After describing the defeat of Bahram Aiba Kishlu Khan, Barani returns to his charge again, but his memory fails him when he writes as if the famine came immediately after Kishlu Khan’s rebellion. The measures we have been discussing—the exodus to Daulatabad, the recruitment of an enormous army for the Khurasan expedition, the Qarachil campaign—could not have been undertaken during a famine. During the two176 years (? six years, 1328-34), he tells us, ‘when the Sultan was at Delhi with his amirs, maliks and soldiers, while their women and children were at Devagiri, the territory of the Doab was ruined on account of severe demands and innumerable cesses. The Hindus set fire to their grain and burnt it; they also turned out their cattle from their houses. The Sultan ordered the shiqdars and faujdars to extend their hands in plunder. Some muqaddams and chaudharis were killed, while others were blinded. Those who succeeded in escaping collected together and took refuge in the forests. Thus the territory was desolated. During these days the Sultan happened to go for hunting to Baran; he ordered the whole territory of Baran to be plundered and the heads of the Hindus to be brought and hanged from the towers of the Baran fort... The Sultan during these days took his army to plunder the Hindustanis and he plundered the territory from Kanauj to Dalmau; those who fell into the hands of the soldiers were killed, but most inhabitants fled away and hid themselves in the forests; the forests, however, were surrounded and those found in them were killed. In this way during this year177 the land between Kanauj and Dalmau was desolated.’

Barani quite ignores the Sultan’s objective in raising the land tax and waging a war with the Doab peasants for the possession of their grain. The matter is, however, clarified by Ibn-i Battuta, who seems to have reached Delhi in March 1334, probably the first year of severe famine in the Doab. When the famine became unbearable, the Sultan ordered provisions for six months to be distributed to all the people of Delhi. Accordingly the qazis, clerks and amirs used to go round the streets and shops. They would make a note of the inhabitants, and give to each provisions sufficient to last for six months at the rate of the daily allowance of one and half maghrabi ratl (i.e. 12 chataks of modern Indian weight) per day.178 All this while I used to feed the people with victuals, which I caused to be prepared in Sultan Qutbuddin’s sepulchre, as

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176 ‘Two’ seems to be a clerical error for ‘six’.
177 It seems probable that the monsoon failed to reach the Doab in 1333.
178 Dr. Mehdì Hasan’s calculation, Rehla, 85.
will be mentioned. The people were being thus relieved.' Ibn-i Battuta only tells us about the capital, but the Sultan’s government must have organized some rough system of rationing for all cities till the cutting of the next kharif crop, and it had to get from the peasants the minimum of grain necessary for the purpose.

Barani and Ibn-i Battuta agree in stating that the Sultan was at Kanauj when he heard that Saiyyid Ahsan Shah, governor of Ma’abar, had rebelled, and that he had put seven or eight loyal amirs to the sword and had been joined by the army, which had conquered Ma’abar. The Sultan’s hand had fallen very heavily on the earlier rebels, but Saiyyid Ahsan Shah, whose capital, according to Ibn-i Battuta, was six months’ march from Delhi, calculated that the long distance and the weakening of the central government owing to a severe famine, which seems to have covered the Doab, Malwa and East Punjab, gave him a chance. His son, Ibrahim Kharetadar, was in the imperial service and was sure to be punished, but he preferred to take the risk. The Sultan returned from Kanauj to Delhi, equipped his army in about eight days and started for Ma’abar. Saiyyid Ibrahim Kharetadar, who was then governor of Hansi and Sarsati, was arrested immediately with his relations, and when the Sultan returned from the South, he was put to death on the charge of treason. Meanwhile the wazir, Khwaja-i Jahan Ahmad Ayaz, had reached Dhar, but here he discovered that his nephew along with two or three amirs had conspired to kill him and to fly with his property to Ma’abar. Ahmad Ayaz discovered the conspiracy through one of their confidants, Malik Nusrat Hajib, seized the conspirators and sent them to Delhi. The Sultan ordered the amirs to be killed by elephants. But he sent Ahmad Ayaz’s nephew to be put to death by Ayaz himself and this was done. Ahmad Ayaz was then ordered to return to Delhi and take charge of the central government.

The Sultan reached Daulatabad and stayed there for a month or two. He then proceeded to Bidar in Telingana. According to Barani the Sultan appointed harsh agents and officers to collect whatever they could from the land of the Marathas. But a severe outbreak of plague while the Sultan was at Bidar frustrated all his future plans. ‘At that time’, says Ibn-i Battuta, ‘the plague broke out in his army, the bulk of which perished. The slaves and soldiers (abd wa mamluk) and the

179 Mehdi Hasan, Rehla, 117. Ibn-i Battuta is obviously incorrect in stating that the famine broke out after the Sultan had left for Ma’abar; Barani says that the famine became more severe after the Sultan had marched four stages. Isami is silent about the famine.
180 Ibid., 103-4.
181 Ibid., 99.
principal amirs, such as Daulat Shah whom the Sultan used to address as “uncle” and Amir Abdullah of Herat, died.\textsuperscript{182} Ibn-i Battuta was not present with the Sultan’s army, but he has described this well-known epidemic—the oriental or bubonic plague—elsewhere. ‘When I reached Madura, I found that an epidemic was raging there and that the people afflicted with it died in no time. Whoever caught the infection died on the morrow or the day after, and if not on the third day then on the fourth… Wherever I went I saw people either diseased or dead.’\textsuperscript{183} Isami, who talks poetically in terms of a poisonous wind (\textit{simum}), due to the evil acts of the Sultan, declares that ‘out of the army-officers of Delhi one half died, more or less, and that the army which the Sultan brought back to Delhi had been reduced by the plague (‘\textit{waba}’) to less than a third.’\textsuperscript{184}

The Sultan himself fell a victim to the plague. As is well-known for all early victims the plague used to be fatal, but with the passage of time the poison of the bacteria became less effective and people began to recover. The Sultan was probably among these fortunate later victims. He got into a litter and, though expecting the pangs of death (\textit{naza}), started for Daulatabad. In the way a messenger from Qutlug Khan informed him that Hoshang, son of Kamaluddin Gurg, had rebelled and found refuge with a Hindu chief of Konkan. But neither the Sultan nor Hoshang were prepared to drag matters to extremes, though Hoshang’s Hindu host was prepared to die for him.

The Sultan, when leaving Warangal, put Malik Maqbul in charge of that territory. On reaching Devagiri, he assigned Bidar and the territories subject to it to Shihab-i Sultan Nusrat Khan on a farm or contract of one hundred lakhs of \textit{tankas} (a year). The government of Devagiri and Maharashtra was assigned to Qutlug Khan, who was authorized to convey the Sultan’s pardon to Hoshang, and the Sultan was pleased when Hoshang came to see him at Delhi. A general permission was given to the former citizens of Delhi to return to the capital and two or three \textit{caravans} started for Delhi, but people who had accommodated themselves to Maharashtra were allowed to remain there.\textsuperscript{185}

‘When the Sultan saw the misfortune that had befallen the army,’ Ibn-i Battuta observes, ‘he returned to Daulatabad, since rebellion had been ripe in the provinces and anarchy reigned in different parts, and the sceptre would have fallen from his hands had it not been

\textsuperscript{182} Ib\textit{id.}, 101.
\textsuperscript{183} Ib\textit{id.}, 230.
\textsuperscript{184} Isami (Madras edition), 469-71.
\textsuperscript{185} Rehla, 101-2; Barani, 450-81; Isami, 449-52.
decreed by Destiny that his power would continue. On his way back to Daulatabad the Sultan fell ill; the people spread rumours of his death far and wide and this gave rise to widespread disturbances.186

Ibn-i Battuta's impression that the Sultan's government was no longer based on real military strength is correct. The invincible central army of the empire, which the Tughluqs had inherited from the Khaljis, was so weakened by the loss of lives in the plague that it became ineffective as an instrument of the central authority for several years, and in spite of Muhammad bin Tughluq's efforts, it never reached its former standard of efficiency and invincibility. The Sultan undertook no distant campaign for a decade, and the army that marched with him to Gujarat in 1345 was but the ghost of its former self.

The fact that the Sultan had not under his personal and immediate command an army that could control the empire and knock down enemies on the frontier created a curious situation with respect to rebels. If a district officer rebelled, the regional or provincial officer could suppress him. But if a provincial officer rebelled during this decade (1334-45), the Sultan was just helpless. He could not take up the challenge and the rebel, whether a Hindu chief or a Muslim officer, became an independent ruler. The larger number of rebellions after 1334 were no doubt inspired by the known weakness of the central army. The idea of an all-India administration had to be given up altogether, and the Sultan correctly calculated that his army was too weak to challenge Alauddin Bahman Shah after his accession in 1347. It was probably after the plague of 1334 and his known military weakness that two existing features were greatly accentuated: The Sultan began to punish both the guilty and the innocent on mere suspicion in the hope that bloodshed on a large scale would terrorize his officers and make them obedient; on the other hand, his officers, knowing his military weakness, preferred rebellion to punishment without trial. This is the main military theme of the seventeen later years of the reign.

While the Sultan was dealing with the situation in Maharashtra, a crisis developed in Lahore. Hulajun, one of those Mongol chiefs who had been taken into the imperial service by Muhammad bin Tughluq, killed the governor of Lahore, Malik Tatar, and assumed independence. Khwaja-i Jahan marched from Delhi and defeated the rebel, who fled from Lahore.

The Sultan though still ill (according to Barani) proceeded from Devagiri to Delhi but stopped for a few days at Dhar. There was an acute famine in Malwa also; in Delhi the price of grain rose to 16 and

17 țitals a sir. But Barani’s statement that this year also there could be no cultivation owing to lack of rain is not quite correct. Ibn-i Battuta, who to start with had been treated as a very distinguished guest, could get no proper interview with the Sultan till after his return from Devagiri after an absence of two and a half years. ‘It was in these days’, Ibn-i Battuta tells us, ‘that I reached the Sultan’s camp. The territories on the western (?) southern bank of the Ganges, where the Sultan was encamped were severely affected by the famine while those lying on the eastern (?) northern bank were prosperous.’ Obviously, it had rained fairly well in Awadh but not in the Doab. The governor of the territories of the eastern (?) northern bank was Ainul Mulk bin Mahru, and these territories included Awadh, Zafarabad, Lucknow and others. Ainul Mulk used to send every day fifty thousand mans of wheat, rice and grain and also fodder for the animals.’

Barani, in effect, accepts the accuracy of Ibn-i Battuta’s statement when he says that the Sultan allowed the citizens to migrate with their families to Hindustan (?) Awadh) to escape the famine. ‘Sultan Muhammad also came out of the capital and passing Patiali and Kampila encamped with his troops before the town of Khud by the side of the Ganges. The men built their thatched houses facing the cultivated lands. This encampment was named Sargdwarī (Gate of Heaven); grain could come here from Kara and Awadh and was cheaper than in Delhi. While the Sultan was encamped at Sargdwarī, Malik Ainul Mulk Mahru held the iqta of Awadh and Zafarbad. Ainul Mulk and his brothers sent to the Sultan at Delhi and Sargdwarī cash, commodities, cloth and grain to the value of seventy or eighty lakhs of tankas; the Sultan’s trust in Ainul Mulk increased and he was convinced of Ainul Mulk’s efficiency.’

According to Ibn-i Battuta, the Sultan had to stay at Sargdwarī for about two and a half years and he had spent an equal time in the futile attempt to reach Ma’ābar. It is necessary to examine what the Sultan had suffered in power and prestige during these five terrible years. There had been plague but not famine in the Deccan, but the home provinces of the empire—Doab, East Punjab, Malwa, but probably not Awadh—had been hit severely by the continued drought and it would take a wise minister, if the Sultan could find one, seven or eight years to restore agriculture to normal conditions. The ‘bulk’ of the invincible army of Delhi—one-half of the officers and two-thirds of the men’—had perished in the plague. It has to be borne in mind that the army which almost perished in the plague was the

187 Firuz Shahi, 480-81.
army of the central government; the civil and military officers stationed in the provinces—often referred to as the sadah amirs—do not seem to have suffered.

REVOLUTIONS IN BENGAL

'Bahram Khan (the King's step-brother) died in Sonargaon (Dacca); and in 739/1338-39 Malik Fakhruddin, the silahdar (weapon-keeper) of Bahram Khan, rebelled and declared that he was an independent ruler and took the title of Sultan Fakhruddin. Malik Pindar Khalji Qadr Khan, governor of Lakhnauti, along with Malik Husamuddin Abu Raja, the mustaufi-i mamluk (auditor-general), Azam Malik Izzuddin Yahya, the muqta of Satgaon (Chittagong), and Firuz Khan, son of Nusrat Khan, the amir-i koh, marched to Sonargaon to suppress Fakhruddin's rebellion. Fakhruddin came out with his army to fight them; there was a battle, Fakhruddin was defeated and fled and his elephants and horses fell into the hands of the imperialists.

The other amirs returned to their iqtas but Qadr Khan remained in Sonargaon. When the monsoon set in, most horses of the army of Qadr Khan died. But he had collected a lot of money in the form of silver tankas. After every two or three months he would come to the palace (serai) and collect them in a heap and say, "In this way I will place them before the royal court (dakhul); the more I collect the better will be my service." Malik Husamuddin warned him against the danger of collecting large sums of cash in a distant province: "People will be tempted; short-sighted persons will want to know the reason why this money is not sent to the capital; all revenue collected is safest in the treasury of the king." But Qadr Khan would not hear; he neither paid their salary to the soldiers nor sent the revenue to the royal treasury. Then Fakhruddin attacked and Qadr Khan's unpaid army joined him. Qadr Khan was killed; Fakhruddin established himself in Sonargaon and put Lakhnauti in charge of his slave, Mukhlis.

'Ali Mubarak, the ariz of the army of Qadr Khan, seized Lakhnauti and put Mukhlis to death. But he adopted none of the insignia of royalty and petitioned to the court: "I have captured Lakhnauti; if an officer from the capital is appointed to take charge of it, I will return to the capital." Sultan Muhammad agreed; he gave the title of khan to Yusuf, the shahna of Delhi, and decided to send him there. But Yusuf died; the Sultan could not attend to the matter and sent no one to Lakhnauti.

'Owing to the opposition of Fakhruddin, Ali Mubarak had no alternative but to declare that he was a king and assume the title
of Sultan Alauddin. After some days Malik Haji Ilyas, who had an army and plenty of followers, conspired with some maliks, amirs and the people of Lakhnauti; he put Alauddin to death and mounted the throne with the title of Sultan Shamsuddin. In 741/1340-41 Haji Ilyas marched against Sonargaon; he succeeded in capturing Fakhruddin, brought him to Lakhnauti and put him to death. Thereafter for a long time Lakhnauti remained in the hands of Shamsuddin and his descendants; it did not come within the control of the Delhi sultans again.\textsuperscript{188}

It is impossible to believe that Sultan Muhammad failed to attend to the Bengal problem owing to an oversight. Qadr Khan may have been harbouring treasonable designs, but Ali Mubarak was certainly loyal. But the Sultan lacked both the men and the resources which an officer of his would need for establishing himself in the province; consequently, in view of troubles nearer home, he could do nothing about the matter and Bengal slipped out of his grasp.

\textbf{Establishment of Independent Hindu principalities in Southern India}

We can form some idea of the military and financial weakness to which the sultanat had been reduced by the famine and the plague from the fact that the Sultan made no effort to maintain his power over two principalities which he had annexed after a terrible cost of money and blood.

(a) \textit{Vijayanagar}:

When the Sultan retreated with his plague-stricken army to the famine-stricken North, it was obvious that he would be unable to control the Far South. In 1336 Hari Har and his brother, Bukka, founded a Hindu principality south of the river Krishna, which gradually expanded into the Vijayanagar empire.

(b) \textit{Warangal}:

The Sultan had decided to annex Warangal after the second invasion. Now (\textit{circa} 1335) Warangal was lost and he could do nothing about it. ‘While the Sultan was at Delhi (and before he went to Sargdwar),’ Barani tells us, ‘the rebellion of the Hindus at Warangal took place; Kanhya Naik attained to power in the region; Malik Maqbul, the governor of Warangal, took the road to Delhi and reached

\textsuperscript{188} \textit{Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi}, 104-6. Yahya Sirhindi does not quote his authority, but he gives us the best account of the revolutions in Bengal, which we can at present find.
there safely; the power of Hindus was established at Warangal and the region was totally lost.'

KAMPILA

'About the same time a relation of Kanhya (who had been converted to Islam) was sent by the Sultan to Kampila. This wretch apostatized from Islam, went back to Hinduism and raised the banner of revolt. Kampila was also lost and came into the hands of the Hindus.' 189

And this was the end of Sultan Muhammad's dream of an all-India administrative system. Apart from the homelands of the empire, as Barani points out, 'only Gujarat and Devagiri remained in his hands'.

THE NAGARKOT CAMPAIGN

No detailed account of Muhammad bin Tughluq's Nagarkot campaign in the Kangra district is found in any early authority, but that the Sultan personally undertook this campaign is clear from certain stray remarks and references found in the works of Barani 190 and Afs. 191 Badr-i Chach gives some verses under the caption of Fath-i Qila-i Nagarkot and mentions 738/1337 as the date of conquest. The campaign cannot be identified with the Qarachil expedition, as Sir Wolseley Haig has done for the simple reason that, unlike the Qarachil expedition, this campaign was led by the Sultan in person. But it certainly formed part of the Sultan's larger programme of securing frontier outposts. Perhaps it was the Qarachil disaster that induced him to assume the command in person. He displayed great religious tolerance on this occasion and, according to the Sirat-i Firuz Shahi, spared the temple of Jwalamukhi. 192

REBELLIONS

In spite of the famine, the Sultan had to face a number of rebellions.

Rebellion of Mas'ud Khan:

Mas'ud Khan was the Sultan's step-brother; his mother was a daughter of Sultan Alauddin Khalji. 'He was the most handsome of all the men that I have seen in the world', 193 Ibn-i Battuta remarks.

189 Firuz Shahi, 484.
190 Ibid., (Barani), 483.
191 Ibid., (Afs), 185-89.
192 Sirat-i Firuz Shahi, f. 40.
193 Rehla, 85.
The Sultan had stoned his mother to death on the charge of adultery and this naturally created a deep resentment in the heart of Mas'ud. Two years after this Mas'ud was charged with contemplating rebellion. He was so afraid of the torture inflicted in order to extort confessions that he accepted the charge outright and was executed in the centre of the market. His body remained there for three days.\textsuperscript{194}

\textit{Rebellion at Sunam and Samana}:

This was in the nature of a peasant revolt. The cultivators refused to pay the land tax and shut themselves up in their mandals. The Sultan marched against the rebels in person, captured their leaders and brought them to Delhi.

\textit{Rebellion of Nizam Ma'in at Kara}:

In 739/1338 Nizam Ma'in rebelled at Kara. He had undertaken to farm the revenue of Kara for several lakhs of tankas, but could not pay even one-tenth of the amount he had promised. He assumed the title of Sultan Alauddin and declared his independence. Ainiul Mulk, the governor of Awadh and Zafrabad, and his brother Shahrullah, marched against him. Ma'in was flayed alive and his stuffed skin was sent to Delhi.\textsuperscript{195} The iqta of Kara was assigned to the husband of the Sultan's sister, Shaikhzada Bustani.\textsuperscript{196}

\textit{Rebellion of Shihab Sultan at Bidar}:

In 740/1338-9 Tajul Mulk Nusrat Khan, also known as Shihab Sultan, rebelled at Bidar. He had been assigned Bidar about 1334 and had to pay a crore of tankas to the centre. He failed to pay the fixed amount of revenue and also could not promote agriculture as he had promised. He rose in rebellion as he thought that his failure would lead to his condign punishment by the Sultan. Qutlugh Khan marched against him and captured him.

\textit{Rebellion of Ali Shah Nathu at Gulbarga}:

This rebellion took place some time after the rebellion of Shihab Sultan. Ali Adil Shah Nathu was a nephew of Zafar Khan, the famous general of Alauddin Khalji. Having been appointed to collect the taxes, he killed Bhiran, the Hindu \textit{maqta} of Gulbarga, and established his hold over Gulbarga and Bidar. Qutlugh Khan marched against him, defeated him and sent him to Delhi. The Sultan exiled

\textsuperscript{194} Ibid., 86.
\textsuperscript{195} Firdous Shahi, 487. Yabia Sirhindi gives the name of his brother.
\textsuperscript{196} Ibid., 487-88.
him and his brothers to Ghazni, but when they returned without his permission, he ordered them to be executed.

Rebellion of Ainul Mulk Mahru:

Ainul Mulk, son of Amir Mahru, was a close friend and associate of Muhammad bin Tughluq, who appointed him governor of Awadh and Zafrabad. During the days of the Doab famine he did excellent work in his iqta. With the help of his brothers, he dealt with the recalcitrant elements and established peaceful and prosperous conditions in his iqtas. In 1338 he suppressed the rebellion of Nizam Ma’in at Kara. When the Sultan was at Sargdware, Ainul Mulk and his brothers worked hard to help the Sultan in his relief programmes. He used to send 50,000 mans of wheat and rice every day to the imperial camp. Besides, he sent 70 to 80 lakhs of tankas in cash and commodities to the Sultan at Delhi and Sargdware, as already mentioned.

These achievements of Ainul Mulk and his hold over the people made the Sultan suspicious of him. This suspicion was further confirmed by the fact that during the famine, when the Sultan had forbidden emigration, many nobles, officers and others, particularly the secretariat staff (nawisandas), went to Awadh and Zafrabad and found shelter with Ainul Mulk. Some of these persons were involved in cases of embezzlement. Ainul Mulk and his brothers treated them with kindness and even assigned villages to them.

The Sultan thought of transferring Ainul Mulk to Daulatabad, which needed a statesman and administrator of Ainul Mulk’s stature and insight. Qutlugh Khan had proved himself unequal to the task. Ainul Mulk, however, interpreted this transfer as a device for reducing his influence and his ultimate destruction. The emigrant nobles and nawisandas convinced Ainul Mulk that the Sultan was not sincere in sending him to the Deccan and that he was playing a treacherous game.

One day Muhammad bin Tughluq sent a message to Ainul Mulk, which explained to him the inexpediency of sheltering these men and ordered their immediate despatch in chains to Delhi. Ainul Mulk’s

197 Ibid., 489.
198 Zafrabad is mentioned in the A’in-i Akbari as a pargana in the sarkar of Jaunpur. It was probably founded by Zafar Khan during the reign of Ala-ud-din Khalji.
199 Rehla, 105.
200 Firuz Shahi, 486.
201 Ibid., 486.
202 Ibid., 486.
suspicions were further confirmed, and he began to plan his escape with his brothers. One night he left the Sargdwari camp and proceeded to join his brother, who had seized the entire baggage of the Sultan, which was in his charge.\textsuperscript{203} The news of this escape was reported to Muhammad bin Tughluq by a slave, Ibn-i Malik Shah, who used to live with Ainul Mulk.\textsuperscript{204}

The Sultan, who was in the Doab at that time, found himself in a very critical position. He could not concentrate his forces to suppress the rebellion at such a distance from the capital. So he thought of going back to the capital and then coming again with sufficient men and material. But the foreign amirs, who were bitterly hostile to Ainul Mulk, the leader of the Indian amirs, advised the Sultan to take prompt action. Nasiruddin Auhari suggested that an immediate attack would prevent Ainul Mulk from organizing his forces. His advice disappointed the native amirs who, in their heart of hearts, were sympathetically inclined towards Ainul Mulk.\textsuperscript{205} Muhammad bin Tughluq called his troops from Samana, Amroha, Baran, Koil and other towns, and resorted to a strange stratagem to overawe the enemy. If one hundred men came to the royal camp from outside, one thousand men went out to receive them and thus they created the impression that large imperial reinforcements were pouring in from all sides. The Sultan hurriedly proceeded towards Kanauj and entrenched himself in the fort, thus securing a strategic position.

Ainul Mulk and his brothers crossed the Ganges below Bangarmau;\textsuperscript{206} they wanted to raid the camp of the Sultan, but by mistake they reached the camp of the wazir. The wazir’s force consisted of elements deadly opposed to the Indian amirs. The Persians, Turks and Khurasanis, who constituted the wazir’s troops, fought well and Ainul Mulk’s forces fled away from the field.\textsuperscript{207} One of Ainul Mulk’s principal associates, Malik Ibrahim Banji, betrayed him; and pulling him down from his horse by catching hold of his locks of hair, took him to the wazir. Ainul Mulk’s brothers were either drowned while attempting to cross the river or were killed in the battle.\textsuperscript{208}

\textsuperscript{203} Ibid., 489.

\textsuperscript{204} Rehla, 105. Ibn-i Battuta further informs us: ‘It is the habit of the emperor of India to keep with every amir, be he great or small, one of his slaves who acts as a spy on the amir and informs the emperor about everything concerning him.’

\textsuperscript{205} Ibid., 105-6.

\textsuperscript{206} Bangarmau lies in the centre of the pargana of the same name at a distance of 31 miles N.W. of Unao on the road leading from that place to Hardoi.

\textsuperscript{207} Ibid., 107.

\textsuperscript{208} Ibid., 108-9.
Ainul Mulk was subjected to many indignities. He was asked to ride on an ox.²⁰⁹ His body was naked, except for a small cloth hiding his private parts. The sons of maliks and amirs spat on his face and scolded and abused him.²¹⁰ When he was brought before Muhammad bin Tughluq in that condition, the Sultan was deeply moved and ordered him to be given ordinary clothes. Ainul Mulk’s hands were tied to his neck and chains were put on his legs. Some sixty-two of his companions were ruthlessly trampled by elephants and their flesh was thrown at Ainul Mulk. After crushing his rebellion, the Sultan went on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Salar Mas‘ud Ghazi and from there he returned to Delhi.

Ainul Mulk was pardoned on the fourth day after his defeat and was appointed superintendent of a royal garden. He was given a khilat (robe of honour) and a horse. His ration was supplied from the royal godown. Afif’s account about the rehabilitation of Ainul Mulk is as follows:

‘The Sultan held a public court, and a small carpet was placed next to the throne. He summoned to this court all qazis, ulama, shaikhs, khans, maliks, nobles and the general public from all directions. When after a short time the well-wishers of the court had assembled, rubbed their foreheads on the ground in humble submission and stood up with all reverence in their respective positions, Sultan Muhammad commanded the courtiers to come nearer. When they had done so, he said, “I put to you a question: If a man should lose a priceless gem and after some time find it lying in dirt, should he pick it up or leave it there?” The nobles and officers of the empire replied: “It should be picked up. It would not be wise to leave it there.” On hearing this answer the Sultan pointed towards Ainul Mulk and remarked, “That gem of mine is Ainul Mulk, who had the misfortune to be found among his slovenly brothers. I picked him up and have found in him my gem.” It was commanded that Ainul Mulk be seated on the carpet referred to above.’²¹¹

Ainul Mulk is not heard of during the remaining years of Muhammad bin Tughluq’s reign, but when the Sultan breathed his last at Thatta, we find him in Multan. Shihab-i Sultani had also been put in charge of a garden.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 108. Yahya Sirhindī says: ’Bereft of head dress, he was placed on an ass by Ibrahim Bangi and taken to the Sultan.’
²¹⁰ Ibid., 108.
²¹¹ Afif, Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi, 408.
Rebellion of Shahu Afghan:

In 742/1341 Shahu Afghan killed Bahzad, the governor of Multan, and declared his independence. Muhammad bin Tughluq set off from Delhi to deal with him. On the way he heard about the death of his mother, Makhduma-i Jahan, but despite his grief and bereavement, he continued his march. Near Dipalpur he came to know that Shahu had fled to the ‘home of the Afghans’—explained by Ibn-i Battuta as Cambay, Gujarat and Nahrwala where the Afghans lived. It was not the Sultan’s policy to tolerate rebels. He issued orders for the wholesale arrest of Afghans in his territory.

THE KHILAFAT AS A PROTECTING GLACIS

In the later years of the famine (circa 1339) Muhammad bin Tughluq evinced a keen and excessive interest in the institution of the khilafat. According to Barani,212 he made persistent enquiries about the Khalifa and the position of the khilafat after the fall of Baghdad; and when he came to know about the Egyptian Khalifa, he was so delighted that he would have sent his whole wealth to the Khalifa but for the danger of bandits and pirates on the way. Was this respect for the khilafat genuine or was it simply a subterfuge to disarm the hostility of the Muslim masses, particularly of the religious sections, through the immense moral prestige of the khilafat on the Muslim mind? And was there such a prestige? It seems highly improbable, if not impossible, that despite his close diplomatic and cultural contacts with the outside world, the Sultan did not know for decades that there was an Abbasid Khalifa in Egypt. Perhaps this alleged discovery of the Khalifa was just an explanation for the delayed expression of his faith in the khilafat. However, it is significant that the period of the Sultan’s pedantic display of faith in the khilafat as the only source of moral and legal authority synchronizes with the period of great stress and strain in his empire and the problems created by the opposition of the religious classes. From 741/1340-41 to 752/1351 his time and energy were spent in dealing with rebellions that grew like dragon’s teeth in every direction. He thought that perhaps by the use of the Khalifa’s name, he could rehabilitate himself in the confidence of the people.

The anonymous author of the Sirat-i Firuz Shahi213 says that his extensive study of books had led him to believe that the sanction of the Khalifa was absolutely necessary for the rightful exercise of political power. The Tarikh-i Alfi, however, informs us that it was the

212 Ibid., 491 et seq.
213 Sirat, Ms., f. 139.
Sultan's teacher, Qutlugh Khan, who had impressed this fact on his mind. But that the absolute necessity of the Khalifa's sanction for the legal exercise of his political authority should dawn on him at a particular time—this could not have been a mere coincidence. It was the last weapon in his armoury which he could use against the rebel-crowd and Badr-i Chach very significantly remarks that the receipt of the manshr from the Khalifa unnerved his enemies.214

Muhammad bin Tughluq removed his own name from the coins215 in 741/1340-41 as 'he was tormented by doubts regarding the legality of his sovereignty, which had never been recognized by a khalifa.' On the coins issued in A.H. 742, 743 and 744 the name of Mustakfi Billah appears.216 This was nothing more than a mere affirmation of loyalty to a symbol, for Mustakfi Billah had expired in 740/1339-40. Subsequently, he stopped the Friday and the Id prayers, and did not start them again until the Khalifa had granted an investiture to him... This manshr was received in 744/1343 from Al-Hakim II and the event was celebrated with great pomp and eclat. Barani,217 Ibn-i Battuta218 and Badr-i Chach219 are all unanimous in stating that the Sultan showed great respect to the emissaries of the Khalifa. According to Strat-i Firuz Shahi the manshurs were received thereafter by the Sultan every year. Maybe, the mysterious coins of the Sultan containing numerals (like 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8) on the reverse indicate the length of his association with the khilafat—the period of the legal existence of his sultanat—or the receipt of yearly manshurs.

THE SULTAN'S ATTEMPT AT REHABILITATING AGRICULTURE

We have still to consider one of the most far-sighted programmes of the Sultan, which unfortunately collapsed. He gave considerable thought to the problem of agrarian distress and the short-fall in agriculture after the famine years. Barani tells us that during the four years (1340-43) when the Sultan was at Delhi, his main attempt was to restore agriculture to normal conditions. But in his attempt to find fault with the Sultan's work, Barani makes some errors and does not describe the real conditions. Medieval peasants were aware that barren

214 Qasa'id-i Badr Chach, 14.
215 Nelson Wright, The Coinage, 122, coin no. 491A.
216 Ibid., 148-49, coins no. 617B, 620A, 621, 622, 622A, 623F.
217 Firuz Shahi, 492. According to Barani he kissed the feet of Sa'id Sarsari, who had brought the manshr and the robe of honour for him.
218 Rehla, 72 et seq.
219 Qasa'id-i Badr Chach, 14.
or *usar* land cannot be brought under the plough; they were also aware that *banjar* or semi-barren land will not grow crops except after enormous labour and cost. Barani is, therefore, wrong in attributing to the Sultan the desire that ‘not even a hand-breadth of land should remain uncultivated’. Secondly, there was no scarcity of cultivable land; we may also assume that the peasants who survived were enough for the purpose. But what they needed was seed, cattle, ploughs—in fact, all things necessary for medieval agriculture. The Sultan provided these things to the cultivators at the beginning.

Ibn-i Battuta informs us: ‘During the years of famine the Sultan had ordered the digging of wells outside the capital city and the cultivation of crops there. For this purpose he had provided the people with seeds as well as the requisite sum of money. And he made them undertake this cultivation with the object of enriching the granary.’\(^{220}\) This was a sort of experiment in *state-farming*. It appears that the Sultan did not succeed in it and resorted to the other alternative of *contract-cultivation*. Whether the Sultan was well-advised in entrusting this work to contractors, instead of persons in his permanent service, may be doubted; but in directing the peasant to sow his crops according to state-orders in preference to his personal choice, the Sultan had probably the general needs of the country in view.

With these warnings in mind, we can proceed to quote Barani’s partially correct passage:

‘The first object to which the Sultan applied himself during the years he did not go from Delhi to any place was the improvement of agriculture and the growth of cultivation. The Sultan made regulations (*asalib*) for the improvement of agriculture; whatever came to the Sultan’s mind for this object was written down and called a “regulation”. If these imaginary regulations could have been implemented, and they had not appeared impossible to the people, the world would have been full of good things owing to agricultural production; enormous treasures would have been collected and an army strong enough to conquer the inhabited world could have been enlisted.

‘A department, called *diwan-i amir-i koh*, was organized to promote agriculture and officers to it were appointed. The country was divided into imaginary rectangles (*daira*) of thirty *karohs* by thirty *karohs* on two conditions—not a handful of land in all these *karohs* was to be left uncultivated and every crop was to be changed; thus wheat was to be grown instead of barley, sugar-cane instead of

\(^{220}\) *Rehla*, 88.
wheat, and grapes and dates instead of sugar-cane. About a hundred shiqdars were to be appointed (to these imaginary rectangles). Greedy men, men in distress and reckless adventurers came and undertook within three years to bring under cultivation three hundred thousand bighas of barren land (zamin-i akhal) and to provide three thousand horses (?) from the barren land. They gave written deeds to this effect. To this reckless group, which undertook to cultivate barren land, various awards were given—caparisoned horses, cloaks of brocade and cash. Out of a loan (sondhar) of three lakhs of tankas promised to each of them, every one got fifty thousand tankas in immediate cash. The money they got seemed the price of their blood. Since the barren land could not be cultivated, they spent the money for their own needs and then waited for punishment. In the course of two years over seventy lakhs of tankas were advanced as loans by the treasury to people who had undertaken to cultivate barren land. In the course of three years they could not bring under cultivation a hundredth or even a thousandth part of the barren land assigned to them. Had the Sultan returned alive from Thatta, not one of these contractors and loan-mongers would have been spared.\textsuperscript{221}

REVOLT OF THE 'SADAH' AMIRS AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE BAHMANI KINGDOM

The energies of the Sultan in the closing years of his reign were directed towards dealing with the revolts of the sadah amirs (amiran-i sadah), who had charged the entire atmosphere from Cambay to Daulatabad with sedition and rebellion. These rebellions ultimately paved the way for the emergence of the independent Bahmani kingdom.

A word about the position of the sadah amirs is necessary in order to bring out clearly their role in the history of the period. The term was originally related to the army structure of the Turks and the Mongols, which was planned on the decimal system.\textsuperscript{222} Barani quotes Bughra Khan's advice to Kaiqubad in which a reference is made to the decimal system as the basis of the army organization.\textsuperscript{223} All references to the sadah amirs during the early Turkish period concern the Mongols. Kaiqubad and Jalaluddin Khalji are reported to

\textsuperscript{221} Firuz Shahi, 497-99.

\textsuperscript{222} Al-Qalahshandi writes about Muhammad bin Tughluq, 'The officers of his army are the khans, maliks, amirs, sipah-salars and then the ranks... The khan has ten thousand horsemen, the malik one thousand, the amir one hundred, and the sipah-salar less than that.' Subbul A'sha (An Arab Account of India in the 14th Century, 66-67).

\textsuperscript{223} Firuz Shahi, 145.
have executed some Mongol sadah amirs.\textsuperscript{224} Perhaps the institution had a Mongol origin, but it developed its own features in India; its exclusive military connotation was extended to embrace civil and administrative functions also. 'The question arises', writes Dr. Ishwari Prasad, 'whether these amirs were captains of 100 men as is frequently suggested or officers placed in charge of 100 villages. From the word sadi it appears probable that each amir was placed in charge of 100 villages, though a careful examination of Barani's text as a whole leads to the conclusion that these men were officers who combined civil and military functions and each had one hundred men under his command.'\textsuperscript{225} While no specific evidence about the number of soldiers placed under a sadah amir is available, the view that these officers exercised civil functions also is confirmed very clearly by Hajrud Dahir. According to him the sadah amirs were appointed in the Doab 'over the tax-collectors (ummal)'\textsuperscript{226}

The hostility of the sadah amirs was deepened by the Sultan's new plan for administering the Deccan. The bright idea was to divide the Deccan into four units in charge of Malik Sardawatsdar, Malik Mukhlisul Mulk, Yusuf Bughra and Aziz Khammar. These four officers were to work under a wazir established at Daulatabad. Imadul Mulk Sartez was to be the wazir and a Hindu, Dhara, was to be the naib wazir for the Deccan. But only two items of the new programme could be put into operation.

(a) Recall of Qutlugh Khan from Daulatabad. Some historians, like the author of the Burhan-i Ma'asir, give a very good certificate to Qutlugh Khan for his work in the Deccan, but Barani very explicitly says that under him the resources of the Deccan had considerably fallen and that he was unequal to the problems of that region. The Sultan recalled him and, probably because Imadul Mulk Sartez was not immediately available, he sent Qutlugh's brother, Nizamuddin, also known as Alimul Mulk,\textsuperscript{227} in his place. Since Qutlugh Khan had the reputation of protecting persons against the Sultan's wrath, the sadah amirs resented this change and interpreted it as a prelude to punitive action against them. But it is doubtful whether the transfer of a high officer alone would have led to their rebellion, if the Sultan's determination to punish them had not become a stark and visible reality.

(b) Appointment of Aziz Khammar. The Sultan sent Aziz Khammar as governor to Malwa and bestowed several lakhs of tankas on

\textsuperscript{224} Qiranus Sadain, Aligarh ed., Introduction, 18; Firuz Shahi, 219.
\textsuperscript{225} History of the Qaruna Turks, 209.
\textsuperscript{226} History of Gujarat, III, 873, et seq.
\textsuperscript{227} He is called Alim Malik by Isami and Yahya Sirhindi.
him so that he may live there with power and dignity. 'O Aziz!', the Sultan told him, 'You see how rebellions are raising their heads in every direction. I hear that whoever rebels, does so on the strength of the sadah amirs, and that these sadah amirs become supporters of these rebels for the sake of loot and plunder. Thus only does it become possible for anyone to rebel. Look here! Whomsoever amongst the sadah amirs of Dhar you find to be a mischief-monger, crush him in any way you can.'\textsuperscript{228} The grant of such plenary powers to a callous person could not but be abused. Aziz Khammar, on reaching Dhar, started a veritable reign of terror. He arrested some eighty-nine\textsuperscript{229} sadah amirs and had them executed. The news of these executions sent a wave of horror and disgust through Daulatabad and Gujarat; 'wherever there was a sadah amir, he became suspicious and watchful'.\textsuperscript{230} When the Sultan learnt about these executions, he admired Aziz's performance. He sent a special robe of honour to Aziz Khammar and asked every one of the dignitaries of his court to write letters to Aziz, praising his action. The nobles were also asked to send gifts of robes and horses to Aziz Khammar.\textsuperscript{231} This was a public declaration of the Sultan's determination to deal ruthlessly with the sadah amirs, and it naturally made them more determined in their struggle, which had now become a struggle for survival. Their petty acts of insubordination and misbehaviour were now replaced by organized rebellions and pitched battles.

\textit{Revolt in Gujarat:}

Barani, Isami and Ibn-i Battuta have given different accounts of the circumstances which led to the flare-up at Dabhoi and Baroda. But there is nothing contradictory in their statements, which may be taken as inter-related though it is difficult to determine their sequence. (i) Ibn-i Battuta says that the Sultan had written to Muqbil,\textsuperscript{232} the naib wazir of Gujarat, to capture Qazi Jalal and a group of Afghans. Malikul Hukama, a relation of the Sultan and a companion of Muqbil, divulged this secret to the Afghans, who immediately rose in rebellion. Three hundred Afghans, whom Muqbil had intended to kill, raided Cambay and plundered the treasury.\textsuperscript{233} (ii) Isami says that after Muqbil had killed many people at the order of the Sultan, Juranbal, Qazi Jalal, Jalal ibn-i Lala and Jhallu assembled at a place

\textsuperscript{228} Firuz Shafi, 509.
\textsuperscript{229} On page 507 of Firuz Shafi the number is given.
\textsuperscript{230} Ibid., 504.
\textsuperscript{231} Ibid., 504.
\textsuperscript{232} He was a slave of Ahmad Ayaz.
\textsuperscript{233} Rehda, 113-14.
and took solemn oaths to rise against the Sultan.\textsuperscript{234} The government officers, who came to confiscate their property and to take them into custody, were themselves captured. Thereupon Muqbil marched against them. (iii) According to Barani, Muqbil was taking the revenues and horses to Delhi, when the sadah amirs of Baroda and Dabhoi seized the treasures and even plundered the wares of some merchants,\textsuperscript{235} who were travelling with him. This completely stripped off of all treasures, Muqbil returned to Anhilwara.\textsuperscript{236}

The treasure thus acquired by the rebels provided them with the necessary resources for organizing a movement against the Sultan of Delhi. 'The rebellion of the sadah amirs of Dabhoi and Baroda', remarks Barani, 'created a sensation in the whole of Gujarat.'\textsuperscript{237} It was through a trick that Muqbil succeeded in saving his skin.\textsuperscript{238}

\textit{The Rebels March to Cambay:}

The four rebel leaders then marched to Cambay and occupied it. The city was entrusted to one Akhi by name.\textsuperscript{239} Here Taghi, the former \textit{shahna-i bargah}, was living as an exile in chains and fetters. The rebels set him free and gave him a \textit{kulah} (hat) and a \textit{qaba} (cloak), and selected him as the fifth leader of the rebel group. Taghi, however, escaped from them on the third day and reached Pattan (Anhilwara) and joined Muqbil.

The report of these reverses reached Aziz Khammar, the governor of Malwa and, without waiting for instructions from the Sultan, he started to help Muqbil.\textsuperscript{240} The four rebel leaders also made their preparations and put their soldiers in order. According to Isami, the imperial army comprised of six thousand soldiers, while the rebel army did not exceed seven hundred cavalry. The imperial army was thoughtlessly arranged. Taghi led the advance-guard, Aziz Khammar commanded the centre, and Muqbil controlled the right wing. The rebels could not attempt to arrange their army in the traditional manner on account of their limited numbers. Aziz Khammar made a rash thrust into the centre of the enemy ranks, and got entangled in

\textsuperscript{234} Futul-us Salatin, 504.
\textsuperscript{235} Ibn-i Battuta gives the name of one merchant, Ibnul Kaulami, who had constructed a 'handsome school at Alexandria'. \textit{Rehla}, 114. See also page 69 where he mentions some other names also.
\textsuperscript{236} Firuz Shahi, 504.
\textsuperscript{237} Ibid., 504.
\textsuperscript{238} Futuh-us Salatin, 504.
\textsuperscript{239} Ibid., 505.
\textsuperscript{240} According to Ibn-i Battuta, Malik Jahan Bambah at the head of seven thousand horsemen had come to the help of Malik Aziz Khammar, but all of them were defeated. \textit{Rehla}, 114.
a whirlpool from which he could not come out. Qazi Jalal rushed on him from an ambush and all the leaders of the rebels made a concerted attack from different directions. Aziz Khammar was caught and killed. Muqbil’s defeat was complete. The rebels collected the booty under a tent and distributed it among the four leaders. It was the first very significant defeat of the imperial forces by the rebels and it emboldened them considerably.

The Sultan’s March from Delhi:

Isami says that the Sultan left Delhi for Gujarat when he heard about the killing of Aziz, but Barani definitely states that the Sultan had left Delhi late during the month of Ramazan 744/January 1344, when he heard about the rebellions of Dabhoi and Baroda, and was at Sultanpur when he had heard about Aziz Khammar’s march to Gujarat. Barani’s details about the movements of the Sultan and of the Delhi-side are more reliable than those of Isami, who is more detailed in his account of the other side of the struggle.

When Muhammad bin Tughluq decided to march in person against the rebels, Qutlugh Khan sent a message through Barani, submitting that it was below the dignity of the Sultan to march in person against the sadah amirs of Dabhoi and Baroda; and since they had been antagonized by the cruel and impolitic executions of Aziz Khammar, the likelihood was that on hearing about the arrival of the Sultan, they would immediately take to flight. Qutlugh Khan offered to lead the campaign and to bring the rebels to the Sultan as he had done in the case of Shihab-i Sultani and Ali Shah. But the Sultan ignored his request and ordered preparations to be made for the royal march to Gujarat. So far the Sultan had only marched in person against rebels who belonged to the highest category of the governing class; this was his first campaign against the lowest cadre of his bureaucracy. The Sultan had successfully dealt with and withstood the attacks of the higher nobility, but his whole administration got paralysed when the lower class of administrators, like the sadah amirs, challenged his authority. The Sultan could crush men like Gurshasp and Aiba, but he became helpless before this riff-raff drawn from different and incongruous backgrounds. The changed circumstances were largely due to the weakness of the central army, which in spite of a whole decade had not been able to recover from the effects of the plague. The Sultan in person alone could lead it with some hope of success. The sadah amirs, despite all the prestige and influence they came to exercise

242 Ibid., 509.
subsequently, were not high in the grades of the imperial hierarchy, and it is not without significance that Isami refrains from referring to this background of the founder of the Bahmani kingdom.

Before the outbreak of the rebellion in Gujarat, the Sultan had assigned the governorship of that province to Shaikh Mu'izzuddin, son of Shaikh Alauddin of Ajudhan. When the Sultan decided to march in person, he issued an order for the payment of three lakhs of tankas to Shaikh Mu'izzuddin so that he may recruit and get ready a contingent of one thousand horsemen within two to three days. Isami gives a very graphic account of the weakness of the royal forces at this time. He says that the number of mounted soldiers was so small that it did not exceed four thousand. The army was in an utterly frustrated state—the horses were lifeless and the soldiers were indifferent.

Before the Sultan set out on this campaign, he nominated a council of regency consisting of Malik Kabir, Malik Firuz and Khwaja-i Jahan Ahmad Ayaz to look after the affairs of the empire during his absence. According to both Barani and Asif, the head of this council, who also acted on behalf of the Sultan, was Malik Kabir, also called Qabula. He had started his life as a slave and obtained the highest possible position. At the order of the Sultan, Kabir had written to the Khalifa offering his services; so he was constructively an officer of the Khalifa also. He was held in great respect; nevertheless the Sultan could depend upon him for the execution of his policies.

The Sultan stayed at Sultanpur for a time as three or four days of the month of Ramazan were still left. During his stay there a message was received from Aziz Khammar that, on hearing of the rebellion of Dabhoi and Baroda, he had decided to march out to crush the rebels. The Sultan was extremely displeased at this report and said: ‘Aziz does not know the art of war. He might be killed by the rebels.’ Soon afterwards reports arrived to the effect that Aziz had been caught and killed on the battle-field. The Sultan was deeply disturbed at these reports and one night he even discussed with Barani about the causes of disturbances in the empire.

It appears from the accounts of Isami and Barani that the Sultan’s strategy was to stop at convenient places, probably to mobilize fresh

243 Firuz Shahi, 508.
244 Futuh-us Salatin, 510-12.
245 Ibid., 511.
246 Firuz Shahi, 509.
247 Ibid., 509. It is interesting to note that Isami also says that Aziz was utterly ignorant of the tactics of war. Futuh-us Salatin, 507.
248 This conversation is discussed later.
resources and to send armies from different places to different destinations. The activities of the sadah amirs were widespread and had to be controlled and dealt with in different directions. Isami says that the Sultan had to stay for months at Nagaur, where he had to face a severe shortage of fodder. From Nagaur he sent Azam Malik to Broach; from Mount Abu he sent Shaikh Mu‘izzuddin to Anhilwara; and from Broach he sent Malik Muqbil towards Daulatabad.

The Sultan sent an advance contingent to Dabhoi and Baroda to challenge the rebels. Many of the insurgents were killed but some of them managed to escape to Daulatabad along with their families.

The Sultan sent Azam Malik to Broach with one hundred mounted soldiers and with very specific instructions for Qamar, who was in charge of the fort. Qamar was to stick to the fort, ‘no matter what streams of blood flowed outside it’. He was also to keep a watch over the soldiers from Daulatabad. He was not to come out if the rebels attacked the fort. On receiving this farman of the Sultan, Qamar put his soldiers all along inside the fort-ramparts and shut himself up. When the insurgents heard about the arrival of an army at Broach, they left Cambay, where they had been controlling the situation for three or four months and where Taghi had also joined them, and rushed to Broach. They were under the impression that a strong imperial force had reached there. They besieged the Broach fort and expected the imperial forces to come out in the open to challenge them. The army inside the fort numbered three to four thousand soldiers; the rebels had at their disposal a force of seven thousands. When there was no response from the fort to the attempts of the rebels to provoke fighting, Jhallu Afghan attacked a gate. Some of the soldiers from Daulatabad and one Shaikhzada Hamid came out of the fort and, in utter disregard of the definite instructions of the Sultan, gave battle to the insurgents. Jhallu’s horse stumbled and fell in the field; he was immediately surrounded and his head was cut off. When Jhallu fell, other soldiers also rushed out from the fort. Juranbal and Qazi Jalal were disheartened and fled to Man Deva, the ruler of

249 Futuh-us Salatin, 511.
250 Ibid., 512.
251 Firuz Shahi, 512.
252 Ibid., 512.
253 Ibid., 512.
254 Futuh-us Salatin, 512.
255 Ibid., 509-10.
256 Ibid., 513.
Baglana, who received them with warmth but later deprived them of their belongings.\footnote{257}

Barani informs us that from Broach the Sultan sent Muqbil with some forces of Delhi along with the *sadah* amirs of Broach in pursuit of the fugitives. Malik Muqbil overtook them on the bank of the Narbada and destroyed them. He seized all their property and took all their families into custody.\footnote{258} Muqbil stayed there for some days, and, acting on the royal directive, he put to death many of the *sadah* amirs of Broach. Some of them, who escaped the sword of Muqbil, reached Daulatabad, while others sought shelter with the *muqaddams* of Gujarat.

The Sultan stayed at Broach for some time and tried to set its affairs in order. He appointed harsh tax collectors to realize the arrears of revenue with a strong and firm hand. He was extremely irritated by all those people who had supported the rebels.

**Rebellion at Daulatabad:**

According to Barani, the Sultan had appointed Zain Banda Majdul Mulk and the second son of Rukn-i Thanesari, two very cruel and intensely hated officers, to inquire about the rebels at Daulatabad. The son of Thanesari reached his destination and began his investigations, while Zain Banda had only reached Dhar. This raised a tumult in the minds of the Musalmans of Devagiri. By an unfortunate coincidence the Sultan at this very time sent three well-known officers with a confidential *farman* addressed to Alimul Mulk directing him to send the leading *sadah* amirs of Devagiri under an escort of fifteen hundred horsemen to Broach.\footnote{259} According to Isami, Alimul Mulk did not like the contents of the *farman*, still he had no alternative but

\footnote{257} *Ibid.*, 514.

\footnote{258} Barani says that some of the rebels defeated at the Narbada fled to Man Deva, the *muqaddam* of Kol Sahir, but Man Deva arrested them and deprived them of all their property (*Firuz Shahi*, 512). But from Isami’s account (*Futuh-us Salatin*, 514) it appears that it was after the defeat at Broach that the rebels sought shelter with Man Deva. From the names of the two great forts attributed to him, Man Deva was obviously the ruler of Baglana.

\footnote{259} Barani, 513.

It is significant that only when Isami discusses the rebellion of Daulatabad, he prepares a whole charge-sheet against Muhammad bin Tughluq. (a) He is a friend of the low-born; (b) he wishes ill to religion; (c) he has gone astray from the path of religion; (d) everyone, young and old, is aggrieved against him; (e) rebellion is justified against him; (f) the *shari‘at* has permitted the shedding of his blood; (g) the qazis have declared legal his execution; (h) he has become rebellious towards Islam; (i) he has started mixing with *Kafirs*; (j) he has stopped the call to prayers; (k) he has stopped the Friday prayers; (l) he celebrates the festival of Holi; and (m) he consorts with the jogis in private. *Futuh-us Salatin*, 515.
to obey the imperial order. The sadah amirs had hardly marched five farsangs towards Broach when they began to brood over their fate. Nuruddin and Ismail Makh Afghan decided upon rebellion and mobilized opinion in favour of their plan. They argued: ‘Why should we lay down our lives like this? We should first cut off the heads of Ahmad Lachin, Qultash and Husam and send them to Jagnag and Man Deva. Then we should march back to Daulatabad and arrest Alimuth Mulk.’

Next day at sunrise they went to the tent of Ahmad Lachin and cut off his head. The noise awakened Qultash from his sleep; he rushed out on a horse but was chased, caught and killed. Husam was killed in his tent without any resistance. Their heads were sent to Devahar, capital of Man Deva. Nuruddin and Ismail rushed to Daulatabad and reached there a little after midday. News of the rebellion was brought by Nasir Tughalchi and a hajib to Alimuth Mulk, who had gone to his afternoon sleep after working in the diwan. Awakened from his sleep, he ordered the gates to be closed and prepared to fight the rebels. That day’s battle was indecisive. At night Alimuth Mulk retired to the inner kushak of Daulatabad while Nasir and the hajib took charge of the outer fort, and the rebels seized the khatti of Devagiri. Next day the battle was again undecided, but on the morning of the third day Alimuth Mulk was captured alive and the rebels seized Daulatabad. The great treasure in Devagiri, which had not been sent to Delhi as the routes were not safe, fell into the hands of the rebels. The karkuns (employees) of the Delhi sultanat were killed, but Alimuth Mulk was set free as they considered him innocent. The rebels then decided to elect a king. When the name of Ismail was mentioned, he showed his preference for Hasan.260 The people agreed with him, but since Hasan was not available at the time and delay was dangerous, they raised Ismail to the throne. An orange coloured chatir was raised over his head and he became known as Sultan Nasiruddin. Nuruddin was appointed wazir with the title of Khwaja-i Jahan. Ismail distributed money among the soldiers and gave every man fifteen months’ salary.261 Thus the first independent kingdom of the Deccan came into being. It foreshadowed the eventual emergence of the great Bahmani kingdom.

When the Sultan came to know of this rebellion, he could not sleep for three days and three nights. ‘He writhed in pain like a serpent at the loss of its treasure.’ On the fourth day he repented of his

260 This is Isami’s version (Futuh-us Salatin, 512) and may be merely an attempt to prove the superiority of Hasan (the future Bahmani ruler) over all others.

261 Ibid., 521. According to Barani the wilayat of Maharashtra was distributed amongst the sadah amirs.
killings and took a vow not to shed human blood.\textsuperscript{262} He raised a huge army in six months\textsuperscript{263} and then marched towards Daulatabad. He made elaborate preparations and planned the disposition of his army very carefully. The rebels also made elaborate preparations and a large number of talented sadah amirs threw themselves into the struggle. But it was difficult for them to outpace the manoeuvre and planning of a sultan, who had spent a quarter of a century in fighting against heavy odds. The rebels were defeated and many of their supporters were killed on the battle-field. Ismail Makh Afghan fled with his family to Dharagir or Dharagarh, the highest part of the Devagiri fort. He was entirely surrounded by the enemy; Ibn-i Battuta, writing on the basis of reports, says that the Sultan would not grant him an amnesty, but provided him with food and water. Hasan Kangu (the future founder of the Bahmani kingdom) fled to Miraj,\textsuperscript{264} where he started recruiting an army for another encounter, and was later joined by his comrades like Sikandar Khan, Qir Khan Husain Hatiyah and others.

Gulbarga had also come under the control of the rebels. The Sultan scuttled Imadul Mulk Sartez with some amirs to arrest the fugitives, crush the rebels and retrieve the fort. The Sultan himself stayed at Daulatabad for some time and turned his attention to the reorganization of its affairs. He assigned iqtas to nobles and tried to establish peaceful conditions. It was at this time that he heard about the rebellion of Taghi in Gujarat and decided to go there.

\textit{Birth of the Bahmani Kingdom:}

Before leaving Daulatabad, the Sultan put Khudawandzada Qawamuddin, Malik Jauhar and Shaikh Burhan Balarami \textit{Zahirul Jujush} in charge of the fort and stationed a big army there. The affairs of the Deccan were, however, in the melting pot and the situation was far from satisfactory. The inhabitants of Broach, who had stayed on in Daulatabad, were sent to Broach along with the army. The price of corn went up at the time and the soldiers experienced great hardships. As the Sultan proceeded towards Broach, the historian Barani came to offer felicitations for his success at the battle of Daulatabad on behalf of the council of regency. The battle of Daulatabad must have been a big victory—at least from the point of view of imperial prestige—for in that case alone could the council have decided to send its felicitations to the Sultan, of course not knowing

\textsuperscript{262} Ibid., 530.
\textsuperscript{263} Ibid., 530.
\textsuperscript{264} In the Satara district of Maharashtra.
that within a few months the Deccan was destined to be lost to Delhi for all time. The Sultan received Barani with great affection.

Later, when the Sultan was busy settling the affairs of Sahsiling and wanted to proceed to Anhilwara, he received reports from Daulatabad that Hasan Kangu and other rebels, who had fled from the battle-field, had fallen on Imadul Mulk Sartez, killed him and scattered his forces. Khudawandzada Qawamuddin, Malik Jauhar and the Zahirul Juyush had fled from Daulatabad to Dhar. Hasan Kangu came to Daulatabad, ascended the throne on 24 Rabi II 748/3 August 1347 and laid the foundation of the Bahmani kingdom, which for the next century and a half was to dominate the political scene of the South. Ismail Makh acknowledged the new king. This news upset the Sultan completely. He could now see clearly that the empire was fast crumbling and it was beyond his resources and power to check the process. Barani says that during this time the Sultan did not indulge in executions. This fact is confirmed by Isami also, who says that a ‘pain’ suddenly overtook the heart of the Sultan at the time of the isha prayer and he proclaimed a general amnesty to the people. Isami adds, however, that next day, when the pain had subsided, the Sultan returned to his old ways.265 However the Sultan, who had been planning to send an army against the rebels, realized that the power of the Bahmanis was too great to be challenged and reconciled himself to the loss of the Deccan.

FRUSTRATIONS OF A DESPOT

Muhammad bin Tughluq’s life during the closing years of his reign was one of deep frustrations, gloom and peevishness. All his projects had failed and an incurable spirit of rebellion had permeated the rank and file of the people. His dogged tenacity of purpose refused to give way, but his frustrations found expression in different ways. During his stay at Sultanpur, while on his way to crush the Gujarat rebels, he summoned his courtier or nadim, Ziyauddin Barani. It was towards the end of the night and the Sultan may have spent sleepless hours brooding over the impossible situation. ‘You see’, he told the historian, how many rebellions are raising their heads. I am not afraid of these rebellions. But people say that these rebellions are due to the excessive capital punishments of the Sultan. Well, I am not going to give up my punishments owing to what people say. You have read many histories. Have you read anywhere about the crimes for which kings have inflicted capital punishments?’ Barani gave the details of the Sassanid penal law as well as the Muslim sharf’at but

265 Ibid., 536.
tried to approximate his answers, so far as possible, to the wishes of
the Sultan. He said:

‘I have read in the Tarikh-i Kislavi that it is not possible for a
ruler to govern without inflicting capital punishments. If a king
does not do that, God alone knows what mischief and turmoil will
be created by the activities of refractory people; even the obe-
dient will be involved in thousands of sins. When a confidant
asked the Persian emperor, Jamshed, about the cases in which
capital punishment could be inflicted, Jamshed replied: “The
infliction of capital punishment by the king is justified in the case
of seven offences; if the king goes beyond these limits, troubles
for the kingdom will arise. (i) Apostasy—leaving the true creed
and persisting in religious error; (ii) murder—intentionally killing
a law-abiding person; (iii) adultery—cohabitation of a married
man with the wife of another; (iv) conspiracy—planning rebellion
against the king in which the fact of the conspiracy is proved;
(v) rebellion—leading a rebellion against the king or helping
rebel leaders; (vi) helping the king’s enemies, opponents or rivals
by giving them information, arms, or assisting them in other ways,
and the facts are proved; (vii) disobedience—disobedience to the
king in a way that endangers the state but not disobedience of
other kinds.”’

The Sultan then asked Barani as to how many of these seven
categories of capital punishments were permitted by the Prophet.
Barani replied: ‘Only for apostasy, murder and adultery. Capital
punishment for the other four offences are the responsibility of the
king for the welfare of the state. Jamshed has said: “Kings have
selected wazirs, raised them to a high status and put the affairs of
the kingdom in their charge. In consequence of this, wazirs have
been able to make laws (zawabit) for the state and to enforce them
permanently; and owing to the enforcement of these laws, it has not
been necessary for the king to sully his own hands with the blood of
any creature.”’ The Sultan then stated his position in the following
words:

‘The punishments prescribed by Jamshed related to ancient times.
In these days a large number of wicked and mischievous persons
have been born. I inflict capital punishments on the basis of suspi-
cion and presumption of rebellion, disorder and conspiracy. I put
people to death for every slight disobedience that I see in them,
and I will keep inflicting capital punishments in this way till
either I perish or the people are set right and give up rebellion
and disobedience. I have no wazir who can frame such laws for
my kingdom that it may become unnecessary for me to smear my hands with blood. Also I inflict capital punishments because people have become my enemies all of a sudden. I have distributed so much treasure among the people, but no one has become my sincere well-wisher. The temper of the people has been clearly revealed to me; they are my enemies and opponents.\textsuperscript{206}

Feelings of bitterness and frustration run throughout this conversation of the Sultan and show how deeply his mind had been affected by them.

Some time later the anguish of his soul again gushed out before Barani. Taghi was at large and the Sultan was trying to pacify Gujarat. News had come at this time about the second insurrection of the sadah amirs at Daulatabad. What to do and where to go? The Sultan had not yet decided about his future course of action. He summoned Barani and said: ‘My kingdom is diseased and its illness cannot be cured by any medicine. If the physician treats it for lumbago, the fever increases; if he treats it for fever, there is an obstruction of the arteries. Different diseases have appeared in my kingdom simultaneously. If I put things right at one place, disorders appear at another place; if I put them right at the second place, disorders appear at a third place. What have kings of the past said about these diseases of the kingdom?’

To this pathetic note of the Sultan, Barani’s reply was boldly indiscreet, but it stirred the Sultan to the very depths of his soul and drew him out. Barani said: ‘Books of history have described the remedies prescribed by kings for the diseases of the kingdom in a variety of ways. Some sultans, on seeing that the people have ceased to trust them and that a general resentment against them has appeared, have abdicated from the kingdom and assigned it to one of their sons, whom they have considered deserving, in their own lifetime. They have then retired to a corner of the kingdom, devoted themselves to engagements that keep away weariness and contented themselves with the cheerful company of a few courtiers. They have not (after their abdication) meddled with the affairs of the kingdom. Other sultans, owing to that disease of the kingdom which is due to the hatred of the people (towards their ruler), have given themselves up suddenly to hunting, music and wine, and have assigned all affairs of the state—both principles and details and the solution of every problem—to their wazirs, high officers and the supporters of the kingdom. One of the most dangerous and fatal diseases of the kingdom is the detestation of (the ruler) among the select and the

\textsuperscript{206} Firuz Shahi, 509-10.
commons and the lack of confidence among the generality of the ra‘iyat.’

There was an implied suggestion in this speech that abdication was the only alternative left for the Sultan. But the suggestion went against the very grain of the Sultan and he told the historian:

‘If the affairs of the kingdom were settled according to my wishes, my desire was to go to the sacred Ka‘ba and assign the affairs of the Delhi empire to these three persons—Firuz, Malik Kabir and Ahmad Ayaz. But in these days I am angry with the people and the people are angry with me. The people have discovered my mind and I have discovered the evil and rebellious designs of the people. Every remedy I try fails. My remedy for rebels, opponents, disobedient persons and evil-wishers is the sword. I will continue punishing and striking with my sword till it either cuts or misses. The more the people oppose me, the greater will be my punishments.’

It was now a desperate man struggling with a desperate situation. What may have deepened the frustration of his life considerably and made him peevish and relentless was the unfortunate effect of an operation which, according to Ibn-i Hajar Asqalani, had made him impotent.267 He had two daughters born earlier, but he had no children later. Very contemptuously Isami remarks: ‘Verily the king has no son; he wishes the entire world to be like himself.’268

It was perhaps in these moments of frustrations that he turned to some saints for spiritual help and blessings. Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri wrote to him in a letter:269 ‘As requested by you, dear brother, I have prayed to God to set right all your worldly and religious affairs.’

Rebellion of Taghi; Death of Sultan Muhammad

Taghi was a Turkish slave brought to Ghiyasuddin Tughluq by some merchants from Turkistan. He was appointed superintendent of the durbar (shahna-i bargah) by Muhammad bin Tughluq and was later made an officer in the army of the wazir. As a punishment for some dereliction of duty, the Sultan issued orders for his banishment to Yaman. While he was at Cambay, Qazi Jalal’s rebellion broke out in Gujarat, and he rendered some service to the Sultan by persuading

268 Futuh-us Salatin, 450.
269 Muktubat-i Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri (Ms.).
the people to disperse the rebels. The Sultan appreciated this loyal behaviour and reappointed him as shahna-i bargah. Taghi remained in Gujarat for some time, while the Sultan proceeded to the Deccan in order to deal with the Daulatabad rebellion. But during the Sultan’s absence Taghi joined hands with the muqaddams and the sadah amirs of Gujarat and raised the standard of revolt. He killed Shaikh Mu’izzuddin, the governor of Anhilwara, and besieged Broach with a large army.

According to Barani, the Sultan spent three rainy seasons in Gujarat—the first at Mandal Baturi and the second near the fort of Karnal. His main object was the pacification of the province and in this he succeeded; Taghi was a nuisance but not a power. The ruler of Karnal wished to capture Taghi alive and hand him over to the Sultan, and Taghi on discovering his intention fled to the Jam of Thatta. 'The Sultan, after the end of the rainy season, captured Karnal; and the coast and the islands came within his power. The ranas and muqaddams came to the Sultan and submitted; they were given robes and inams in return. In Karnal a mehta (Hindu officer) was appointed by the Sultan; Khankhar, the rana of Karnal, was brought a captive before the Sultan. The whole of the province was pacified. The Sultan passed the third monsoon at Kondal on the way to Thatta.'270 Here he received the painful news that Malik Kabir had died. The Sultan sent Ahmad Ayaz and Malik Maqbul, the naib wazir, to Delhi and summoned a large number of shaikhs, ulama, maliks and amirs with their families, horse and foot. Boats full of fighting men came to him from Dipalpur, Multan, Uchch and Siwistan. Altun Bahadur with four or five thousand Mongol horsemen was sent by Amir Qazghan, the ruler of Mavaraun Nahr. Thus the Sultan marched towards Thatta with an enormous army.

The imperial forces were alerted against Taghi, who fled from one place to another, eluding the Sultan’s officers and subsequently the Sultan also. From Broach he fled to Cambay; and from there he went to Asawal. When the Sultan turned to Asawal, Taghi started for Patan. At Kadi the Sultan overtook him and defeated him in an encounter at Takalpur near Patan, but he fled towards Patan. He then escaped to Ğirnar and ultimately sought shelter with the Sumeras of Thatta, who defended him with an army ‘numerous as ants and locusts’.

It was the last campaign of Muhammad bin Tughluq’s life—tragic but remarkable in its relentless pursuit of the enemy and determination to bring him to book.

270 Isami.
Pursuing Taghi from place to place, Muhammad bin Tughluq reached Gondal in Kathiawar. Here he had to break his journey on account of his illness and the rains. He then reached the Indus and moved towards Thatta. He suffered a relapse and again developed temperature. He fasted on the 10th of Muharram and broke his fast with fish. This aggravated his illness for fish did not agree with him; but he ignored it and continued his journey on the river for two continuous days. His illness increased and his strong frame began to crack. He landed at a village, Sonda, and after a week breathed his last on 21 Muharram 752/ 20 March 1351. Thus came to an end a stormy career which, despite all its concern for the welfare of the people, had kept the whole country in a state of suspense, anxiety and terror for more than a quarter of a century. ‘At last the people got rid of him and he got rid of the people,’ says Badauni. It was not without significance that soon after his accession, Firuz Shah obtained letters of forgiveness by money payment from those who had been mutilated by him and from the heirs of those whom he had killed, and put them in a box at the head of the Sultan’s cenotaph. It was a subtle comment on the decessed Sultan’s policies and nothing more insinuating could have been done to malign him.

THE SULTAN’S ‘SIYASAT’ (DEATH-PENALTIES)

One would have expected a highly educated ruler, like Muhammad bin Tughluq, to have been a humanist of great standing. But the reverse was the case. ‘Of all the people’, says Ibn-i Battuta, ‘this king loves most to make presents and also to shed blood.271... His gate was hardly free from the corpse of a man who had been executed... The Sultan would punish all wrongs whether big or small and he would spare neither men of learning (ahlul ilm) and of probity (salah) nor those of high descent (sharaf). Every day hundreds of people in chains with their hands fastened to their necks and their feet bound were brought into the council-hall. Those who were to be killed were killed, and those who were to be tortured were tortured, and those who were to be beaten were beaten. The Sultan used to summon all the prisoners to the council-hall every day except Friday.272 Ibn-i Battuta relates a number of hideous punishments of which he happened to be an eye-witness.

Barani, who could have been contradicted by his contemporaries, has no hesitation in recording: ‘The killing of Musalmans and of believers in one God had become a part of his temperament and

271 Rehla, 56.
272 Ibid., 85.
nature. He put many ulama, shaikhs, Saiyyids, mystics, qalandars, clerks and army-men to death. No day or week passed in which the blood of many Musalmans was not shed, and a stream of blood was made to flow before the royal palaces.\textsuperscript{273}

The Sultan's punishments sent a wave of disgust and horror through the people, and whenever circumstances permitted, they rebelled against the authority of the 'tyrant'. We are told that the Sultan never punished anybody unless he had obtained a verdict for his execution from the four muftis, who were constantly in attendance. Obviously, it was hardly possible for any mufti to express an opinion against the wishes of the Sultan, and if he ever did so, there was hardly any chance of his carrying his point before a philosopher well acquainted with the technique of casuistry and debate.\textsuperscript{274} This tribunal was nothing short of a big farce staged to satisfy his conscience and to give an air of legality and fair-play to his otherwise callous massacres. Two or three incidents of the Sultan's presence in the court as a defendant summoned by the aggrieved parties, as mentioned by Ibn-i Battuta,\textsuperscript{275} should be considered sham pretences intended to deceive the people as well as his own conscience. The brutal punishments meted out to Gurshasp, Ghiyasuddin, Shaikh Shihabuddin and others and the inhuman treatment of their dead bodies could not possibly leave the people undisturbed. Barani says that there were certain nobles and officers, who encouraged the Sultan in pursuing his policy of ruthless executions. He has particularly named Zain Banda Mukhtasal Mulk, Yusuf Bughra, Khalil son of Sardawatdar, Muhammad Najib, Shahzada Nihawandi, Qaranfal Sayyaf, Aiba, Mujir Abu Raja, the son of a qazi of Gujarat and the three sons of Thanesari. The historian has succeeded in giving an idea of the horrible blood-thirstiness of these people when he remarks that they could have killed twenty prophets without compunction.

PERSONAL CHARACTER; EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION OF THE SULTANAT

Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq was one of the most striking personalities of medieval India. His intellectual attainments elicited praise from friend and foe alike, and raised him head and shoulders above his contemporaries. His personal life was absolutely chaste\textsuperscript{276}

\textsuperscript{273} Firuz Shahi, 459-60.
\textsuperscript{274} Mubarak Shahi, 115.
\textsuperscript{275} Rehla, 83.
\textsuperscript{276} Firuz Shahi, 460.

While he was insistent that people should perform congregational prayers punctually, he allowed tarababads (pleasure resorts where people could enjoy music, etc.)
and free from many of the vices which tarnished the character of medieval monarchs. There was hardly any branch of medieval learning in which he had not achieved something—literature, history, philosophy, rhetoric, poetry, logic, mathematics, medicine, astronomy and calligraphy. His knowledge of Arabic was limited; he understood the language but could not speak it. His memory was, however, prodigious and he knew the Quran as well as a part of the *Ihidaya* by heart. His intelligence was sharp and penetrating and his power of conversation unrivalled. His eloquence was magical, says Barani. In the use of similes and metaphors he was an adept. Notwithstanding all his scholarly interests and intellectual attainments, he was essentially a man of action, who never allowed his intellectual pursuits to affect his administrative responsibilities. He had the gait and bearing of a soldier—a well-built body, with broad and tough hands which made the hands of people tremble when he took them in his own. He looked smart (*zaib-i jama*) in whatever dress he put on.

To this physical equipment was added a dauntless spirit of courage and chivalry, which became known in other lands also. Most of his life, both before and after his accession, was spent on the battle-field. He began his career as the *amir-i akhur* of Mubarak Khalji and ended his life in the pursuit of a rebel in distant Sind. Perhaps no other Delhi sultan undertook so many campaigns in person and dealt with so many well-organized rebellions as he did. Apart from this incessant military activity, he remains unrivalled in the history of the Delhi sultanat on account of his administrative measures and cultural contacts with the world outside. He initiated a new era of cultural contacts with Asian and African countries. People from Khurasan, Iraq, Sistan, Herat, Egypt, Trans-Oxiana, Tangiers, etc. visited his court and he acquired first-hand knowledge about the literary and cultural developments in those lands. His political

to function undisturbed in his empire, as Ibn-i Battuta has pointed out. He was himself fond of music and had a jealously guarded contingent of musicians in his service (*Masalikul Absar*, 32).

277 The *Hidaya* is a voluminous law book and it seems highly improbable for an individual to commit it to memory, but several independent authorities mention this fact about the Sultan. Ibn-i Hajar Asqalani, *Al-Durar al Kaminah*, III, 460; *Masalikul Absar*, Eng. tr., 37.

278 Feroz Shahi, 463-64.

279 *Shyarul Aulia*, 254-55. Amir Khurd gives a graphic account of Shaikh Qutbuddin Munawar’s meeting with the Sultan.

280 Two incidents may be quoted in this context. A scholar from Persia brought for him philosophical books, including the works of Ibn-i Sina (*Masalikul Absar*, 41). The Sultan sent Maulana Mu’inuddin Imrani to Qazi Azd to persuade him to come
vision was broad and dynamic, and he had a dogged tenacity of purpose which made him pursue his objectives under the most unfavourable circumstances.

Nevertheless, he failed in his main attempt, which was to establish an all-India administration.

Muhammad bin Tughluq inherited a vast empire from his father and, during the first decade of his reign, he made it vaster still by his own exertions. From the foot-hills of the Himalayas to Dwara Samudra and from Thatta to Lakhnauti the entire country was brought under his umbrella. The whole of the Deccan—including its distant parts like Ma’abar and Warangal—obeyed his orders. The independent states of the Western Ghats—Sandabur, Hinaur, Manjarur, Jurfattan, Dahfattan, Budfattan, Fandarayra and Calicut—acknowledged his paramountcy. Never before in the history of the Delhi sultanat had the authority and prestige of the sultan touched such a high watermark and, according to Barani, so much revenue had never flowed into the Delhi treasury from every direction as under Muhammad bin Tughluq. The author of the *Masalikul Absar* writes: 'It is a big country having ninety ports on the sea-coast, the revenue of which is derived from perfumes, muslin (*lanis*), various kinds of cloth and other beautiful things. The learned *faqih*, Sirajuddin Abu Safa Umar bin Ishaq bin Ahmad as-Shibli al-Awadhi, ... one of the great jurists, who is at present at the court of the Sultan in Delhi, has related to me that the chief provinces in the territory of this king are twenty-three in number: Delhi, Devagiri, Multan, Kahran (Kuhram), Samana, Sabastan (Siwistan), Wajja (Uchch), Hasi (Hansi), Sasuti (Sirs), Ma’abar, Tilang (Telingana), Gujarat, Badaun, Awadh, Kanauj, Lakhnauti, Bihar, Kara, Malwa, Lahawar (Lahore), Kalanaur, Jajnagar and Dwara Samudra.'

To maintain effective control over this extensive empire was an extremely difficult task in the fourteenth century, specially in view of the geographical barriers and the limited means of communications, both of which were exploited by local interests to weaken the control of the centre. The Sultan, however, applied his organizing


281 *Firuz Shahi*, 467-70.


In this list Shihabuddin has, by mistake, mentioned Tilang twice. No other historian of the period has given a list of the provinces of the empire. Barani incidentally mentions some provinces (*Firuz Shahi*, 467-73), but gives no exhaustive list.

Jajnagar and Dwara Samudra were not provinces of the empire, but their Hindu rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of Delhi.
capacity and resourcefulness to bring every part of the extensive empire under his personal control. Barani informs us that whenever a new territory was added to the empire, it was forthwith furnished with a hierarchy of officials and arrangements were made for the direct realization of revenues.\textsuperscript{283} When the Sultan strove to create an effective administrative centre at Daulatabad, he had in mind the stupendous difficulties that lay in controlling the South from Delhi. However, this measure could not possibly override the barriers set by geography; and the process of disintegration, though delayed, could not be averted.

But after ten years the experiment failed; and though the Sultan persisted in his attempt to the end, it was impossible, under medieval conditions of transport and communications, to maintain such a stupendous edifice. The centrifugal tendencies, which began to assert themselves, were helped by one of the most serious famines in the history of India, by the bubonic plague that seems to have paralysed the central army for a whole decade, and by the severe death penalties by which the Sultan hoped to make the people obedient but which only led to more rebellions.

But we must not exaggerate the extent of Muhammad bin Tughluq's failure. He left the frontiers of the directly administered territories of the Delhi sultanat just where they had been at Alauddin Khalji's death. The Sultan and his policies may have been highly unpopular, and the ordinary citizen may have raised his hands in horror when he heard the stories, correct or exaggerated, of the Sultan's punishments. Still there is no doubt that he was personally respected. If the \textit{Futuh-us Salatin} can be an index to the mind and activities of the rebels, it may be safely concluded that they left no stone unturned in inciting the people against him. 'If all people combine against him', the \textit{Futuh-us Salatin} says, 'he can be overthrown... Rebellion against him is legal... The shari'at has permitted the shedding of his blood... The qazis have given a fatwa (judgement) permitting his execution.'\textsuperscript{284}

In attempting a correct estimate of the Sultan's position, three facts have to be borne in mind. Firstly, no sultan of Delhi has had to face so many and so well-organized rebellions as Muhammad bin Tughluq; the fact that he survived them all proves that he must have had a corps of very loyal officers. Further, the success of the rebels was confined to the areas annexed after the death of Alauddin Khalji, which only proves that the great Khalji Sultan was right in stopping where he did.

\textsuperscript{283} \textit{Firuz Shahi}, 468.  
\textsuperscript{284} \textit{Futuh-us Salatin}, 451.
Secondly, Muhammad bin Tughluq is one of the very few rulers of the Delhi sultanat concerning whom no attempted assassination has been recorded, though if his three main historians (Isami, Barani and Ibn-i Battuta) are correct, there must have been thousands and thousands of persons in India who had deep personal reasons for revenging themselves on the Sultan. Also it is not reported that the Sultan took any but the traditional measures of his predecessors for his personal protection. He was too much of a soldier to be afraid of the assassin’s dagger or a palace revolt. That his own officers should depose him never crossed his mind, whatever he may have thought of rebels and the generality of his subjects.

Lastly, Muhammad bin Tughluq died without nominating a successor. For two days his army by the side of the Indus had no king. Firuz Shah, after his election, had to march all the way from the precincts of Thatta to Delhi. Had the mass of the officers in the army been disloyal, they could have displaced the Tughluq dynasty; even a truculent minority could have made Firuz Shah’s position difficult. The governors of the great provinces could have rebelled on hearing of Sultan Muhammad’s death, which implied a temporary weakening of the central authority, but all of them hastened to offer their allegiance to Firuz Shah. Bengal, the Deccan and the Far South were lost, but all rebellions in northern India were suppressed.

Different assessments have been made of the Sultan’s character by his contemporaries and by posterity. He has been called ‘a mass of inconsistencies’, ‘a wonder of creation’, ‘a freak of nature’, ‘an ill-starred idealist’, and above all a ‘nightmare’ and a ‘mad man’. But these are more in the nature of verdicts based on partial estimates of his complex nature than objective assessments of his total impact on, and contributions to, the history of the Delhi sultanat.

Foreign scholars, like Shihabuddin al-Umari, Al-Qalqashandi, Ibn-i Hajar Asqalani and Salabuddin Safadi have unqualified praise for him on account of his learning, generosity and cordial treatment of foreign scholars. Ibn-i Battuta praises the Sultan’s open-handed generosity and religious interests but condemns his executions. To Isami the Sultan was a second Yezid, a tyrant and a heretic who deserved an all-round condemnation. He paints the Sultan in lurid colours all through and finds no redeeming feature in his personality. He justifies every rebellion against him. Barani is also critical of the Sultan, but

285 Ibid., 515.
286 Ibid., 606.
287 Ibid., 607.
288 Ibid., 515.
unlike Isami, in almost every rebellion that he has discussed, his sympathies were with Muhammad bin Tugluq.

To Barani, a companion of seventeen years, Muhammad bin Tugluq appeared 'a mixture of opposites'. Nevertheless, a careful analysis of the mind of the historian leads one to the conclusion that it was not the Sultan who was 'a mass of inconsistencies' or a 'mixture of opposites', but that the historian himself was a miserably torn personality. He projected his own psychological states in his assessment of the Sultan's character. It was due to his policy of throwing offices open to talent, his many novel orders, his recruitments from the promiscuous mass of the people to the 'charmed' circle of the nobles, his philosophic interests which led to the development of a sceptic attitude in him towards the 'revealed books and the traditions of the prophets' (kutub-i samavi wa ahadis amhia), which created confusion all around and made the position of the old and respectable families, like Barani's own, absolutely untenable. He, therefore, deserved (in Barani's opinion) condemnation in the severest terms. So Barani starts disparaging the Sultan. But this mood does not last long. As soon as the historian returns from his mental excursion into the age of Muhammad bin Tugluq and suddenly becomes conscious of his present miserable plight, the direction of his emotions begins to change. 'I enjoyed status and position during the reign of Muhammad bin Tugluq. A patron and benefactor like him deserves to be praised.' Then the historian starts extolling the Sultan to the skies. When Barani is in the present, he has love for Muhammad bin Tugluq; when he is in the past, he has nothing but hatred for him. Love and hatred thus alternate with fluctuations in the moods of the historian. The moment one succeeds in catching this subtle psychological phase of the historian, the entire data supplied by him neatly fit into a proper perspective.

**Bureaucracy of Muhammad bin Tugluq**

Under Muhammad bin Tugluq the governing class of the sultanat period underwent a complete change of character and composition. If on the one side he pushed ahead the Khalji concept of a governing class based on loyalty and efficiency rather than racial affinity, he also introduced new elements into it. Barani does not give a list of offices conferred by the Sultan at the time of his accession but this lacuna has been filled up by Yahya Sirhindi; still Barani makes some disconnected references to the later officers of the reign. A study of

289 Ibid., 467.
290 Ibid.
these two lists along with the names of other officials found in contemporary records reveals the basic character of his bureaucracy. It appears that Muhammad bin Tughluq’s governing class comprised of seven distinct elements:

(1) Families of officers who had been in the service of the sultanat since the time of Alauddin Khalji; (2) Families of converts to Islam, recently promoted to positions of authority; (3) Foreigners; (4) Members of religious, mainly mystic, families appointed by the Sultan; (5) the Afghans; (6) the sadah amirs; and (7) the Hindus.

Never before, or even after him, was the governing class of the Delhi sultanat recruited from such diverse backgrounds. This was at once the source of the strength and the weakness of the bureaucracy of Muhammad bin Tughluq. It broadened the base of the empire but weakened the position of the Sultan.

(1) *Old families*:

Amongst the old nobles the Sultan’s wazir, Khwaja-i Jahan Ahmad Ayaz, son of Muhammad Ayaz, Alauddin’s kotwal of Siri, Qutlug Khan and Ainul Mulk, son of Amir Mahru, deserve special mention. Ahmad Ayaz was closely associated with the whole policy of Muhammad bin Tughluq and, as we shall see, he had to suffer for this after the Sultan’s death. Qutlug Khan was a tutor of the Sultan and was held in deep respect by him. His two brothers, Kamaluddin and Nizamuddin, also enjoyed posts of distinction in the administration. Qutlug Khan was appointed wazir of Daulatabad in 1335, when illness obliged the Sultan to abandon his Ma‘abar campaign and return to Delhi. Qutlugh could not deal with the rebellions and, in fact, he could not rise to the occasion in dealing with the problems of the South. His over-cautious or vacillating policy led to the loss of the South and facilitated the emergence of the independent kingdoms of Madura, Warangal, Kampilà and Vijayanagar. The Sultan had ultimately to withdraw him from the Deccan. Ainul Mulk Mahru, though not a military man, was a very honest administrative officer, who combined executive efficiency with deep learning and the capacity for writing excellent Persian. Ibn-i Battuta says that he was looked upon as the leader of the Hindustani group among the governing class and, therefore, was a *persona non-grata* with the foreign amirs, who were always anxious to get him involved in some trouble. We have seen the excellent work he did as governor of Awadh, when the Sultan was paralysed by famine. He was destined to have a brilliant career during the reign of Firuz Shah.

As new elements entered the official hierarchy of Muhammad bin
Tughluq, this section of the old nobility gradually lost its exclusive control of the administration.

(2) Converts:

Another important element in the governing class of Muhammad bin Tughluq consisted of converts from Hinduism. Azizuddin Khammar (the distiller) and Qawamul Mulk Maqbul belong to this category. Azizuddin was probably connected with some vintner family and was, on this account, called Khammar. Barani is very critical of his low family status. Ibn-i Battuta saw him as a tax-collector at Amroha but subsequently he was appointed governor of Malwa. No convert from Hinduism had a better career in the service of the Delhi sultanat than Qawamul Mulk Maqbul. He belonged to the Hindu nobility of Warangal; the Sultan converted him to Islam, found him efficient in spite of his illiteracy, and saw to his promotion. He held various posts, including in succession the governorships of Multan, Badaun and Gujarat. When the Sultan died, Maqbul was working at Delhi as the naib wazir of the whole empire. Some members from the ruling Hindu families were also included in this category. The sons of the Rai of Kampila, who embraced Islam or were brought up as Musalmans, belonged to this group. The Sultan had great confidence in them and had, as we have seen, put one of them in charge of the supply of his drinking water. This element of the nobility continued to enjoy the confidence of the Sultan throughout his reign.

(3)Foreigners:

Muhammad bin Tughluq showed extraordinary consideration for foreigners and admitted them to the highest ranks in his administration. 'One of the habits of the emperor of India, Sultan Abul Mujahid Muhammad Shah,' remarks Ibn-i Battuta, 'is to love foreigners and to honour them by specially appointing them as governors and high officers. Most of his special officers, chamberlains, ministers, judges and brothers-in-law are foreigners. He has issued orders that in his dominions foreigners should be addressed as a'izza. And a'izza (excellent) has consequently become a proper name for them.' 291 This group of foreign officers could not be employed indiscriminately in every part of the country, because its knowledge of local problems was limited; but on judicial posts or posts in charity departments it could function better. Ibn-i Battuta's hostile criticism of the Sultan and his policies shows that this element did not remain uninfluenced by local pressures and

291 Rehla, 4. Ibn-i Battuta is supported by Shihabuddin al Umari and Ziyauddin Barani.
prejudices, but by and large it was cooperative and loyal to the Sultan.

(4) **Members of Religious Families:**

One of the experiments of Muhammad bin Tughluq was to enlist some members of religious families in his administration. As discussed elsewhere, his argument was that during the time of the Pious Caliphs the learned and the pious had rendered similar services to the state. The analogy was wrong because circumstances had completely changed; and the training required for religion and the administration was so radically different that any attempt to appoint to executive offices people who had been trained for theology or mysticism, but were ignorant of war and administration, was bound to lead to disaster. Shaikh Mu'izzuddin, son of Shaikh Alauddin of Ajudhan, who was appointed governor of Gujarat at a very critical juncture, was killed by the insurgents. Shaikh Imaduddin, a brother of Shaikh Ruknuddin Abul Fath of Multan, fought against Bahram Aiba and was killed. Saiyid Kamaluddin Amir Kirmani was taken in the army. Shaikh Shihabuddin, a well-known saint of Delhi, was appointed head of the diwanul-mustakhraj—the department for the realization of arrears from revenue officials. These arrears used to be extorted by 'means of bastindo and tortures' and none could be more unsuitable for the office than the scion of a mystic family. Obviously, this element could not make its mark in the administration and slowly drifted out of the political forum.

(5) **Afghans:**

Some Afghan families also succeeded in securing high posts in the administration of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Malik Makh and Malik Shahu Lodi Afghan were eminent maliks and Barani specifically mentions their names in the list of Muhammad bin Tughluq's officers. It appears that these Afghans did not cooperate with him and their rebellions created a serious problem.

(6) **The Sadah amirs:**

The character and position of these amirs has already been discussed.

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293 Barani, *Firuz Shahi*, 518.
294 Rehla, 87.
295 Shyamal Auliya, 215.
296 Rehla, 87.
297 *Firuz Shahi*, 454-55.
(7) Hindu Officers:

Under Muhammad bin Tughluq a large number of Hindus were appointed to important posts in the administration. The Chunar inscription refers to a Hindu wazir of the Sultan, Sai Raj. The naib wazir of the Deccan was also a Hindu, Dhara by name. The governorship of Sehwan was entrusted to Ratan. Bhiran Rai was appointed governor of Gulbarga and the iqta of Kohir was assigned to him. The introduction of this Hindu element in the charmed circle of the bureaucracy was resented by the old families, who had vested interests and disliked any encroachment on their privileges. The Sehwan rebellion and the rebellion of Ali Shah Nathu were inspired by this discontent. It is significant that while Muhammad bin Tughluq had to face a number of rebellions organized by his Muslim officers, there was no insurrection of the Hindu officers in his services.

Taken as a whole these seven elements, whatever their individual utility and significance, could not pull on together, and the governing class of Muhammad bin Tughluq lacked that homogeneity of spirit and outlook which was so necessary for the successful implementation of his policies and projects.