

The Delhi Sultanate

A Political and Military History

The Delhi Sultanate was the first Islamic state to be established in India. In a broad-ranging and accessible narrative, Peter Jackson traces the history of the Sultanate from its foundation in 1210 to its demise in around 1400 following the sack of Delhi by the Central Asian conqueror, Temür (Tamerlane). During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Sultanate was the principal bastion of Islam in the subcontinent. While the book focuses on military and political affairs, tracing the Sultanate's expansion, its resistance to formidable Mongol invasions from the northwest and the administrative developments that underpinned these exploits, it also explores the Sultans' relations with their non-Muslim subjects. As a comprehensive treatment of the political history of this period, the book will make a significant contribution to the literature on medieval Indo-Muslim history. Students of Islamic and South Asian history, and those with a general interest in the region, will find it a valuable resource.

PETER JACKSON is Senior Lecturer in the Department of History at Keele University. He is editor of **The Cambridge History of Iran**, volume 6 (1986), and translator and joint editor of *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck* (1990).

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Preface

This book is designed to be a political and military history of the ‘Greater’ Delhi Sultanate, which after its creation in 1210 lasted for almost two hundred years and for almost half that period functioned as the sole bastion of Muslim power in the Indian subcontinent. The era from the sack of Delhi by the Central Asian conqueror Temür (*Timūr-i Lang*, ‘the Lame’; Westernized as ‘Tamerlane’) in 801/1398 down to the Mughal conquest in 932/1526, during which the Sultanate was merely one of several competing Muslim kingdoms in the north, is briefly covered in the Epilogue.

The source materials for the Delhi Sultanate – largely narrative in form and written in Persian, with the addition of descriptions of India by external observers who wrote in Arabic – are markedly less satisfactory than, for instance, either those available for the Mughal empire that followed it or those composed in the contemporary Mamlūk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria. Much of the general literature on this period of Indian history has tended to adhere, in my view, far too closely to the arrangement in the narrative sources, and accordingly the reader is all too often served up a barely digestible repast of seemingly unconnected events.

I have divided the period into two phases, with the reign of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī (695–715/1296–1316) marking a watershed: his era witnessed the implementation of far-reaching administrative changes, designed in large part to meet both an escalation in Mongol attacks and a more vigorous advance in Rajasthan and the south. Each of the two sections is introduced by a chapter on the sources, and the view they purvey of the sultans; but otherwise, within each section I have tried to approach the task thematically, giving prominence to the formation of the aristocracy, to administrative control and to the perennial warfare against the Sultanate’s enemies, whether independent Hindu powers or the Mongols of Afghanistan and Central Asia. In chapters 12–13 and 15 an attempt has been made to bring political and military affairs into relation with economic developments, although it has to be said that material for the economic history of the Sultanate is relatively meagre. Two chapters, focusing on the reigns of Muḥammad bin Tughluq (724–752/1324–51) and of Fīrūz Shāh (752–790/

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1351–88), represent a departure from the framework I have adopted; but it seemed advisable to devote a consolidated study to each of these problematic reigns. It is hoped that chapter 14, on the sultans' relations with the subject Hindu population, fits naturally between them, given Muḥammad's favour towards Hindus and his successor's allegedly more rigorous attitudes.

This book has been some years in gestation, and in writing it I have accumulated many debts. It is a pleasure to be able at last to acknowledge an award from the Leverhulme Trust which contributed towards the cost of replacement teaching for two terms in 1990–1, and the generosity of Keele University both in meeting the balance of those costs and in granting me a research award for a further term and funding research expenses. Thanks are also due to my medievalist colleagues in the History department for closing ranks when I was on sabbatical leave. I have benefited greatly from the assistance of the inter-library loans section of Keele University Library, and from the facilities offered by the Cambridge University Library, the Oriental Room of the Bodleian Library and the Indian Institute in Oxford, the John Rylands University Library at Manchester, the India Office Library and the Oriental Students' Room of the British Library (now amalgamated), the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and the Library of the Rijksuniversiteit Leiden. The forbearance of the Librarian of the Royal Asiatic Society towards a notoriously long-term borrower is also deeply appreciated. I am grateful to the relevant Turkish authorities for permission to consult the manuscript collections in the Süleymaniye and Nuruosmaniye Libraries and the Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi in Istanbul. Dr Renato Traini, librarian at the Biblioteca dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana in Rome, promptly and courteously supplied me with photocopies of the relevant folios of the manuscript Caetani 21 of al-Şafadī's *al-Wāfi bi'l-Wafayāt*. The Bodleian Library, the British Library and the National Archives of India have also kindly provided me with microfilms of certain manuscripts in their collections.

A number of scholars contributed towards the production of this book. Some years ago, Mr Simon Digby generously lent me a photocopy of most of the manuscript of the first recension of Baranī's *Ta'rīkh-i Firūz-Shāhī* in his private collection, which has proved invaluable, and more recently gave me permission to use a text in which he has collated the portion of this manuscript covering the reign of Muḥammad b. Tughluq with the relevant section of that in the Bodleian Library. In India in 1991, Dr Akbar Ali Khan Arshizade, Officiating Director of the Raza Library at Rampur, extended to my wife and myself a hospitality we still remember with warm gratitude. We had good reason, too, to value the assistance of Vikram, our driver, and Toni, our guide in the old city of Delhi. For the production of the maps I am indebted to my colleague Andrew Lawrence, of the

cartographic unit in the Department of Environmental Social Sciences at Keele. At the Cambridge University Press, Marigold Acland has proved an extremely patient and good-natured editor.

It will be obvious in the following pages how much I have profited from the work of other scholars who have made the eastern Islamic world, and in particular Muslim India, very much more their field than I have myself. Dr Peter Hardy and Professor Edmund Bosworth, who jointly examined my PhD thesis in 1976, have continued to sustain me with their friendship, interest and hospitality. I have gained also from the opportunity to meet and argue about the Delhi Sultanate with Dr Khurram Qadir, of the Bahauddin Zakariya University at Multan. Naturally, I enjoy undivided credit for any errors that have crept into the book.

My greatest debt is acknowledged, inadequately, in the dedication. Despite the heavy demands of her own career, my wife has never failed to offer encouragement and moral support to an author who at times appeared to be teetering on the edge of insanity. Without her this book could not have been written.

Note on transliteration

For the transliteration of Arabic and Persian, I have used the system adopted in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, except that *ch* is employed instead of *č*, *j* for *dj*, and *q* for *k*. For the sake of uniformity, Persian names and terms derived from Arabic are spelled as if they were Arabic: thus Muhaddith rather than Muhaddis, *dhimma* for *zimma*, *ḥadrat* for *ḥazrat*, and *waqf* in place of *vaqf*. The Persian *idāfa* has been rendered throughout as *[-y]i*. For Turkish and Mongol proper names and terms, I have followed the UNESCO system, as employed in J. A. Boyle, *The successors of Genghis Khan* (New York, 1971). The tentative reconstruction of a proper name is indicated by an asterisk, as in *Altunapa or *Tartaq. Precise readings, as found in manuscripts or printed texts, are reproduced in capitals, with X standing for *kh*, Γ for *gh*, Ć for *ch*, Š for *sh*, Ž for *zh*, ’ for *ḥamza*, and the long vowels represented by A, W and Y (a ‘tooth’ without diacritical points appears as a dot).

Indian names present a greater problem, and here I have undoubtedly been guilty of inconsistency. The names of those places that found their way into standard Islamic geographical lore are given in Arabic-Persian form, e.g. Qinnawj and Badā’ūn in place of Kanauj and Budaon; but otherwise a hybrid (if hopefully recognizable) form has been employed, e.g. Kōl, Chandēri, Ērach, rather than Kūl, Chandīri, Īrach. Where a European spelling has become established, however, as with Delhi and Lahore, I have given the Persian-Arabic form (*Dillī*, *Dihlī*; *Lāhawr*) alongside it at first encounter, thereafter adhering to the form in common use.

Abbreviations

Periodicals and reference works

<i>AEMA</i>	<i>Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi</i>
<i>AOH</i>	<i>Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i>
<i>ARIE</i>	<i>Archaeological Survey of India. Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy</i>
<i>BEO</i>	<i>Bulletin d'Etudes Orientales de l'Institut Français de Damas</i>
<i>BI</i>	Bibliotheca Indica
<i>BL</i>	British Library
<i>BN</i>	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
<i>BSO[A]S</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental [and African] Studies, University of London</i>
<i>CAJ</i>	<i>Central Asiatic Journal</i>
<i>CCIM</i>	H. Nelson Wright (ed.), <i>Catalogue of the coins of the Indian Museum, Calcutta</i>
<i>CMSD</i>	H. Nelson Wright (ed.), <i>The coinage and metrology of the Sultāns of Dehli</i>
<i>DGUP</i>	<i>District gazetteers of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh</i> (Allahabad, 1903–22, 48 vols.)
<i>ED</i>	Sir Henry Elliot, <i>A history of India as told by its own historians</i> , ed. J. Dowson (London, 1867–77, 8 vols.)
<i>EI</i>	<i>Epigraphia Indica</i>
<i>EIAPS</i>	<i>Epigraphia Indica. Arabic and Persian Supplement</i>
<i>EIM</i>	<i>Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica</i>
<i>Enc.Ir.</i>	E. Yarshater (ed.), <i>Encyclopaedia Iranica</i> (London and Costa Mesa, California, 1982– in progress)
<i>Enc.Isl.</i> ²	Ch. Pellat <i>et al.</i> (eds.), <i>The encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , new edn (Leiden, 1954– in progress)
<i>GMS</i>	Gibb Memorial Series
<i>HI</i>	<i>Hamdard Islamicus</i>
<i>HJAS</i>	<i>Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies</i>

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HN	M. Habib and K. A. Nizami (eds.), <i>The Delhi Sultanat (A.D. 1206–1526)</i>
HS	Hakluyt Society
IA	<i>Indian Antiquary</i>
IC	<i>Islamic Culture</i>
IESHR	<i>Indian Economic and Social History Review</i>
IG	W. S. Meyer et al. (eds.), <i>The Imperial Gazetteer of India</i> , new edn. (Oxford, 1907–9, 26 vols.)
IHQ	<i>Indian Historical Quarterly</i>
IHR	<i>Indian Historical Review</i>
IOL	India Office Library, London
IO[N]S	<i>Israel Oriental [Notes and] Studies</i>
<i>Iran</i>	<i>Iran. Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies</i>
IS	<i>Islamic Studies</i>
IU	Islamkundliche Untersuchungen
JA	<i>Journal Asiatique</i>
JAH	<i>Journal of Asian History</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JAS[B]	<i>Journal of the Asiatic Society [of Bengal]</i>
JASP	<i>Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan</i>
JB[O]RS	<i>Journal of the Bihar [and Orissa] Research Society</i>
JCA	<i>Journal of Central Asia</i>
JIH	<i>Journal of Indian History</i>
JIS	<i>Journal of Islamic Studies</i>
JNSI	<i>Journal of the Numismatic Society of India</i>
JPHS	<i>Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society</i>
JRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland</i>
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JUPHS	<i>Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society</i>
MASI	<i>Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India</i>
MIM	<i>Medieval India: a miscellany</i>
MIQ	<i>Medieval India Quarterly</i>
NIA	<i>New Indian Antiquary</i>
PFEH	<i>Papers on Far Eastern History</i>
PIHC	<i>Proceedings of the . . . Indian History Congress</i> [numeral refers to the number of the session]
PL	C. A. Storey, <i>Persian literature: a bio-bibliographical survey</i> (London, 1927– in progress)
PPV	Pamiatniki Pis'mennosti Vostoka
PSMI	<i>Proceedings of the Seminar on Medieval Inscriptions (6–8th Feb. 1970)</i> (Aligarh, 1974)
PUJ	<i>Patna University Journal</i>

QGIA	Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Kairo. Quellen zur Geschichte des islamischen Ägyptens
RCEA	Et. Combe, J. Sauvaget and G. Wiet (eds.), <i>Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe</i> (Cairo, 1931– in progress)
RRL	Rampur Raza Library
SK	Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Istanbul
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
TMENP	G. Doerfer, <i>Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen</i>
TSM	Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, Istanbul
TVOIRAO	<i>Trudy Vostochnago Otdeleniia Imperatorskago Russkago Arkheologicheskago Obshchestva</i>
WZKM	<i>Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes</i>
ZS	<i>Zentralasiatische Studien</i>

Texts

AHG	Ulughkhānī, <i>Zafar al-Wālih</i> , ed. Ross, <i>An Arabic history of Gujarat</i>
AH	Fakhr-i Mudabbir, <i>Ādāb al-Ḥarb wa'l-Shajā'a</i>
Bābur-Nāma	Bābur, <i>Bābur-Nāma</i>
CN	Kūfi, <i>Chach-Nāma</i>
DA	Ghaznawī, <i>Dastūr al-Albāb</i>
DGK	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Dibācha-yi Ghurraṭ al-Kamāl</i>
DR	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Diwal Rānī-yi Khaḍir Khān</i>
FFS	Sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq, <i>Futūḥāt-i Fīrūz-Shāhī</i>
FG	Yūsuf-i Ahl, <i>Farā'id-i Ghiyāthī</i>
FJ	Baranī, <i>Fatāwā-yi Jahāndārī</i>
FS	'Iṣāmī, <i>Futūḥ al-Salāṭīn</i>
GK	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Ghurraṭ al-Kamāl</i>
IA	Ibn al-Athīr, <i>al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rikh</i>
IB	Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, <i>Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār</i>
IM	Ibn Māhrū, <i>Inshā-yi Māhrū</i>
JH	'Awfī, <i>Jawāmi' al-Hikāyāt</i>
JT	Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl-Allāh, <i>Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh</i>
KF	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Khazā'in al-Futūḥ</i>
MA	al-'Umarī, <i>Masālik al-Abṣār</i>
MF	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Miftāḥ al-Futūḥ</i>
NS	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Nuh Sipīhr</i>
QS	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Qirān al-Sa'dayn</i>
RI	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Rasā'il al-I'jāz</i>
SA	Fakhr-i Mudabbir, <i>Shajarat al-Ansāb</i>
SFS	Anonymous, <i>Sīrat-i Fīrūz-Shāhī</i>
Siyar	Kirmānī (Amīr Khwurd), <i>Siyar al-Awliyā'</i>

xx Abbreviations

<i>SP</i>	Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl-Allāh, <i>Shu‘ab-i Panjgāna</i>
<i>Tāj</i>	Ḥasan-i Nizāmī, <i>Tāj al-Ma‘āthir</i>
<i>TFS</i>	Baranī, <i>Ta’rikh-i Fīrūz-Shāhī</i>
<i>TFS</i> ¹	Baranī, <i>Ta’rikh-i Fīrūz-Shāhī</i> , first recension
<i>TJG</i>	Juwaynī, <i>Ta’rikh-i Jahān-Gushā</i>
<i>TMS</i>	Sirhindī, <i>Ta’rikh-i Mubārak-Shāhī</i>
<i>TN</i>	Jūzjānī, <i>Ṭabaqāt-i Nāsirī</i>
<i>TS</i>	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Tuḥfat al-Ṣighār</i>
<i>Tughluq-Nāma</i>	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Tughluq-Nāma</i>
<i>WH</i>	Amīr Khusraw, <i>Wasaf al-Ḥayāt</i>
Shāmī, <i>ZN</i>	Shāmī, <i>Ẓafar-Nāma</i>
Yazdī, <i>ZN</i>	Yazdī, <i>Ẓafar-Nāma</i>