have sex with her and inspect her virginity personally, which pleased him.

In the end Temüjin accepted Dayir Usan's surrender and Khulan as his new wife. However, Dayir Usan later retracted his surrender but he and his subjects were eventually

subdued, his possessions plundered, and he himself killed. Temüjin continued to carry out military campaigns against the Merkits until their final dispersal in 1218. Khulan was able to achieve meaningful status as one of Temüjin's wives and managed one of the large wifely camps, in which other wives, concubines, children and animals lived. She gave birth to a son named Gelejian, who went on to participate with Börte's sons in their father's military campaigns.

### **Möge Khatun**

Möge Khatun was a concubine of Genghis Khan and she later became a wife of his son Ögedei Khan. The Persian historian Ata-Malik Juvayni records that Möge Khatun "was given to Chinggis Khan by a chief of the Bakrin tribe, and he loved her very much." Ögedei favored her as well and she accompanied him on his hunting expeditions. She is not recorded as having any children.

### **Juerbiesu**

Juerbiesu was an empress of Qara Khitai, Mongol Empire, and Naiman. She was a renowned beauty on the plains. She was originally a favored concubine of Inanch Bilge khan and after his death, she became the consort of his son Tayang Khan. Since Tayang Khan was a useless ruler, Juerbiesu was in control of almost all power in Naiman politics.

She had a daughter named Princess Hunhu (渾忽公主) with Yelü Zhilugu, the ruler of Liao. After Genghis Khan destroyed the Naiman tribe and Tayang Khan was killed, Juerbiesu made several offensive remarks regarding Mongols, describing their



clothes as dirty and smelly. Yet, she abruptly rescinded her claims and visited Genghis Khan's tent alone. He questioned her about the remarks but was immediately attracted to her beauty. After spending the night with him, Juerbiesu promised to serve him well and he took her as one of his empresses. Her status was only inferior to Khulan and Borte.

### **Ibaqa Beki**

Ibaqa was the eldest daughter of the Kerait leader Jakha Gambhu, who allied with Genghis Khan to defeat the Naimans in 1204. As part of the alliance, Ibaqa was given to Genghis Khan as a wife. She was the sister of Begtütmiş, who married Genghis Khan's son Jochi, and Sorghaghtani Beki, who married Genghis Khan's son Tolui. After about two years of childless marriage, Genghis Khan abruptly divorced Ibaqa and gave her to the general Jürchedei, a member of the Uru'ut clan and who had killed Jakha Gambhu after the latter turned against Genghis Khan. The exact reason for this remarriage is unknown:

According to *The Secret History of the Mongols*, Genghis Khan gave Ibaqa to Jürchedei as a reward for his service in wounding Nilga Senggum in 1203 and, later, in killing Jakha Gambhu. Conversely, Rashid al-Din in *Jami' al-tawarikh* claims that Genghis Khan divorced Ibaqa due to a nightmare in which God commanded him to give her away immediately, and Jürchedei happened to be guarding the tent. Regardless of the rationale, Genghis Khan allowed Ibaqa to keep her title as Khatun even in her remarriage, and asked that she would leave him a token of her dowry by which he could remember her. The sources also agree that Ibaqa was quite wealthy.

## **Uniting the Mongol confederations**

In the early 12th century, the Central Asian plateau north of China was divided into several prominent tribal confederations, including Naimans, Merkits, Tatars, Khamag Mongols, and Keraites, that were often unfriendly towards each other, as evidenced by random raids, revenge attacks, and plundering.

### **Early attempts at power**

Temüjin began his ascent to power by offering himself as an ally (or, according to other sources, a vassal) to his father's *anda* (sworn brother or blood brother) Toghrul, who was Khan of the Keraites, and is better known by the Chinese title "Wang Khan", which the Jurchen Jin dynasty granted him in 1197. This relationship was first reinforced when Börte was captured by the Merkits. Temüjin turned to Toghrul for support, and Toghrul offered 20,000 of his Keraite warriors and suggested that Temüjin involve his childhood friend Jamukha, who had himself become Khan of his own tribe, the Jadaran.

Although the campaign rescued Börte and utterly defeated the Merkits, it also paved the way for the split between Temüjin and Jamukha. Before this, they were blood brothers (*anda*) vowing to remain eternally faithful.

### **Rift with Jamukha and defeat at Dalan Balzhut**

As Jamukha and Temüjin drifted apart in their friendship, each began consolidating power, and they became rivals. Jamukha supported the traditional Mongolian aristocracy, while Temüjin followed a meritocratic method, and attracted a

broader range and lower class of followers. Following his earlier defeat of the Merkits, and a proclamation by the shaman Kokochu that the Eternal Blue Sky had set aside the world for Temüjin, Temüjin began rising to power. In 1186, Temüjin was elected khan of the Mongols. Threatened by this rise, Jamukha attacked Temujin in 1187 with an army of 30,000 troops. Temüjin gathered his followers to defend against the attack, but was decisively beaten in the Battle of Dalan Balzhut. However, Jamukha horrified and alienated potential followers by boiling 70 young male captives alive in cauldrons. Toghrul, as Temüjin's patron, was exiled to the Qara Khitai. The life of Temüjin for the next 10 years is unclear, as historical records are mostly silent on that period.

### **Return to power**

Around the year 1197, the Jin initiated an attack against their formal vassal, the Tatars, with help from the Keraites and Mongols. Temüjin commanded part of this attack, and after victory, he and Toghrul were restored by the Jin to positions of power. The Jin bestowed Toghrul with the honorable title of Ong Khan, and Temüjin with a lesser title of *j'aut quri*.

Around 1200, the main rivals of the Mongol confederation (traditionally the "Mongols") were the Naimans to the west, the Merkits to the north, the Tanguts to the south, and the Jin to the east.

In his rule and his conquest of rival tribes, Temüjin broke with Mongol tradition in a few crucial ways. He delegated authority based on merit and loyalty, rather than family ties. As an incentive for absolute obedience and the Yassa code of law,

Temüjin promised civilians and soldiers wealth from future war spoils. When he defeated rival tribes, he did not drive away their soldiers and abandon their civilians. Instead, he took the conquered tribe under his protection and integrated its members into his own tribe.

He would even have his mother adopt orphans from the conquered tribe, bringing them into his family. These political innovations inspired great loyalty among the conquered people, making Temüjin stronger with each victory.

### **Rift with Toghrul**

Senggum, son of Toghrul (Wang Khan), envied Genghis Khan's growing power and affinity with his father. He allegedly planned to assassinate Genghis Khan. Although Toghrul was allegedly saved on multiple occasions by Genghis Khan, he gave in to his son and became uncooperative with Genghis Khan. Genghis Khan learned of Senggum's intentions and eventually defeated him and his loyalists.

One of the later ruptures between Genghis Khan and Toghrul was Toghrul's refusal to give his daughter in marriage to Jochi, Genghis Khan's first son. This was disrespectful in Mongolian culture and led to a war. Toghrul allied with Jamukha, who already opposed Genghis Khan's forces. However, the dispute between Toghrul and Jamukha, plus the desertion of a number of their allies to Genghis Khan, led to Toghrul's defeat. Jamukha escaped during the conflict. This defeat was a catalyst for the fall and eventual dissolution of the Keraite tribe.

After conquering his way steadily through the Alchi Tatars, Keraites, and Uhaz Merkits and acquiring at least one wife each time, Temüjin turned to the next threat on the steppe, the Turkic Naimans under the leadership of Tayang Khan with whom Jamukha and his followers took refuge. The Naimans did not surrender, although enough sectors again voluntarily sided with Genghis Khan.

In 1201, a khuruldai elected Jamukha as Gür Khan, "universal ruler", a title used by the rulers of the Qara Khitai. Jamukha's assumption of this title was the final breach with Genghis Khan, and Jamukha formed a coalition of tribes to oppose him. Before the conflict, several generals abandoned Jamukha, including Subutai, Jelme's well-known younger brother. After several battles, Jamukha was turned over to Genghis Khan by his own men in 1206.

According to the *Secret History*, Genghis Khan again offered his friendship to Jamukha. Genghis Khan had killed the men who betrayed Jamukha, stating that he did not want disloyal men in his army. Jamukha refused the offer, saying that there can only be one sun in the sky, and he asked for a noble death. The custom was to die without spilling blood, specifically by having one's back broken. Jamukha requested this form of death, although he was known to have boiled his opponents' generals alive.

### **Sole ruler of the Mongol plains (1206)**

The part of the Merkit clan that sided with the Naimans were defeated by Subutai, who was by then a member of Genghis Khan's personal guard and later became one of Genghis Khan's

most successful commanders. The Naimans' defeat left Genghis Khan as the sole ruler of the Mongol steppe – all the prominent confederations fell or united under his Mongol confederation.

Accounts of Genghis Khan's life are marked by claims of a series of betrayals and conspiracies. These include rifts with his early allies such as Jamukha (who also wanted to be a ruler of Mongol tribes) and Wang Khan (his and his father's ally), his son Jochi, and problems with the most important shaman, who allegedly tried to drive a wedge between him and his loyal brother Khasar. His military strategies showed a deep interest in gathering intelligence and understanding the motivations of his rivals, exemplified by his extensive spy network and Yam route systems. He seemed to be a quick student, adopting new technologies and ideas that he encountered, such as siege warfare from the Chinese. He was also ruthless, demonstrated by his tactic of measuring against the linchpin, used against the tribes led by Jamukha.

As a result, by 1206, Genghis Khan had managed to unite or subdue the Merkits, Naimans, Mongols, Keraites, Tatars, Uyghurs, and other disparate smaller tribes under his rule. This was a monumental feat. It resulted in peace between previously warring tribes, and a single political and military force. The union became known as the Mongols. At a *Khuruldai*, a council of Mongol chiefs, Genghis Khan was acknowledged as Khan of the consolidated tribes and took the new title "Genghis Khan". The title Khagan was conferred posthumously by his son and successor Ögedei who took the title for himself (as he was also to be posthumously declared the founder of the Yuan dynasty).

According to the Secret History of the Mongols, the chieftains of the conquered tribes pledged to Genghis Khan by proclaiming:

"We will make you Khan; you shall ride at our head, against our foes. We will throw ourselves like lightning on your enemies. We will bring you their finest women and girls, their rich tents like palaces."

## **Religion**

Genghis Khan was a Tengrist, but was religiously tolerant and interested in learning philosophical and moral lessons from other religions. He consulted Buddhist monks (including the Zen monk Haiyun), Muslims, Christian missionaries, and the Taoist monk Qiu Chuji.

According to the *Fozu Lidai Tongzai* written by Nian Chang (b. 1282) Genghis Khan's viceroy Muqali was pacifying Shanxi in 1219, the homeland of Zen Buddhist monk Haiyun (海雲, 1203–1257), when one of Muqali's Chinese generals, impressed with Haiyun and his master Zhongguan's demeanor, recommended them to Muqali. Muqali then reported on the two to Genghis Khan who issued the following decree on their behalf: "They truly are men who pray to Heaven. I should like to support them with clothes and food and make them chiefs. I'm planning on gathering many of this kind of people. While praying to Heaven, they should not have difficulties imposed on them. To forbid any mistreatment, they will be authorized to act as *darqan* (possessor of immunity)." Genghis Khan had already met Haiyun in 1214 and been impressed by his reply refusing to grow his hair in the Mongol hairstyle and allowed him to

keep his head shaven. After the death of his master Zhongguan in 1220, Haiyun became the head of the Chan (Chinese Zen) school during Genghis Khan's rule and was repeatedly recognized as the chief monk in Chinese Buddhism by subsequent Khans until 1257 when he was succeeded as chief monk by another Chan master Xueting Fuyu the Mongol-appointed abbot of Shaolin monastery.

Genghis Khan summoned and met the Daoist master Qiu Chuji (1148–1227) in Afghanistan in 1222. He thanked Qiu Chuji for accepting his invitation and asked if Qiu Chuji had brought the medicine of immortality with him. Qiu Chuji said there was no such thing as a medicine of immortality but that life can be extended through abstinence. Genghis Khan appreciated his honest reply and asked Qiu Chuji who it is that calls him eternal heavenly man, he himself or others.

After Qiu Chuji replied that others call him by that name Genghis Khan decreed that from thenceforth Qiu Chuji should be called "Immortal" and appointed him master of all monks in China, noting that heaven had sent Qiu Chuji to him. Qiu Chuji died in Beijing the same year as Genghis Khan and his shrine became the White Cloud Temple. Following Khans continued appointing Daoist masters of the Quanzhen School at White Cloud Temple.

The Daoists lost their privilege in 1258 after the Great Debate organized by Genghis Khan's grandson Möngke Khan when Chinese Buddhists (led by the Mongol-appointed abbot or *shaolim zhanglao* of Shaolin monastery), Confucians and Tibetan Buddhists allied against the Daoists. Kublai Khan was appointed to preside over this debate (in Shangdu/Xanadu, the



third meeting after two debates in Karakorum in 1255 and 1256) in which 700 dignitaries were present. Kublai Khan had already met Haiyun in 1242 and been swayed towards Buddhism.

Genghis Khan's decree exempting Daoists (*xiansheng*), Buddhists (*toyin*), Christians (*erke'üd*) and Muslims (*dashmad*) from tax duties were continued by his successors until the end of the Yuan dynasty in 1368. All the decrees use the same formula and state that Genghis Khan first gave the decree of exemption. Kublai Khan's 1261 decree in Mongolian appointing the elder of the Shaolin monastery uses the same formula and states "*Činggis qan-u jrlg-tur toyid erkegü:d šingšingü:d dašmad aliba alba gubčiri ülüüjen tngri-yi jalbariju bidan-a irüge:r ögün atugai keme:gsen jrlg-un yosuga:r...ene Šaolim janqlau-da bariju yabuga:i jrlg ögbei*" (According to the decree of Genghis Khan which says may the Buddhists, Christians, Daoists and Muslims be exempt from all taxation and may they pray to God and continue offering us blessings...I have given this decree to the Shaolin elder to carry it). According to Juvaini, Genghis Khan allowed religious freedom to Muslims during his conquest of Khwarezmia "permitting the recitation of the *takbir* and the *azan*". However, Rashid-al-Din states there were occasions when Genghis Khan forbade Halal butchering. Kublai Khan revived the decree in 1280 after Muslims refused to eat at a banquet. He forbade Halal butchering and circumcision. The decree of Kublai Khan was revoked after a decade. Genghis Khan met Wahid-ud-Din in Afghanistan in 1221 and asked him if the prophet Muhammad predicted a Mongol conqueror. He was initially pleased with Wahid-ud-Din but then dismissed him from his service saying "I used to consider you a wise and prudent man, but from this speech of yours, it has become

evident to me that you do not possess complete understanding and that your comprehension is but small".

## **Military campaigns**

### **Western Xia Dynasty**

- During the 1206 political rise of Genghis Khan, the Mongol Empire created by Genghis Khan and his allies shared its western borders with the Western Xia dynasty of the Tanguts. To the east and south was the Jin dynasty, founded by the Manchurian Jurchens, who ruled northern China as well as being the traditional overlords of the Mongolian tribes for centuries.

Genghis Khan organized his people, army, and his state to first prepare for war with Western Xia, or Xi Xia, which was close to the Mongolian lands. He correctly believed that the more powerful young ruler of the Jin dynasty would not come to the aid of Xi Xia. When the Tanguts requested help from the Jin dynasty, they were refused. Despite initial difficulties in capturing its well-defended cities, Genghis Khan managed to force the emperor of Xi Xia to submit to vassal status.

### **Jin dynasty**

In 1211, after the conquest of Western Xia, Genghis Khan planned again to conquer the Jin dynasty. Wanyan Jiujin, the field commander of the Jin army, made a tactical mistake in not attacking the Mongols at the first opportunity. Instead, the Jin commander sent a messenger, Ming'an, to the Mongol side,

who defected and told the Mongols that the Jin army was waiting on the other side of the pass. At this engagement fought at Yehuling, the Mongols massacred hundreds of thousands of Jin troops. In 1215, Genghis besieged the Jin capital of Zhongdu (modern-day Beijing). According to Ivar Lissner, the inhabitants resorted to firing gold and silver cannon shot on the Mongols with their muzzle-loading cannons when their supply of metal for ammunition ran out. The city was captured and sacked. This forced the Jin ruler, Emperor Xuanzong, to move his capital south to Kaifeng, abandoning the northern half of his empire to the Mongols. Between 1232 and 1233, Kaifeng fell to the Mongols under the reign of Genghis's third son, Ögedei Khan. The Jin dynasty collapsed in 1234, after the siege of Caizhou.

## **Qara Khitai**

Kuchlug, the deposed Khan of the Naiman confederation that Temüjin defeated and folded into his Mongol Empire, fled west and usurped the khanate of Qara Khitai (also known as the Western Liao, as it was originally established as remnants of the Liao dynasty). Genghis Khan decided to conquer the Qara Khitai and defeat Kuchlug, possibly to take him out of power. By this time the Mongol army was exhausted from ten years of continuous campaigning in China against the Western Xia and Jin dynasty. Therefore, Genghis sent only two tumen (20,000 soldiers) against Kuchlug, under his younger general, Jebe, known as "The Arrow".

With such a small force, the invading Mongols were forced to change strategies and resort to inciting internal revolt among Kuchlug's supporters, leaving the Qara Khitai more vulnerable

to Mongol conquest. As a result, Kuchlug's army was defeated west of Kashgar. Kuchlug fled again, but was soon hunted down by Jebe's army and executed. By 1218, as a result of the defeat of Qara Khitai, the Mongol Empire and its control extended as far west as Lake Balkhash, which bordered Khwarazmia, a Muslim state that reached the Caspian Sea to the west and Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea to the south.

## **Khwarazmian Empire**

- In the early 13th century, the Khwarazmian dynasty was governed by Shah Ala ad-Din Muhammad. Genghis Khan saw the potential advantage in Khwarazmia as a commercial trading partner using the Silk Road, and he initially sent a 500-man caravan to establish official trade ties with the empire. Genghis Khan and his family and commanders invested in the caravan gold, silver, silk, various kinds of textiles and fabrics and pelts to trade with the Muslim traders in the Khwarazmian lands. However, Inalchuq, the governor of the Khwarazmian city of Otrar, attacked the caravan, claiming that the caravan contained spies and therefore was a conspiracy against Khwarazmia. The situation became further complicated because the governor later refused to make repayments for the looting of the caravans and hand over the perpetrators. Genghis Khan then sent a second group of three ambassadors (two Mongols and a Muslim) to meet the Shah himself, instead of the governor Inalchuq. The Shah had all the men shaved and the Muslim beheaded and sent his head back

with the two remaining ambassadors. Outraged, Genghis Khan planned one of his largest invasion campaigns by organizing together around 100,000 soldiers (10 tumens), his most capable generals and some of his sons. He left a commander and number of troops in China, designated his successors to be his family members and likely appointed Ögedei to be his immediate successor and then went out to Khwarazmia.

The Mongol army under Genghis Khan, generals and his sons crossed the Tien Shan mountains by entering the area controlled by the Khwarazmian Empire. After compiling intelligence from many sources Genghis Khan carefully prepared his army, which was divided into three groups. His son Jochi led the first division into the northeast of Khwarazmia.

The second division under Jebe marched secretly to the southeast part of Khwarazmia to form, with the first division, a pincer attack on Samarkand. The third division under Genghis Khan and Tolui marched to the northwest and attacked Khwarazmia from that direction.

The Shah's army was split by diverse internecine feuds and by the Shah's decision to divide his army into small groups concentrated in various cities. This fragmentation was decisive in Khwarazmia's defeats, as it allowed the Mongols, although exhausted from the long journey, to immediately set about defeating small fractions of the Khwarazmian forces instead of facing a unified defense. The Mongol army quickly seized the town of Otrar, relying on superior strategy and tactics. Genghis

Khan ordered the wholesale massacre of many of the civilians, enslaved the rest of the population and executed Inalchuh by pouring molten silver into his ears and eyes, as retribution for his actions.

Genghis Khan next advanced on the city of Bukhara, which was not heavily fortified, with just a moat and a single wall, and the citadel typical of Khwarazmian cities. The city leaders opened the gates to the Mongols, though a unit of Turkish defenders held the city's citadel for another twelve days. The survivors from the citadel were executed, artisans and craftsmen were sent back to Mongolia, young men who had not fought were drafted into the Mongolian army and the rest of the population was sent into slavery. After the surrender of Bukhara, Genghis Khan also took the unprecedented step of personally entering the city, after which he had the city's aristocrats and elites brought to the mosque, where, through interpreters, he lectured them on their misdeeds, saying: "If you had not committed great sins, God would not have sent a punishment like me upon you."

With the capture of Bukhara, the way was clear for the Mongols to advance on the capital of Samarkand, which possessed significantly better fortifications and a larger garrison compared to Bukhara. To overcome the city, the Mongols engaged in intensive psychological warfare, including the use of captured Khwarazmian prisoners as body shields. After several days only a few remaining soldiers, loyal supporters of the Shah, held out in the citadel. After the fortress fell, Genghis executed every soldier that had taken arms against him. According to the Persian historian Ata-Malik Juvayni, the people of Samarkand were then ordered to

evacuate and assemble in a plain outside the city, where they were killed and pyramids of severed heads raised as a symbol of victory. Similarly, Juvayni wrote that in the city Termez, to the south of Samarkand, "all the people, both men and women, were driven out onto the plain, and divided in accordance with their usual custom, then they were all slain".

Juvayni's account of mass killings at these sites is not corroborated by modern archaeology. Instead of killing local populations, the Mongols tended to enslave the conquered and either send them to Mongolia to act as menial labor or retain them for use in the war effort. The effect was still mass depopulation. The piling of a "pyramid of severed heads" happened not at Samarkand but at Nishapur, where Genghis Khan's sons-in-law Toquchar was killed by an arrow shot from the city walls after the residents revolted. The Khan then allowed his widowed daughter, who was pregnant at the time, to decide the fate of the city, and she decreed that the entire population be killed. She also supposedly ordered that every dog, cat and any other animals in the city be slaughtered, "so that no living thing would survive the murder of her husband". The sentence was duly carried out by the Khan's youngest son Tolui. According to widely circulated but unverified stories, the severed heads were then erected in separate piles for the men, women and children.

Near to the end of the battle for Samarkand, the Shah fled rather than surrender. Genghis Khan subsequently ordered two of his generals, Subutai and Jebe, to destroy the remnants of the Khwarazmian Empire, giving them 20,000 men and two years to do this. The Shah died under mysterious

circumstances on a small island in the Caspian Sea that he had retreated to with his remaining loyal forces.

Meanwhile, the wealthy trading city of Urgench was still in the hands of Khwarazmian forces. The assault on Urgench proved to be the most difficult battle of the Mongol invasion and the city fell only after the defenders put up a stout defense, fighting block for block. Mongolian casualties were higher than normal, due to the unaccustomed difficulty of adapting Mongolian tactics to city fighting. As usual, the artisans were sent back to Mongolia, young women and children were given to the Mongol soldiers as slaves, and the rest of the population was massacred. The Persian scholar Juvayni states that 50,000 Mongol soldiers were given the task of executing twenty-four Urgench citizens each, which would mean that 1.2 million people were killed. These numbers are considered logistically implausible by modern scholars, but the sacking of Urgench was no doubt a bloody affair.

### **Georgia, Crimea, Kievan Rus and Volga Bulgaria**

After the defeat of the Khwarazmian Empire in 1220, Genghis Khan gathered his forces in Persia and Armenia to return to the Mongolian steppes. Under the suggestion of Subutai, the Mongol army was split into two forces. Genghis Khan led the main army on a raid through Afghanistan and northern India towards Mongolia, while another 20,000 (two tumen) contingent marched through the Caucasus and into Russia under generals Jebe and Subutai. They pushed deep into Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Mongols defeated the kingdom of Georgia, sacked the Genoese trade-fortress of Caffa in Crimea and overwintered near the Black Sea. Heading home, Subutai's



forces attacked the allied forces of the Cuman-Kipchaks and the poorly coordinated 80,000 Kievan Rus' troops led by Mstislav the Bold of Halych and Mstislav III of Kiev who went out to stop the Mongols' actions in the area. Subutai sent emissaries to the Slavic princes calling for a separate peace, but the emissaries were executed. At the Battle of Kalka River in 1223, Subutai's forces defeated the larger Kievan force. They may have been defeated by the neighbouring Volga Bulgars at the Battle of Samara Bend. There is no historical record except a short account by the Arab historian Ibn al-Athir, writing in Mosul some 1,800 kilometres (1,100 miles) away from the event. Various historical secondary sources – Morgan, Chambers, Grousset – state that the Mongols actually defeated the Bulgars, Chambers even going so far as to say that the Bulgars had made up stories to tell the (recently crushed) Russians that they had beaten the Mongols and driven them from their territory.

The Russian princes then sued for peace. Subutai agreed but was in no mood to pardon the princes. Not only had the Rus put up strong resistance, but also Jebe – with whom Subutai had campaigned for years – had been killed just prior to the Battle of Kalka River. As was customary in Mongol society for nobility, the Russian princes were given a bloodless death. Subutai had a large wooden platform constructed on which he ate his meals along with his other generals. Six Russian princes, including Mstislav III of Kiev, were put under this platform and crushed to death.

The Mongols learned from captives of the abundant green pastures beyond the Bulgar territory, allowing for the planning for conquest of Hungary and Europe. Genghis Khan recalled

Subutai back to Mongolia soon afterwards. The famous cavalry expedition led by Subutai and Jebe, in which they encircled the entire Caspian Sea defeating all armies in their path, remains unparalleled to this day, and word of the Mongol triumphs began to trickle to other nations, particularly in Europe. These two campaigns are generally regarded as reconnaissance campaigns that tried to get the feel of the political and cultural elements of the regions. In 1225 both divisions returned to Mongolia. These invasions added Transoxiana and Persia to an already formidable empire while destroying any resistance along the way. Later under Genghis Khan's grandson Batu and the Golden Horde, the Mongols returned to conquer Volga Bulgaria and Kievan Rus' in 1237, concluding the campaign in 1240.

### **Western Xia and Jin Dynasty**

The vassal emperor of the Tanguts (Western Xia) had earlier refused to take part in the Mongol war against the Khwarezmid Empire. Western Xia and the defeated Jin dynasty formed a coalition to resist the Mongols, counting on the campaign against the Khwarazmians to preclude the Mongols from responding effectively.

In 1226, immediately after returning from the west, Genghis Khan began a retaliatory attack on the Tanguts. His armies quickly took Heisui, Ganzhou, and Suzhou (not the Suzhou in Jiangsu province), and in the autumn he took Xiliang-fu. One of the Tangut generals challenged the Mongols to a battle near Helan Mountains but was defeated. In November, Genghis laid siege to the Tangut city Lingzhou and crossed the Yellow River, defeating the Tangut relief army. According to legend, it was

here that Genghis Khan reportedly saw a line of five stars arranged in the sky and interpreted it as an omen of his victory.

In 1227, Genghis Khan's army attacked and destroyed the Tangut capital of Ning Hia and continued to advance, seizing Lintiao-fu, Xining province, Xindu-fu, and Deshun province in quick succession in the spring. At Deshun, the Tangut general Ma Jianlong put up a fierce resistance for several days and personally led charges against the invaders outside the city gate. Ma Jianlong later died from wounds received from arrows in battle. Genghis Khan, after conquering Deshun, went to Liupanshan (Qingshui County, Gansu Province) to escape the severe summer. The new Tangut emperor quickly surrendered to the Mongols, and the rest of the Tanguts officially surrendered soon after. Not happy with their betrayal and resistance, Genghis Khan ordered the entire imperial family to be executed, effectively ending the Tangut royal lineage.

## **Succession**

The succession of Genghis Khan was already a significant topic during the later years of his reign, as he reached old age. The long running paternity discussion about Genghis's oldest son Jochi was particularly contentious because of the seniority of Jochi among the brothers. According to traditional historical accounts, the issue over Jochi's paternity was voiced most strongly by Chagatai. In *The Secret History of the Mongols*, just before the invasion of the Khwarezmid Empire by Genghis Khan, Chagatai declared before his father and brothers that he would never accept Jochi as Genghis Khan's successor. In

response to this tension and possibly for other reasons, Ögedei was appointed as successor.

## **Ögedei**

Ögedei Khan, born Ögedei (c. 1186 – December 11, 1241) was the third son of Genghis Khan and second Great Khan (Khagan) of the Mongol Empire. He continued the expansion that his father had begun and was a world figure when the Mongol Empire reached its farthest extent west and south during the invasions of Europe and Asia.

## **Jochi**

Genghis Khan was aware of the friction between his sons (particularly between Chagatai and Jochi) and worried of possible conflict between them if he died. He therefore decided to divide his empire among his sons and make all of them Khan in their own right, while appointing one of his sons as his successor. Chagatai was considered unstable due to his temper and rash behavior, because of statements he made that he would not follow Jochi if he were to become his father's successor. Tolui, Genghis Khan's youngest son, was not suitable since in Mongol culture, youngest sons were not given much responsibility due to their age. If Jochi were to become successor, it was likely that Chagatai would engage in warfare with him and collapse the empire. Therefore, Genghis Khan decided to give the throne to Ögedei. Ögedei was seen by Genghis Khan as dependable in character and relatively stable and down to earth and would be a neutral candidate that might defuse the situation between his brothers.

Jochi died in 1226, during his father's lifetime. Some scholars, notably Ratchnevsky, have commented on the possibility that Jochi was secretly poisoned by an order from Genghis Khan. Rashid al-Din reports that the great Khan sent for his sons in the spring of 1223, and while his brothers heeded the order, Jochi remained in Khorasan. Juzjani suggests that the disagreement arose from a quarrel between Jochi and his brothers in the siege of Urgench. Jochi had attempted to protect Urgench from destruction, as it belonged to territory allocated to him as a fief. He concludes his story with the clearly apocryphal statement by Jochi: "Genghis Khan is mad to have massacred so many people and laid waste so many lands. I would be doing a service if I killed my father when he is hunting, made an alliance with Sultan Muhammad, brought this land to life and gave assistance and support to the Muslims." Juzjani claims that it was in response to hearing of these plans that Genghis Khan ordered his son secretly poisoned; however, as Sultan Muhammad was already dead by 1223, the accuracy of this story is questionable.

## **Death and burial**

Genghis Khan died in August 1227, during the fall of Yinchuan, which is the capital of Western Xia. The exact cause of his death remains a mystery, and is variously attributed to being killed in action against the Western Xia, illness, falling from his horse, or wounds sustained in hunting or battle. According to *The Secret History of the Mongols*, Genghis Khan fell from his horse while hunting and died because of the injury. He was already old and tired from his journeys. The *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* alleges he was killed by the

Western Xia in battle, while Marco Polo wrote that he died after the infection of an arrow wound he received during his final campaign. Later Mongol chronicles connect Genghis's death with a Western Xia princess taken as war booty. One chronicle from the early 17th century even relates the legend that the princess hid a small dagger and stabbed him, though some Mongol authors have doubted this version and suspected it to be an invention by the rival Oirads.

Years before his death, Genghis Khan asked to be buried without markings, according to the customs of his tribe. After he died, his body was returned to Mongolia and presumably to his birthplace in Khentii Aimag, where many assume he is buried somewhere close to the Onon River and the Burkhan Khaldun mountain (part of the Kentii mountain range). According to legend, the funeral escort killed anyone and anything across their path to conceal where he was finally buried. The Genghis Khan Mausoleum, constructed many years after his death, is his memorial, but not his burial site.

In 1939 Chinese Nationalist soldiers took the mausoleum from its position at the 'Lord's Enclosure' (Mongolian: *Edsen Khoroo*) in Mongolia to protect it from Japanese troops. It was taken through Communist-held territory in Yan'an some 900 km (560 mi) on carts to safety at a Buddhist monastery, the Dongshan Dafo Dian, where it remained for ten years. In 1949, as Communist troops advanced, the Nationalist soldiers moved it another 200 km (120 mi) farther west to the famous Tibetan monastery of Kumbum Monastery or Ta'er Shi near Xining, which soon fell under Communist control. In early 1954, Genghis Khan's bier and relics were returned to the Lord's Enclosure in Mongolia. By 1956 a new temple was erected

there to house them. In 1968 during the Cultural Revolution, Red Guards destroyed almost everything of value. The "relics" were remade in the 1970s and a great marble statue of Genghis was completed in 1989.

On October 6, 2004, a joint Japanese-Mongolian archaeological dig uncovered what is believed to be Genghis Khan's palace in rural Mongolia, which raises the possibility of actually locating the ruler's long-lost burial site.

Folklore says that a river was diverted over his grave to make it impossible to find (the same manner of burial as the Sumerian King Gilgamesh of Uruk and Alaric I). Other tales state that his grave was stamped over by many horses, and that trees were then planted over the site, and the permafrost also did its part in hiding the burial site.

Genghis Khan left behind an army of more than 129,000 men; 28,000 were given to his various brothers and his sons. Tolui, his youngest son, inherited more than 100,000 men. This force contained the bulk of the elite Mongolian cavalry. By tradition, the youngest son inherits his father's property. Jochi, Chagatai, Ögedei Khan, and Kulan's son Gelejian received armies of 4,000 men each. His mother and the descendants of his three brothers received 3,000 men each.

## **Mongol Empire**

### **Politics and economics**

The Mongol Empire was governed by a civilian and military code, called the Yassa, created by Genghis Khan. The Mongol

Empire did not emphasize the importance of ethnicity and race in the administrative realm, instead adopting an approach grounded in meritocracy. The Mongol Empire was one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse empires in history, as befitted its size.

Many of the empire's nomadic inhabitants considered themselves *Mongols* in military and civilian life, including Mongols, Turks and others and included many diverse Khans of various ethnicities as part of the Mongol Empire such as Muhammad Khan.

There were tax exemptions for religious figures and, to some extent, teachers and doctors. The Mongol Empire practiced religious tolerance because Mongol tradition had long held that religion was a personal concept, and not subject to law or interference. Sometime before the rise of Genghis Khan, Ong Khan, his mentor and eventual rival, had converted to Nestorian Christianity.

Various Mongol tribes were Shamanist, Buddhist or Christian. Religious tolerance was thus a well established concept on the Asian steppe.

Modern Mongolian historians say that towards the end of his life, Genghis Khan attempted to create a civil state under the Great Yassa that would have established the legal equality of all individuals, including women. However, there is no evidence of this, or of the lifting of discriminatory policies towards sedentary peoples such as the Chinese. Women played a relatively important role in the Mongol Empire and in the family, for example Töregene Khatun was briefly in charge of the Mongol Empire while the next male leader Khagan was



being chosen. Modern scholars refer to the alleged policy of encouraging trade and communication as the Pax Mongolica (Mongol Peace).

Genghis Khan realised that he needed people who could govern cities and states conquered by him. He also realised that such administrators could not be found among his Mongol people because they were nomads and thus had no experience governing cities.

For this purpose Genghis Khan invited a Khitan prince, Chu'Tsai, who worked for the Jin and had been captured by the Mongol army after the Jin dynasty was defeated. Jin had captured power by displacing Khitan.

Genghis told Chu'Tsai, who was a lineal descendant of Khitan rulers, that he had avenged Chu'Tsai's forefathers. Chu'Tsai responded that his father served the Jin dynasty honestly and so did he; also he did not consider his own father his enemy, so the question of revenge did not apply. This reply impressed Genghis Khan. Chu'Tsai administered parts of the Mongol Empire and became a confidant of the successive Mongol Khans.

## **Military**

Genghis Khan put absolute trust in his generals, such as Muqali, Jebe and Subutai, and regarded them as close advisors, often extending them the same privileges and trust normally reserved for close family members. He allowed them to make decisions on their own when they embarked on campaigns far from the Mongol Empire capital Karakorum. Muqali, a trusted lieutenant, was given command of the Mongol

forces against the Jin dynasty while Genghis Khan was fighting in Central Asia, and Subutai and Jebe were allowed to pursue the Great Raid into the Caucasus and Kievan Rus', an idea they had presented to the Khagan on their own initiative. While granting his generals a great deal of autonomy in making command decisions, Genghis Khan also expected unwavering loyalty from them.

The Mongol military was also successful in siege warfare, cutting off resources for cities and towns by diverting certain rivers, taking enemy prisoners and driving them in front of the army, and adopting new ideas, techniques and tools from the people they conquered, particularly in employing Muslim and Chinese siege engines and engineers to aid the Mongol cavalry in capturing cities.

Another standard tactic of the Mongol military was the commonly practiced feigned retreat to break enemy formations and to lure small enemy groups away from the larger group and defended position for ambush and counterattack. Another important aspect of the military organization of Genghis Khan was the communications and supply route or *Yam*, adapted from previous Chinese models.

Genghis Khan dedicated special attention to this in order to speed up the gathering of military intelligence and official communications. To this end, *Yam* waystations were established all over the empire.

## **Khanates**

Several years before his death, Genghis Khan divided his empire among his sons Ögedei, Chagatai, Tolui, and Jochi

(Jochi's death several months before Genghis Khan's meant that his lands were instead split between his sons, Batu and Orda) into several Khanates designed as sub-territories: their Khans were expected to follow the Great Khan, who was, initially, Ögedei.

Following are the Khanates as Genghis Khan assigned them:

- **Empire of the Great Khan:** Ögedei Khan, as *Great Khan*, took most of Eastern Asia, including China; this territory later to comprise the Yuan dynasty under Kublai Khan.
- **Mongol homeland** (present day Mongolia, including Karakorum): Tolui Khan, being the youngest son, received a small territory near the Mongol homeland, following Mongol custom.
- **Chagatai Khanate:** Chagatai Khan, Genghis Khan's second son, was given Central Asia and northern Iran.
- **Blue Horde** to Batu Khan, and **White Horde** to Orda Khan, both were later combined into the Kipchak Khanate, or Khanate of the Golden Horde, under Toqtamysh. Genghis Khan's eldest son, Jochi, had received most of the distant Russia and Ruthenia. Because Jochi died before Genghis Khan, his territory was further split up between his sons. Batu Khan launched an invasion of Russia, and later Hungary and Poland, and crushed several armies before being summoned back by the news of Ögedei's death.

## **After Genghis Khan**

Contrary to popular belief, Genghis Khan did not conquer the whole area of the eventual Mongol Empire. At the time of his death in 1227, the empire stretched from the Caspian Sea to the Sea of Japan.

Its expansion continued for one or more generations. Under Genghis's successor Ögedei Khan the speed of expansion reached its peak. Mongol armies pushed into Persia, finished off the Western Xia and the remnants of the Khwarezmid, clashed with the imperial Song dynasty of China, and eventually took control of all of China in 1279. They also pushed further into Russia and eastern Europe.

## **Perceptions**

Like other notable conquerors, Genghis Khan is portrayed differently by conquered peoples than those who conquered with him. Negative views persist in histories written by many cultures from different geographical regions. They often cite the systematic slaughter of civilians in conquered regions, cruelties and destruction by Mongol armies. Other authors also cite positive aspects of Genghis Khan's conquests.

### **Positive**

Genghis Khan is credited with bringing the Silk Road under one cohesive political environment. This allowed increased communication and trade between the West, Middle East and Asia, thus expanding the horizons of all three cultural areas. Some historians have noted that Genghis Khan instituted

certain levels of meritocracy in his rule, was tolerant of religions and explained his policies clearly to all his soldiers.

## **In Mongolia**

Genghis Khan had been revered for centuries by Mongols and certain other ethnic groups such as Turks, largely because of his association with Mongol statehood, political and military organization, and his victories in war. He eventually evolved into a larger-than-life figure chiefly among the Mongols and is still considered the symbol of Mongolian culture.

During the communist period in Mongolia, Genghis was often described as a reactionary, and positive statements about him were avoided. In 1962, the erection of a monument at his birthplace and a conference held in commemoration of his 800th birthday led to criticism from the Soviet Union and the dismissal of secretary Tömör-Ochir of the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee.

In the early 1990s, the memory of Genghis Khan underwent a powerful revival, partly in reaction to its suppression during the Mongolian People's Republic period. Genghis Khan became one of the central figures of the national identity. He is considered positively by Mongolians for his role in uniting warring tribes. For example, Mongolians often refer to their country as "Genghis Khan's Mongolia", to themselves as "Genghis Khan's children", and to Genghis Khan as the "father of the Mongols" especially among the younger generation. However, there is a chasm in the perception of his brutality. Mongolians maintain that the historical records written by non-Mongolians are unfairly biased against Genghis Khan and

that his butchery is exaggerated, while his positive role is underrated. In Mongolia today, Genghis Khan's name and likeness appear on products, streets, buildings, and other places. His face can be found on everyday commodities, from liquor bottles to candy, and on the largest denominations of 500, 1,000, 5,000, 10,000, and 20,000 Mongolian tögrög (₮). Mongolia's main international airport in Ulaanbaatar is named Chinggis Khaan International Airport. Major Genghis Khan statues stand before the parliament and near Ulaanbaatar. There have been repeated discussions about regulating the use of his name and image to avoid trivialization.

Genghis Khan is regarded as one of the most prominent leaders in Mongolia's history. He is responsible for the emergence of the Mongols as a political and ethnic identity because there was no unified identity between the tribes that had cultural similarity. He reinforced many Mongol traditions and provided stability and unity during a time of almost endemic warfare between tribes. He is also credited for introducing the traditional Mongolian script and creating the first written Mongolian code of law, the Ikh Zasag ("Great Administration"). Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj has noted that the Ikh Zasag heavily punished corruption and bribery, and he considers Genghis Khan a teacher for anti-corruption efforts who sought equal protection under the law for all citizens regardless of status or wealth. On the 850th anniversary of Genghis's birth, the President stated "Chinggis ... was a man who deeply realized that the justice begins and consolidates with the equality of law, and not with the distinctions between people. He was a man who knew that the good laws and rules lived longer than fancy palaces." In summary, Mongolians see him as the fundamental figure in the founding of the Mongol

Empire and therefore the basis for Mongolia as a country. As of 2012, Elbegdorj issued a decree establishing Genghis Khan's birthday as a national holiday on the first day of winter (according to the Mongolian lunar calendar).

## **In Europe**

Genghis Khan had a positive reputation among western European authors in the Middle Ages, who knew little concrete information about his empire in Asia. Philosopher and inventor Roger Bacon applauded the scientific and philosophical vigor of Genghis Khan's empire, and the famed writer Geoffrey Chaucer wrote concerning *Cambinskan*: The noble king was called Genghis Khan, Who in his time was of so great renown, That there was nowhere in no region, So excellent a lord in all things

The Italian explorer Marco Polo said that Genghis Khan "was a man of great worth, and of great ability, and valor."

## **In Japan**

Japanese such as Kenchō Suyematsu have claimed that the ethnic Japanese Minamoto no Yoshitsune was Genghis Khan.

## **Mixed**

### **In China**

There are conflicting views of Genghis Khan in the People's Republic of China. The legacy of Genghis and his successors, who completed the conquest of China after 65 years of

struggle, remains a mixed topic. China suffered a drastic decline in population. The population of north China decreased from 50 million in the 1195 census to 8.5 million in the Mongol census of 1235–36.

However most of them were victims of plague, floods and famine long after the war in northern China was over in 1234 and were not killed by Mongols. Since the 1340s, Yuan China experienced problems. The Yellow River flooded constantly, and other natural disasters also occurred. At the same time the Yuan dynasty required considerable military expenditure to maintain its vast empire.

The Black Death also contributed to the birth of the Red Turban movement. Other groups or religious sects made an effort to undermine the power of the last Yuan rulers; these religious movements often warned of impending doom. Decline of agriculture, plague and cold weather hit China, spurring the armed rebellion. In Hebei, 9 out of 10 were killed by the Black Death when Toghon Temür was enthroned in 1333. Two out of three people in China had died of the plague by 1351. An unknown number of people migrated to Southern China in this period. James Waterson cautioned against attributing the population drop in northern China to Mongol slaughter since much of the population may have moved to southern China under the Southern Song or died of disease and famine as agricultural and urban city infrastructure were destroyed. The Mongols spared cities from massacre and sacking if they surrendered like Kaifeng, which was surrendered to Subetai by Xu Li, Yangzhou which was surrendered to Bayan by Li Tingzhi's second in command after Li Tingzhi was executed by the Southern Song, and Hangzhou was spared from sacking



when it surrendered to Kublai Khan. Han Chinese and Khitan soldiers defected en masse to Genghis Khan against the Jurchen Jin dynasty. Towns which surrendered were spared from sacking and massacre by Kublai Khan. Khitan did not like leaving their homeland in Manchuria as the Jin moved their primary capital from Beijing south to Kaifeng and defected to the Mongols.

In Inner Mongolia there are a monument and buildings dedicated to him and considerable number of ethnic Mongols in the area with a population of around 5 million, almost twice the population of Mongolia. While Genghis never conquered all of China, his grandson Kublai Khan completed that conquest and established the Yuan dynasty that is often credited with re-uniting China.

There has been much artwork and literature praising Genghis as a military leader and political genius. The Mongol-established Yuan dynasty left an indelible imprint on Chinese political and social structures for subsequent generations with literature during the preceding Jin dynasty relatively fewer.

## **In Russia**

Genghis Khan has a predominantly negative reputation in Russia, although he is perceived positively in Buryatia, the republic of the Mongol-speaking Buryats in the Russian Federation. According to the chief editor of *Novaya Buryatia*, Timur Dugarzhapov, "Genghis Khan was always a folk hero among the Buryat people. But in Buryatia, even today, children learn ... how terrible the 'Mongol yoke' was, how it set Russia back and was responsible for all sort of historic ills."

## Negative

The conquests and leadership of Genghis Khan included widespread devastation and mass murder. The targets of campaigns that refused to surrender would often be subject to reprisals in the form of enslavement and wholesale slaughter. The second campaign against Western Xia, the final military action led by Genghis Khan, and during which he died, involved an intentional and systematic destruction of Western Xia cities and culture. According to John Man, because of this policy of total obliteration, Western Xia is little known to anyone other than experts in the field because so little record is left of that society. He states that "There is a case to be made that this was the first ever recorded example of attempted genocide. It was certainly very successful *ethnocide*." In the conquest of Khwarezmia under Genghis Khan, the Mongols razed the cities of Bukhara, Samarkand, Herāt, ʿū̄s, and Neyshābūr and killed the respective urban populations. His invasions are considered the beginning of a 200-year period known in Iran and other Islamic societies as the "Mongol catastrophe." Ibn al-Athir, Ata-Malik Juvaini, Seraj al-Din Jozjani, and Rashid al-Din Fazl-Allah Hamedani, Iranian historians from the time of Mongol occupation, describe the Mongol invasions as an catastrophe never before seen. A number of present-day Iranian historians, including Zabih Allah Safa, have likewise viewed the period initiated by Genghis Khan as a uniquely catastrophic era. Steven R. Ward writes that the Mongol violence and depredations in the Iranian Plateau "killed up to three-fourths of the population... possibly 10 to 15 million people. Some historians have estimated that Iran's population did not again reach its pre-Mongol levels until the mid-20th century."

Although the famous Mughal emperors were proud descendants of Genghis Khan and particularly Timur, they clearly distanced themselves from the Mongol atrocities committed against the Khwarizim Shahs, Turks, Persians, the citizens of Baghdad and Damascus, Nishapur, Bukhara and historical figures such as Attar of Nishapur and many other notable Muslims. However, Mughal Emperors directly patronized the legacies of Genghis Khan and Timur; together their names were synonymous with the names of other distinguished personalities particularly among the Muslim populations of South Asia.

## **Descent**

In addition to most of the Mongol nobility up to the 20th century, the Mughal emperor Babur's mother was a descendant. Timur (also known as Tamerlane), the 14th-century military leader, and many other nobilities of central Asian countries claimed descent from Genghis Khan. During the Soviet purge most of the Mongol nobility in Mongolia were purged.

## **Physical appearance**

Unlike most emperors, Genghis Khan never allowed his image to be portrayed in paintings or sculptures. The earliest known images of Genghis Khan were produced half a century after his death, including the famous National Palace Museum portrait. Though the portrait in the National Palace Museum is often considered the closest resemblance to what Genghis Khan actually looked like, it, like all others, is essentially an arbitrary rendering. These earliest images were commissioned

by Kublai Khan and intentionally sinicized Genghis Khan as a Mandarin, in order to posthumously legitimate him as a Chinese emperor. Other portrayals of Genghis Khan from other cultures likewise characterized him according to their particular image of him. In Persia he was portrayed as a Turkish sultan, in Europe he was pictured as an ugly barbarian with a fierce face and cruel eyes. According to Herbert Allen Giles, a painter known as Ho-li-hosun (also known as Khorisun or Qooriqosun ) was a Mongol commissioned by Kublai Khan in 1278 to paint the portrait of Genghis Khan (National Palace Museum portrait). Under Kublai Khan's supervision, he ordered Khorisun along with the other entrusted remaining followers of Genghis Khan to make sure that the portrait of Genghis Khan reflected his true image.

The only individuals to have recorded Genghis Khan's physical appearance during his lifetime were the Persian chronicler Minhaj al-Siraj Juzjani and Chinese diplomat Zhao Hong. Minhaj al-Siraj described Genghis Khan as "a man of tall stature, of vigorous build, robust in body, the hair of his face scanty and turned white, with cats' eyes, possessed of dedicated energy, discernment, genius, and understanding, awe-striking...".

The chronicler had also previously commented on Genghis Khan's height, powerful build, with cat's eyes and lack of grey hair, based on the evidence of eyes witnesses in 1220, which saw Genghis Khan fighting in the Khorasan (modern day northwest Persia). According to Paul Ratchnevsky, Zhao Hong, a Song dynasty envoy who visited the Mongols in 1221, described Genghis Khan as "of tall and majestic stature, his brow is broad and his beard is long".

Other descriptions of Genghis Khan come from 14th century texts. The Persian historian Rashid-al-Din in *Jami' al-tawarikh*, written in the beginning of the 14th century, stated that most Borjigin ancestors of Genghis Khan were "tall, long-bearded, red-haired, and bluish green-eyed," features which Genghis Khan himself had.

The factual nature of this statement is considered controversial. In the Georgian Chronicles, in a passage written in the 14th century, Genghis Khan is similarly described as a large, good-looking man, with red hair. However, according to John Andrew Boyle, Rashid al-Din's text of red hair referred to ruddy skin complexion, and that Genghis Khan was of ruddy complexion like most of his children except for Kublai Khan who was swarthy.

He translated the text as "It chanced that he was born 2 months before Möge, and when Chingiz-Khan's eye fell upon him he said: "all our children are of a ruddy complexion, but this child is swarthy like his maternal uncles. Tell Sorqoqtani Beki to give him to a good nurse to be reared". 14th century Arabic historian Shihab al-Umari also disputed Rashid al-Din's translation and claimed Alan Gua falsified the origin of her clan. Some Historians such as Denise Aigle claimed that Rashid al-Din mythicized the origin of Genghis Khan ancestors (the Borjigin clan) through his own interpretations of The Secret History of the Mongols. Italian historian Igor de Rachewiltz claimed that the Mongol origins of the early ancestors of Genghis Khan were animals born from the blue eye wolf (Borte Chino) and the fallow doe (Qo'ai Maral) that was described in the early legends, that their ancestors were animals.

## **Name and title**

There are many theories about the origins of Temüjin's title. Since people of the Mongol nation later associated the name with *ching* (Mongolian for strength), such confusion is obvious, though it does not follow etymology.

One theory suggests the name stems from a palatalised version of the Mongolic and Turkic word *tenggis/tengiz*, meaning "sea", "ocean", "oceanic" or "wide-spreading". (Lake Baikal and other large bodies of water were called *tenggis* by the Mongols). This view was repeated by, among others, the Big Russian Encyclopedia;. However, it seems that if they had meant to call Genghis *tenggis* they could have said, and written, "Tenggis Khan", which they did not. Zhèng (Chinese: 正) meaning "right", "just", or "true", would have received the Mongolian adjectival modifier -s, creating "Jenggis", which in medieval romanization would be written "Genghis". It is likely that the 13th-century Mongolian pronunciation would have closely matched "Chinggis".

The English spelling "Genghis" is of unclear origin. Weatherford claims it derives from a spelling used in original Persian reports. Even at this time some Iranians pronounce his name as "Ghengiss". However, review of historical Persian sources does not confirm this.

According to the *Secret History of the Mongols*, Temüjin was named after a powerful warrior of the Tatar tribe that his father Yesügei had taken prisoner. The name "Temüjin" is believed to derive from the word *temür*, Turkic for iron (modern Mongolian: ᠲᠡᠮᠦᠵᠢᠨ, *tömör*). The name would imply a blacksmith

or a man strong like iron. No evidence has survived to indicate that Genghis Khan had any exceptional training or reputation as a blacksmith. But the latter interpretation (a man strong like iron) is supported by the names of Genghis Khan's siblings, Temülin and Temüge, which are derived from the same root word.

## **Name and spelling variations**

Genghis Khan is spelled in a variety of ways in different languages such as Mongolian Chinggis Khaan, English *Chinghiz*, *Chinghis*, and *Chingiz*, Chinese: 成吉思汗; pinyin: *Chéngjísī Hán*, Turkic: *Cengiz Han*, *Çingiz Xan*, *Chingizxon*, *Shun'g'ısxan*, *Çingiz Han* *Çiñğiz Xan*, *Şiñğis xan*, *Çiñğiz Xaan*, *Çiñğizhan*, Russian: Чингисхан (*Çingiskhan*) or Чингиз-хан (*Çingiz-khan*), etc. Temüjin is written in Chinese as simplified Chinese: 铁木真; traditional Chinese: 鐵木真; pinyin: *Tiěmùzhēn*.

When Kublai Khan established the Yuan dynasty in 1271, he had his grandfather Genghis Khan placed on the official record as the founder of the dynasty or *Taizu* (Chinese: 太祖). Thus, Genghis Khan is also referred to as *Yuan Taizu* (Emperor Taizu of Yuan, Chinese: 元太祖) in Chinese historiography.

## **Timeline**

- Probably 1155 or 1162: Temüjin was born in the Khentii mountains.
- When Temüjin was nine, his father Yesükhei was poisoned by Tatars, leaving Temüjin and his family destitute.

- c. 1184: Temüjin's wife Börte was kidnapped by Merkits; he called on blood brother Jamukha and Wang Khan for aid, and they rescued her.
- c. 1185: First son Jochi was born; leading to doubt about his paternity later among Genghis's children, because he was born shortly after Börte's rescue from the Merkits.
- 1190: Temüjin united the Mongol tribes, became leader, and devised code of law Yassa.
- 1201: Victory over Jamukha's Jadarans.
- 1202: Adopted as Wang Khan's heir after successful campaigns against Tatars.
- 1203: Victory over Wang Khan's Keraites. Wang Khan himself killed by accident by allied Naimans.
- 1204: Victory over Naimans (all these confederations unite and become the Mongols).
- 1206: Jamukha was killed. Temüjin was given the title *Genghis Khan* by his followers in a Kurultai (around 40 years of age).
- 1207–1210: Genghis led operations against the Western Xia, which comprises much of northwestern China and parts of Tibet. Western Xia ruler submitted to Genghis Khan. During this period, the Uyghurs also submitted peacefully to the Mongols and became valued administrators throughout the empire.
- 1211: After the kurultai, Genghis led his armies against the Jin dynasty ruling northern China.
- 1215: Beijing fell; Genghis Khan turned to west and the Khara-Kitan Khanate.
- 1219–1222: Conquered Khwarezmid Empire.



- 1226: Started the campaign against the Western Xia for forming coalition against the Mongols, the second battle with the Western Xia.
- 1227: Genghis Khan died after conquering the Tangut people. Cause of death is uncertain.

## **Anushtegin dynasty**

The **Anushteginid dynasty** also known as the **Khwarazmian dynasty** was a Persianate Sunni Muslim dynasty of Turkic *mamluk* origin. The Khwarazmian dynasty ruled large parts of present-day Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Iran in the approximate period of 1077 to 1231, first as vassals of the Seljuks and the Qara Khitai, and later as independent rulers, up until the Mongol conquest of the Khwarazmian Empire in the 13th century.

The dynasty was founded by commander Anushtegin Gharchai, a former Turkic slave of the Seljuq sultans, who was appointed as governor of Khwarazm. His son, Qutb ad-Din Muhammad I, became the first hereditary Shah of Khwarazm. Anush Tigin may have belonged to either the Begdili tribe of the Oghuz Turks or to Chigil, Khalaj, Qipchaq, Qangly, or Uyghurs.

## **History**

The date of the founding of the Khwarazmian dynasty remains debatable. During a revolt in 1017, Khwarezmian rebels murdered Abu'l-Abbas Ma'mun and his wife, Hurra-ji, sister of the Ghaznavid sultan Mahmud. In response, Mahmud invaded and occupied the region of Khwarezm, which included Nasa

and the *ribat* of Farawa. As a result, Khwarezm became a province of the Ghaznavid Empire from 1017 to 1034. In 1077, the governorship of the province, which since 1042/1043 belonged to the Seljuqs, fell into the hands of Anush Tigin Gharchai, a former Turkic slave of the Seljuq sultan. In 1141, the Seljuq Sultan Ahmed Sanjar was defeated by the Qara Khitai at the battle of Qatwan, and Anush Tigin's grandson Ala ad-Din Atsiz became a vassal to Yelü Dashi of the Qara Khitan.

Sultan Ahmed Sanjar died in 1156. As the Seljuk state fell into chaos, the Khwarezm-Shahs expanded their territories southward. In 1194, the last Sultan of the Great Seljuq Empire, Toghrul III, was defeated and killed by the Khwarezm ruler Ala ad-Din Tekish, who conquered parts of Khorasan and western Iran. In 1200, Tekish died and was succeeded by his son, Ala ad-Din Muhammad, who initiated a conflict with the Ghurids and was defeated by them at Amu Darya (1204). Following the sack of Khwarizm, Muhammad appealed for aid from his suzerain, the Qara Khitai who sent him an army. With this reinforcement, Muhammad won a victory over the Ghurids at Hezarasp (1204) and forced them out of Khwarizm.

Ala ad-Din Muhammad's alliance with his suzerain was short-lived. He again initiated a conflict, this time with the aid of the Kara-Khanids, and defeated a Qara-Khitai army at Talas (1210), but allowed Samarkand(1210) to be occupied by the Qara-Khitai. He overthrew the Karakhanids (1212) and Ghurids (1215). In 1212, he shifted his capital from Gurganj to Samarkand. Thus incorporating nearly the whole of Transoxania and present-day Afghanistan into his empire, which after further conquests in western Persia (by 1217) stretched from the Syr Darya to the Zagros Mountains, and

from the northern parts of the Hindu Kush to the Caspian Sea. By 1218, the empire had a population of 5 million people.

## **Jalal al-Din Mangburni**

**Jalal al-Din Mangburni** also known as **Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah** was the last Khwarazmshah of the Anushtegin line, ruling parts of Iran and northwestern India from 1220 to 1231. He was the son and successor of Ala ad-Din Muhammad II.

Jalal al-Din only ruled his ancestral kingdom in Khwarazm briefly, until he was forced to leave for the southwestern part of the realm (roughly corresponding to present-day Afghanistan), due to facing opposition by many of his Turkic commanders, who supported his brother and original heir-apparent, Uzlagh-Shah. The following year, the Khwarazmian capital of Gurganj was captured and devastated by the Mongols. Meanwhile, at the city of Ghazni, Jalal al-Din rallied a substantial army which consisted of Khwarazmians, Turks, and Ghurids, subsequently defeating the pursuing forces of the Mongol leader Genghis Khan at the the Battle of Ustuva, the Battle of Kendakhar, the Battle of Waliyan, the Battle of Djerdin, battle of Parwan. Jalal al-Din was, however, forced to withdraw to northwestern India by the Mongol forces.

## **Name**

The spelling and meaning of his Turkic personal name is obscure. Early scholarship spelled it as Manguburti (or similar variants), whilst the most common variant today is Mangburni

("with a birthmark on the nose") or Mingirini ("valiant fighter worth one thousand men"; cf. Persian *hazarmard*).

## **Background**

Jalal al-Din was reportedly the eldest son of the Khwarazmshah Ala ad-Din Muhammad II (r. 1200–1220), while his mother was a concubine of Turkmen origin, whose name was Ay-Chichek. Due to the low status of Jalal al-Din's mother, his powerful grandmother and Qipchaq princess Terken Khatun refused to support him as heir to the throne, and instead favored his half-brother Uzlagh-Shah, whose mother was also a Qipchaq. Jalal al-Din first appears in historical records in 1215, when Muhammad II divided his empire among his sons, giving the southwestern part (part of the former Ghurid Empire) to Jalal al-Din.

## **Mongol invasion**

When it became known that Genghis Khan was marching towards Khwarazm, Jalal ad-din proposed to his father to meet the Mongols in one decisive battle near the Syr Darya. However, Muhammad II relied on his well-fortified fortresses and did not assemble troops, distributing them instead among the major towns of his empire. Meanwhile, the Mongols swiftly took one city after another. At the beginning of 1220, Bukhara fell, followed by Samarqand. Muhammad started to retreat west, and after a series of unsuccessful battles, was left with a handful of soldiers and his sons. The huge and undisciplined Khwarazmian army was unable to defeat the enemy, which was much inferior in number.

Legend has it that Muhammad, who fled to the Caspian Sea, being terminally ill, gathered his sons: Jalal ad-Din, Aqshah, and Uzlagh Khan and announced that he appointed Jalal ad-Din as heir to the throne, because only he could confront the enemy. Summoning the younger sons to obedience, he hung his sword on the belt of Jalal ad-Din. A few days later, Muhammad died and Jalal ad-Din was proclaimed a Khwarazmshah.

Following the defeat of his father, Ala ad-Din Muhammad II by Genghis Khan in 1220, Jalal ad-Din Mingburnu came to power and retreated with the remaining Khwarazm forces, while pursued by a Mongol army and at the battle of Parwan, north of Kabul, defeated the Mongols.

Due to the Mongol invasion, the sacking of Samarkand and being deserted by his Afghan allies, Jalal ad-Din was forced to flee to India. At the Indus River, however, the Mongols caught up with him and slaughtered his forces, along with thousands of refugees, at the Battle of the Indus. He escaped and sought asylum in the Sultanate of Delhi but Iltutmish denied this to him in deference to the relationship with the Abbasid caliphs. The cities of Herat, Ghazni and Merv were destroyed and massacred by the Mongols, for his resistance or rebelliousness.

## **Re-establishment of the kingdom**

Jalal ad-Din Mingburnu spent three years in exile in India. He entered into an alliance with the Khokhars, Lahore, and much of the Punjab was captured. At this stage he requested an alliance with Iltutmish, the Turkish Mamluk Sultan of Delhi against the Mongols. The Sultan of Delhi refused so he could avoid a conflict with Genghis Khan and marched towards

Lahore at the head of a large army. Mingburnu retreated from Lahore and moved towards Uchch, inflicting a heavy defeat on its ruler Nasir-ud-Din Qabacha, and plundered Sindh, then northern Gujarat before returning to Persia in 1224.

Having gathered an army and entered Persia, Jalal ad-Din sought to re-establish the Khwarazm kingdom, but he never fully consolidated his power. In 1224, he confirmed Burak Hadjib, ruler of the Qara Khitai, in Kerman, received the submission of his brother Ghiyath al-Din Pirshah, who had established himself in Hamadan and Isfahan, and the province of Fars, and clashed with the Caliph An Nasser in Khuzestan. In 1225, the sultan dethroned the Ildegizid Uzbek Muzaffar al-Din and set himself up in their capital of Tabriz on the 25 of July in 1225. In 1225, he attacked Georgia, defeating its forces in the battle of Garni, and conquered Tbilisi, after which allegedly a hundred thousand citizens were put to death for not renouncing Christianity.

## **Warfare**

Jalal ad-Din spent the rest of his days struggling against the Mongols, pretenders to the throne and the Seljuqs of Rûm. His dominance in the region required year-after-year campaigning. In 1226, the governor of Kerman, Burak Hadjib, rebelled against him, but after the sultan marched against him he was again brought back into agreement. Jalal ad-Din then had a brief victory over the Seljuqs and captured the town of Akhlat in Turkey from the Ayyubids. In 1227, he battled against the Mongols on the approach to Isfahan and while he did not defeat the invaders following their great losses they were not able to utilise their victory and withdrew afterwards across the

Oxusriver. In 1228, his brother Ghiyath al-Din rebelled and was defeated by the Sultan. Ghiyath al-Din fled to Burak Hadjib in Kerman where he and his mother were murdered. The revived Khwarezmid Sultan by this time controlled Kerman, Tabriz, Isfahan and Fars. Jalal ad-Din moved against Akhlat again in 1229. However he was defeated in this campaign by Sultan Kayqubad I at Erzincan on the Upper Euphrates at the Battle of Yassıçemen in 1230, from whence he escaped to Diyarbakır.

## **Death**

Through the ruler of Alamut, the Mongols learned that Jalal ad-Din was weakened by a recent defeat. Ögedei Khan sent a new army of 30,000 men under the command of Chormagan and the Khwarazmians were swept away by the new Mongol army. In the winter of 1231, in the ensuing confusion the Mongols arrived into Azerbaijan from the direction of Khorasan and Rayy. The 30,000 strong Mongol army led by Chormagan easily defeated Jalal ad-Din and occupied northern Iran. Khwarazmshah retreated to Ganja, Azerbaijan. The Mongols followed him and captured Arran. Jalal ad-Din took refuge in the Mayyafarikin mountains and there in August of that year he was killed by an unknown Kurd, allegedly employed by the Seljuks.

## **Legacy and assessment**

Shihab al-Din Muhammad al-Nasawi, the personal secretary of the Sultan Jalal ad-Din, described him as follows:

He was swarthy (dark-skinned), small in stature, Turkic in "behavior" and speech, but he also spoke Persian. As for his courage, I have mentioned it many times when describing the battles he took part in. He was a lion among lions and the most fearless among his valiant horsemen. He was mild in his temper though, did not get easily provoked and never used bad language.

Even Nasawi, however, was unable to justify the negative impact Jalal al-Din's rule and conduct of his soldiers had on his subjects. Iranian bureaucrat and historian Ata-Malik Juvayni (died 1283) represented Jalal al-Din as a hero who valiantly fighting for "Persian independence", even though Juvayni was aware that Jalal al-Din was fighting for his own survival and selfish motives. Due to his reputation for resisting the Mongols, Jalal al-Din is commonly depicted on artwork resembling that of the Persian epic *Shahnameh*, where he is associated with the mythological warrior Rostam.

Jalal al-Din was not as successful in politics and diplomacy as he was in leadership and heroism. Although he managed to escape from the Mongols and arrive to Anatolia, and subsequently asked for help from the fellow Muslim rulers against the Mongols, his politics and attitude terrified all the neighboring monarchs and caused them to distance themselves from him. He tried to maintain friendship with the Seljuq Sultan of Anatolia, Ala' ad-Din Kay-Qubad. This could have been a turning point in his warfare against the Mongols had he succeeded, but he abandoned this policy for unknown reasons. Jalal al-Din's diplomatic attempts to cooperate against the Mongols with the Abbasid Caliphate and the Georgians also failed.



## **In fiction**

Jalal ad-Din has been portrayed by Emre Kivılcım in the Turkish-Uzbek TV series *Mendirman Jaloliddin*, created by Mehmet Bozdağ in collaboration with the Uzbek Ministry of Culture and Sports.

## **Battle of the Indus**

The **Battle of the Indus** was fought at the Indus River, in 1221 between Jalal ad-Din Mingburnu, the sultan of the Khwarezmian Empire and his remaining forces of 30,000 men against the 200,000 strong Mongolian army of Genghis Khan.

## **Background**

Jalal ad-Din Mingburnu was fleeing to India with his men and thousands of refugees from Persia, following the Mongol sacking of several cities, including Bukhara and Samarkand, the latter being the Khwarezmian capital. Jalal al-Din defeated the Mongols in the Battle of Ustuva, the Battle of Kendakhar, the Battle of Waliyan, the Battle of Djerdin and the Battle of Parwan, near the city of Ghazni, Jalal ad-Din Mingburnu headed for India to seek refuge together with his army of some 3,000 men and several thousand refugees. However, a powerful army under Genghis Khan, numbering 25,000–50,000 cavalry, caught up with him when he was about to cross the Indus River.

## **Battle**

Jalal ad-Din positioned his army of at least 30,000 men in a defensive stance against the Mongols, placing one flank against the mountains while his other flank was covered by a river bend. Genghis Khan gave Chagatai Khan command of the right wing; he gave command of the left wing to Ögedei Khan. Jalal ad-Din's army was much weaker. Khwarezmian army's right wing rested on the river and was being commanded by Malik Khan. Khwarezmian army's left wing was deployed on rising grounds. Jalal ad-Din thus covered his flanks making it difficult for Genghis Khan to outflank his forces.

The initial Mongol charge that opened the battle was beaten back. Jalal ad-Din counterattacked in the centre with his crack

700-man bodyguard and nearly breached the center of the Mongol Army. Genghis then sent a contingent of 10,000 men around the mountain to flank Jalal ad-Din's army. The soldiers of Jalal ad-Din's army, which were in all 30,000, were much fatigued with having fought ten whole hours against more than 300,000 men, were seized with fear and fled.

Genghis Khan wanted to take Jalal ad-Din alive and forbade killing him; to prevent his escape, Genghis Khan arranged his forces in a form of a bow. With his army being attacked from two directions and collapsing into chaos, Jalal ad-Din, left with 700 men held out in the centre, striking out in various directions and thinking of his own safety, took off his armor, spurred his horse and forced it to jump into the river and swam on horseback, safely reaching the other bank of the Indus River in spectacular style. Genghis Khan witnessed the

feat and famously remarked: "Fortunate should be the father of such a son." Genghis Khan did not allow his men to shoot at Jalal ad-Din. The Mongol warriors wanted to throw themselves into the river to chase Jalal ad-Din but Genghis Khan did not permit them, telling them "the prince will defeat all of their attempts." Chagatai Khan was sent back south to hunt down Jalal al-Din who, reports given to Genghis Khan said, had re-crossed the Sindhu to bury his dead.

## **Aftermath**

Chagatai Khan was sent back south to hunt down Jalal al-Din who, according to the reports given to Genghis Khan, had re-crossed the Sindhu. East of the Indus River Jalal al-Din remained at large, and defeated two local forces close to Lahore. He was reportedly able to build up his forces to as many as 10,000 men. After summer of 1222, Genghis Khan sent Dorbei Doqshin and Bala back across the Indus to hunt down the refugee prince. The latter retreated towards Delhi. Dorbei and Bala did not remain for long east of the Indus, and Dorbei returned to Genghis Khan near Samarkand. Genghiz Khan was furious that they had failed to hunt down Jalal al-Din, and sent him back to India.

In January 1223 Mongol forces coming from Khorasan, Seistan, and Ghazni converged on Saifrud, and after two months made an all-out assault. Beaten off in March, they gave up and retreated. A little later, on 14 May, they had the worst of some fighting outside Tulak. Finally, Mongol forces under a Kazil Manjuk made a renewed advance on the strongholds defying the Mongols in Khorasan and Ghur. He passed Herat and approached Tulak and Saifrud, and found both places

deserted. He set out in pursuit of the Saifrud, garrison intercepting it along the Arghandab River. The enemy group dispersed and fled into the mountains.

Dorbei Doqshin crossed the Indus for a second time. The Mongols first took Nandana from one of the lieutenants of Jalal ad-Din, sacked it and then began to besiege the larger Multan. With no stones in the immediate area, the Mongols quarried elsewhere and shipped the stones by boat to Multan. They breached the wall, the city of Multan was defended successfully by the Khwarazmians, Dorbei Doqshin was repelled and Dorbei Doqshin decided to retreat due to the climate before the city was finally taken. The siege lasted for 42 days (March–April 1224). They returned north via Ghazni. Later, Dorbei Doqshin was sent with the same mission again but during his last mission he joined Jalal ad-Din and converted to Islam.

## Chapter 10

# Ghiyas ud Din Balban

- **Ghiyas ud din Balban** (reigned: 1266–1287) was the ninth sultan of the Mamluk dynasty of Delhi.

Ghiyas ud Din was the *regent* of the last Shamsi sultan, Nasiruddin Mahmud. He reduced the power of the nobility and heightened the stature of the sultan.

His original name was Baha Ud Din. He was an Ilbari Turk. When he was young he was captured by the Mongols, taken to Ghazni and sold to Khawaja Jamal ud-din of Basra, a Sufi. The latter then brought him to Delhi in 1232 along with other slaves, and all of them were purchased by Iltutmish.

Balban belonged to the famous group of 40 Turkic slaves of Iltutmish.

Ghiyas made several conquests, some of them as vizier. He routed the Mewats that harassed Delhi and reconquered Bengal, all while successfully facing the Mongol threat, a struggle that cost his son and heir's life. After his death in 1287, his grandson Qaiqabad was nominated sultan, though his rule undermined the success made under his grandfather's reign.

In spite of having only a few military achievements, Balban reformed civil and military lines that earned him a stable and prosperous government granting him the position, along with Shams ud-din Iltutmish and the later Alauddin Khalji, one of the most powerful rulers of Delhi Sultanate.

## Early life

He was the son of a Central Asian Turkic noble. As a child, he and others from his tribe were captured by the Mongols and sold as slaves in Ghazni. He was sold to Khwaja Jamal ud-din of Basra, a Sufi who nicknamed him Baha ud din. The Khwaja brought him to Delhi where he and the other slaves were bought by Sultan Shams-ud-din Iltutmish, himself a captured Ilbari Turk in origin, in 1232.

Balban was first appointed as a simple water carrier, but quickly rose to the position of Khasdar (king's personal attendant) by the Sultan. He became one of the most notable of the forty Turkic nobles of Delhi, or the Chalissa. During the reign of Razia Sultan, he was the *amir-i-shikar* or lord of the hunt, a position of some importance at the time, having military and political responsibilities. After her overthrow, he made rapid strides in the subsequent reigns, earning the fief of Rewari under Bahram Shah, and later became the Jagir(lord) of Hansi, which was an important fief.

Balban was instrumental in the overthrow of Ala ud din Masud, installing Nasiruddin Mahmud as Sultan and himself as his Vizier from 1246 to 1265. Mahmud married one of Balban's daughters. Balban also installed Kishlu Khan, his younger brother, as lord chamberlain (Amir-i Hajib) and appointed his cousin, Sher Khan, to the Jagir of Lahore and Bhatinda.

Balban's position did not go unnoticed by the other nobles and there was some resentment. His main antagonist was Imad ud-din Raihan, who in works written after Balban's time, is

characterized as a Hindu Murtad (who revoked Islam), although some claim him to be of Turkic origin as well. Imad ud-din managed to persuade the Sultan that Balban was an usurper. Balban and his kin were dismissed and even challenged in combat. However, negotiations between Balban and the Sultan had brought to the dismissal of Imad ud din at 1254, and Balban was reinstalled.

## **Military campaigns**

Balban's reign, according to Ziauddin Barani, was to install 'Fear of the governing power, which is the basis of all good government.' Furthermore, he "maintained that the Sultan was the 'shadow of God' and introduced rigorous court discipline." He depended upon Turkish nobility but formed an army of 2 lakh made up of all castes. A portion of this army was made up of commandos. Balban had several military achievements during his vizierhood, first raising the Mongol siege of Uch under Masud Shah in 1246.

When the governor of Bengal, Tughral Tughan Khan, revoked the authority of Delhi in 1275, Balban first sent the governor of Awadh and then a second army, both of which met with failure. Balban then accompanied a third army which reconquered the countryside, killing Tughral and his followers. His son, Nasiruddin Bughra Khan, assisted him in this mission. Balban then placed his second son, Bughra Khan, as governor. However, Bughra declared independence after Balban's death, which he maintained for 40 years.

One of the famous military campaigns of Balban was against Meo, or Mayo, the people of Mewat who used to plunder the

people of Delhi even in the daylight. The distress caused by the Meo is well described in Barani's words: He has killed many Mayos in his military campaign.

- *The turbulence of the Mewatis had increased, and their strength had grown in the neighbourhood of Dehli, through the dissolute habits and negligence of the elder sons of Shams ud-dín, and the incapacity of the youngest, Násiru-d dín. At night they used to come prowling into the city, giving all kinds of trouble, depriving the people of their rest; and they plundered the country houses in the neighbourhood of the city. In the neighbourhood of Dehli there were large and dense jungles, through which many roads passed. The disaffected in the Doáb, and the outlaws towards Hindustan grew bold and took to robbery on the highway, and they so beset the roads that caravans and merchants were unable to pass. The daring of the Mewatis in the neighbourhood of Dehli was carried to such an extent that the western gates of the city were shut at afternoon prayer, and no one dared to go out of the city in that direction after that hour, whether he travelled as a pilgrim or with the display of a sovereign. At afternoon prayer the Mewatis would often come to the Sar-hauz, and assaulting the water-carriers and the girls who were fetching water, they would strip them and carry off their clothes. These daring acts of the Mewatis had caused a great ferment in Delhi.*

Balban took upon himself the exterminating the turbulent tribes of Mewat and Awadh, destroying strongholds and villages. He then built military outposts, gave land to soldiers



and Afghans to settle. He garrisoned forts at key locations, cleared forests and ensured safe roads. He also unsuccessfully laid siege to the fortress of Ranthambore, but did recapture Gwalior from the Rajputs.

In 1247, Balban suppressed a rising of the Chandela Chief of Kalinjar.

Balban's military reign also distinguished with his success repelling Mongol army. This could be achieved because his cavalry horses were better suited to Indian climate and naturally bred larger than Mongol's horses. The extreme heat of summer constituted the Mongols' problem in India, as the quotation from Juvaini indicates. Their incursions seem to have been brief, even when not defeated by the forces of Delhi, and to have taken place in winter, because only then was it cool enough for the comfort of the Mongols' horses

## **Reign as Sultan**

- Since Sultan Nasiruddin did not have a male heir, so after his death, Balban declared himself the Sultan of Delhi. Balban ascended the throne in 1266 at the age of sixty with the title of *Sultan Ghiyas-ud-din-Balban*.

During his reign, Balban ruled with an iron fist. He broke up the 'Chahalgani', a group of the forty most important nobles in the court. Balban wanted to make sure everyone was loyal to the crown by establishing an efficient espionage system, in the style of the Umayyad Barid. Sultan Balban had a strong and well-organized intelligence system. Balban employed spies,

*barids*, to inform on his officials. He placed secret reporters and news-writers in every department. The spies were independent authority who were only answerable to Sultan.

Furthermore, Balban had his nobles punished most harshly for any mishap, including severe treatment of their own slaves. One of his nobles, Malik Baqbaq, the governor of Budaun, was punished for ordering one of his slaves to be beaten to death, apparently when being drunk. Another governor, Haibat Khan, was handed over to the slave's widow for punishment. About his justice Dr. Ishwari Prasad remarked "So great was the dread of Sultan's inexorable justice that no one dared to ill-treat his servant and slaves."

Balban re-organised the military against the threat of the Mongols. He re-organised the revenues of the Iqatadars, which have been passed on to the children of their original holders from the time of Shams ud-din, or maintained their hold of the Iqta even after they ceased to serve in the military. The old Muqta's, who could not serve as military commanders (emirs) for their revenue, were to be dismissed from their fief and settled with a pension of forty to fifty tankas. The younger Muqtas had been taxed for the surplus revenue (which was not taken from them as it should have) and the children and women who took possession of the Iqta of their forebears, were to be deprived of their Iqtas and compensated with the money required to sustain them. However, he was partially dissuaded from this ruling due to the advice of the old Kotwal, Fakhr ud-din, and the old nobles retained their lands.

Balban's steps against the nobility were so extreme as to raise suspicion from his brother, Sher Khan, who is said to have

never visited Delhi. It appears that resentment between the brothers had to come to a degree that made the Sultan poison his brother

"Balban's court was an austere assembly where zest and laughter were unknown and where wine and gambling were banished." He "introduced rigorous court discipline such as prostration before the king and kissing his feet." Nevertheless, Ghiyasuddin Balban still went on hunting expeditions, though these were more frequently used as a form of military training. There were large scale conversions to Islam in Punjab under his reign. Balban was the first who introduced the famous Persian Festival of Nauroz.

He started Iranian method Sijda and Paibos to the sultan in India. He also introduced the Persian festival Navroz (meaning New year). He himself called the Niyabat-i-Khudai.

## **Death**

Ghiya Su Di Din Balban ruled as the Sultan from 1265 until his death in 1287. Balban's heir was his older son, Prince Muhammad Khan, but he perished in a battle against the Mongols on 9 March 1285. His other son, Bughra Khan, was reluctant to assume the throne, and sought to remain the ruler of Bengal instead. Balban, therefore, chose his grandson, Kaikhasrau, son of Prince Muhammad, as heir apparent. However, after his death his nobles nominated Qaiqubad as Sultan.

Qaiqubad reign (1287–1290), while his father, Bughra Khan, asserted independence in Bengal. Qaiqubad was very weak and

incompetent and eventually fell to stroke and had to pass the rule to his three years old son, Shamsuddin Kayumars, who was eventually dethroned by his guardian, Jalal ud din Firuz Khalji in 1290, bringing an end to the Slave dynasty.

Today, Tomb of Balban wherein a true arch and a true dome were built of the first time in India, lies within the Mehrauli Archaeological Park in Delhi, adjacent to which stands that of his son Khan Shahid and wall mosque. The domes of both the tombs have collapsed and the structures are ruined structures were restored in the recent years when the conservation work began in the park.