CHAPTER FOUR

THE KHALJIS

I. JALALUDDIN FIRUZ KHALJI

ACCESSION OF JALALUDDIN FIRUZ

Shaista Khan Jalaluddin Firuz Khalji’s eventual assumption of sovereignty at the Kailugarhi palace in June 1290 signified more than a dynastic change. Unlike Balban’s accession twenty-five years earlier, it meant the end of an age, for with the Mameluk dynasty also passed away that racialism, which had characterized the political attitude of Qutbuddin, Iltutmish and their successors. The Turk had initiated the conquest, and with singular energy had fought back his enemies, but in organizing the state he had weighted it heavily with racial affiliations; even the formal allegiance to the universal Khilafat could alter little of its Turkish character. Improvised as a Turkish concern, the sultanat’s mainstay was sought to be confined to those who, as a result of the Mongol invasions and the influence of environment, increasingly found themselves unable to preserve it as their exclusive proprietary right, and had to resort, as in Balban’s reign, to the desperate method of violently destroying rival elements. The easy victory of the allegedly non-Turkish Khalji party only underlined the proven fact that racial dictatorship could no longer sustain the state. For it had reached a stage when new forces and aspirations insistently demanded adjustment, and the improvisation of the process of conquest could no longer counteract the inherent disruptive tendencies. A planned administration even more than the long-deferred expansion called for a new outlook and a new society.

The Sultan’s conciliatory temperament seemed to augur well for the new programme. Seeking to make the transition as easy as possible, and respecting the Turkophile feelings of the discomfited citizens, he delayed his entry into Delhi and set up his court in Kaiqubad’s unfinished palace at Kailugarhi. In the reorganization of the government that followed, his own kinsmen and supporters naturally received the key positions, but a general dispossession of the old nobility was prudently avoided. Balban’s friend and the leading citizen of Delhi, Malikul Umara Fakhruddin was confirmed as the
kotwal of the capital while Khwaja Khatir retained the wizariat. During his regency Firuz had agreed to Malik Chaju's request for the governorship of Kara, and thither the remaining members of the Balbani family were now allowed to repair. From among his relations, Firuz's brother, Yagh rash Khan, headed the army ministry, while his nephew Ahmad Chap became the naib-i barbek.

JALALUDDIN FIRUZ'S FEELINGS AND SENTIMENTS

Within a few months, however, the hostility of the citizens almost turned into admiration as they heard of the Sultan's innate modesty and his anxious regard for the feelings of his opponents. Induced by the hope, as Barani points out, of rewards and offices, they journeyed, at first hesitatingly, to make their peace with him and were reassured by his genuine eagerness to win their affection. To their astonishment, they found in the Sultan an exceptionally peaceable and kind-hearted man, then past his seventieth year, who nourished no other ambition than of ending his days as a pious Musalman, warring constantly in the service of God. They still remembered the awe-inspiring hauteur and coolness of Balban's demeanour and so were almost scandalized when Firuz, on his first state entry into Delhi a few months later, made an unashamed display of his human emotions and impulses. To the intense chagrin of his power-drunk kinsmen, he insisted on dismounting at the entrance to the Red Palace inside which, as he said in reply to Ahmad Chap's remonstrance, he had often stood for hours together in front of Balban. He refused to take his seat in the royal audience-hall except in the place assigned to the officers. Overcome by sentiment, he cried aloud and declared that the crown had been forced upon him by the malicious intents of Kachchin and Surkha and that he was forced to endanger the future of his children, kinsmen and dependants, 'for, how could he, with such a humble origin as his, and with so few followers, ever hope to retain and bequeath the crown to his children, when it had passed away from the family of even such a strong-willed and well-established king as Balban within three years of his death?'

Such sentiments reveal an extraordinarily guileless and sincere heart, unsullied by power and rejoicing in a child-like want of equivocation. To the simpler, unpolitical minds he, therefore, appeared as a saintly ruler, for by subordinating state-craft to the dictates of his heart he showed himself in a perfect and agreeable contrast to the earlier despots. His reign typifies, perhaps, a conscious departure from the prevailing 'blood and iron' method of government and, as Barani implies, it was no fault of the kindly old man that his faith in the power of love was abused. Among the realistic politicians,
schooled in the traditions of the stern and cold-blooded Balban, Firuz’s emotional out-pourings and impulsive actions, however, evoked misgivings, for the situation demanded a more aggressive exercise of the royal authority. To canalize all loyalties to the new dynasty and to provide for order and security by the restoration of the overarching powers of the central government were tasks whose urgency brooked no experimentation. It was only by unrelenting ruthlessness that Balban had been able to ensure peace in the kingdom, but in the eastern provinces, despite his terroristic methods, Delhi’s authority was no more. The pitiful end of the late king had impaired the crown’s prestige and called for more vigorous measures. And, besides, sentimental tenderness ill-fitted a king, whose primary task was to dislodge the Mongols from the western Punjab and to initiate the expansion of the sultanat.

REVOLT OF MALIK CHAJJU

But Firuz remained true to his heart, firmly refusing to shed Muslim blood and to inflict misery on his fellow-men ‘for the dubious glory of a few days of power’. Very soon, however, his pacifism was put to a severe test. In August of the same year (1290) Malik Chajju Kashli Khan, Balban’s nephew and head of the old royal family, raised the banner of revolt at Kara. Malik Chajju had earlier declined the offer of regency when, as the ariz-i namalik, Firuz had foiled a conspiracy against the Khaljis and raised the infant Kaimurs to the throne. Chajju may not have been involved in the conspiracy, but his sympathy with the cause was natural and was perhaps not unknown to Firuz. Prudently, therefore, he had sought to live in the cast, away from the de facto ruler, secretly hoping to organize a wider resistance, with the ultimate backing, if possible, of his cousin, Bughra Khan, who had assumed independent sovereignty in Bengal in 1287.1 Firuz’s reluctance was overcome by the counsel of the venerated Fakhruddin Kotwal—himself no warm supporter of the new regime—and the malik was given the iqta of Kara and allowed to take with him all the surviving members of the Balbani family.2

At Kara the malik made his plan and, as it appears, was enthusiastically joined by Amir Ali Hatim Khan, governor of Awadh, and other nobles of the old regime, who held assignments in the east.3 The house of Balban commanded wide loyalty also among the

1 Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi, 54.
2 Ibid., 59.
3 Barani (181) calls Hatim Khan Maula Zada-i Sultan-i Balban (Freedman of Sultan Balban). He was appointed sarjadar (head of the royal bodyguard) by Kajqabad (Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi, 53). On the accession of Kaimurs, he appears to have
Hindu chiefs of the trans-Gangetic tract, for Chajju was joined by a large number of ramas and rawats with their famed infantry (piyada) and archers (dhanuks). The rawats accepted betel-leaves from Chajju—symbol of loyalty and friendship—and boasted that they would break the royal canopy of Firuz. With such support and with the knowledge that in the capital and the neighbouring districts the Khaljis had not yet found favour with the legitimists, Chajju, as reported by Barani, felt confident in proclaiming himself as Sultan Mughisuddin’ and in assuming the prerogatives of sovereignty by striking his coins and having the Khutba read in his name. Whether this step followed Bughra Khan’s refusal or inability to collaborate in the project cannot be ascertained now. As report of the massive preparations for the revolt spread, loyal officers, stationed in the Doab and beyond, felt unsafe in their isolated locations and began to withdraw to the west. Confident of the partisan support in and around the capital, and of his numerous following ‘like ants and locusts’, as Barani puts it, Chajju decided to advance on Delhi. Aiming apparently to approach the city from the Amroha region, he moved northwards along the left bank of the Ganges and followed the Ramganga through Badaun, where two of his supporters, Malik Bahadur and Alp Ghazi, awaited him with their troops.

been posted as governor of Awadh, and the post of surjandur, now split into two, went to Ahmad Chap and Malik Hiranmar (Mubarak Shahi, 62). Among the officers of the east were Malik Alp Ghazi, assignee of Kark (?), Malik Bahadur, Malik Mas’ud (the Akhurbej) and Malik Muhammad Balban (Mubarak Shahi, 64). Barani (183) adds the names of Malik Ulughehi, Malik Tajudar and Malik Ahjan. 4 Barani, 182. Amir Khusrau in his Miftahul Futuh (edited by Professor A. Rashid, Aligarh, 1954, 14) calls them ‘Hindu thieves’. The Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi (63) gives the name of one of these chiefs as Biram Deo or Bhim Deo Kotla, who was slain in the final engagement. This unity of the two old governing class groups is significant. One of the causes of the alliance may have been the fact (to which the Miftahul Futuh refers) that the Hindu chiefs had not paid their tribute to the central government for some years. 5 Barani, 181.

6 Bughra’s reign doubtless terminated towards the end of 1289, for his son and successor, Rukmuddin Kaikaus, struck his coins in 1290 (Journal, Bengal Asiatic Society, 1922, 410). The Riazus Salatin records a tradition that on the accession of Jalaluddin Firuz, Bughra Khan gave up the insignia of royalty (Translation, A. Salam, Calcutta, 1904, 90). Since he did not accept the suzerainty of Delhi and was succeeded by his son, Kaikaus, who retained all the prerogatives of sovereignty, is it possible that Bughra’s abdication and his son’s succession were connected with the events in Awadh, Bughra’s desire to join Chajju having been opposed by his realist ministers, who set up Kaikaus? 7 Barani, 7.

8 Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi, 63. They had joined together at Kurk (?) and then, recrossing the Ganges, encamped at the village, Bahlama.
It was no contemptible strategy. But Firuz's mildness concealed a seasoned warrior, who could appreciate a straight military challenge. Leaving his eldest son, Khan-i Khanan, in charge of the capital, he mobilized his troops and marched through Koil (Aligarh) towards Badaun, ostensibly to close the route through Rohilkhand. He sent a detachment ahead under his second son, Arkali Khan, to seek out and intercept the pretender. Marching ten to twelve karohs ahead of his father in the direction of Amroha, the prince came upon the insurgent army moving on the other side of the Rahib (Ramganga). For lack of boats, which had all been seized by the enemy, Arkali Khan could only send a raiding party at night on rafts and skiffs. The raid proved a success and spread confusion among the enemy who, Amir Khusrau reports, broke camp and hastily moved towards the north 'to the hills of Juba'. For two days Arkali Khan plundered the deserted camp and then hastened in pursuit. While the Sultan, crossing the Ganges at Bhujpur, near Furrukhabad, advanced through Rohilkhand and engaged the Hindu-Muslim supporters of the pretender, the prince contacted the enemy at the Ramganga crossing. Chajju fought with determination for the whole day and by sundown the battle had remained undecided. At night, however, an agent of one of his Hindu supporters, Rai Bhim Deva, brought report of the Sultan's imminent approach from the rear. This news unnerved him and he secretly left the camp with a few followers. In the morning Arkali Khan crossed the river and had almost a walk-over during which Bhim Deo and Alp Ghazi were slain and Malik Mas'ud and Balban were taken prisoners. The leaderless insurgents then surrendered. A few days later Chajju was also captured from a walled village (mawas), where he had sought shelter and whose headman turned him over to his pursuers.

Firuz, who was still in Rohilkhand when Arkali Khan joined him with the prisoners, now turned to the eastern districts bordering the Sarju (Ghagra) river in order to chastize the local supporters of the old regime and incidentally to clear the robber-infested forests along the route to Hindustan. Some, like the chief of Rupal, submitted and offered heavy tribute; others, like the chief of Kahsun, had their areas

9 Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi mentions 'Kabar' as the site from which Chajju might have come. Elliot (II, 539) in a footnote says that Kabir is in Rohilkhand.
10 Miftahul Futuh, 12-13.
11 Ibid., 13. The Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi (63) calls it 'Juyad'.
12 Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi writes it as Biram Deva Kotla.
13 Miftahul Futuh, 17.
14 Barani, 184.
plundered. Hindu recalcitrants were executed and Indian Muslims were sold as slaves.\textsuperscript{15}

**Firuz's Magnanimity**

Having thus vindicated the soldier in him, Firuz in dealing with the vanquished nobles showed a magnanimity that shamed his erst-while enemies, but which he overdid by sentimental effusions. He was in his camp in Rohilkhand when the imprisoned nobles were brought in. As he espied the fallen nobles being led up the darbar grounds, bareheaded, chained and in soiled and tattered garments, the Sultan cried out in pain, covered his eyes, and indignantly ordered the prisoners to be dressed and entertained 'as in the olden days'. Later he astonished the orthodox politicians by inviting Amir Ali Sarjandar and the higher nobles to a feast and convivial party.\textsuperscript{16} As the cup went the rounds, he spoke to the crestfallen and speechless nobles words of kindness and consolation and, to the great consternation of the cautious Ahmad Chap, warmly commended their loyal and devoted exertions in the cause of their master's family.

Disappointed in his expectation of the rebels' punishment \textit{a la Balban}—for the king took no sterner measure than to send Chajju in honourable confinement to Multan and to release his comrades—the indignant nephew pointedly demanded kingly firmness or abdication. But in a spirited avowal Firuz frankly confessed his inability to rule with tyranny and bloodshed, and expressed his readiness to make room for any one amongst his relations, who was prepared to barter his elementary humanity for this 'ungodly, man-killing kingship'. He could not, at the fag-end of his life, unfeelingly kill or disgrace these eminent men, his honoured friends and patrons. Could he ever forget the days when, with his brother, he used to stand in the rank of the officers, fondly hoping that Hatim Khan would respond to their salutations? May be, the rebels would have given him no quarter, but then, he argued naively, 'the guilt of shedding Musalman blood would be upon them and God would consign them to Hell'. 'I showed my gratitude for victory by being kind to them for, after all, they are human beings and Musalmans and can surely appreciate generosity, and from a sense of gratitude they will stay their hands from doing

\textsuperscript{15} Miftahul Futuh, 21-23.

\textsuperscript{16} Barani (173) says that he was told of this incident by the poet, Amir Khusrau. The Sultan was sitting on a \textit{mondha} (reed-chair) and Khusrau stood by his side. Barani definitely refers to Amir Ali Sarjandar, Malik Ulughchi, son of Malik Targhi, Malik Tajudar, Malik Ahjan and other great amirs being among the captives with yokes (du-shakhas) round their necks. Malik Chajju had not yet been captured.
me any further harm.' For once, at least, his faith was not betrayed, for the defeated nobles gave no further trouble.

FIRUZ’S MILITARY EXPEDITIONS

Soon after his return, the Sultan was called upon to meet another military challenge. 17 The Sunam-Dipalpur-Multan border, to which Arkali Khan had just been appointed, was once again invaded by the Mongols under one Abdullah. 18 Firuz, who had grown old in his frontier command and delighted in opportunities of fighting the infidels, set out immediately with his army. 19 The invader was contacted at a place named Bar-ram by the chroniclers. 20 After some days of preliminary skirmishes between the advance-guards, in which the Delhi forces gained the upper hand, the Mongols agreed to withdraw without fighting. The Sultan exchanged friendly greetings with Abdullah, whom he called his son. But while Abdullah retreated across the frontier, a party of Mongols headed by Ulghu, another grandson of Halaku, embraced Islam, remained behind and desired to be allowed to stay in India. The Sultan was delighted and magnanimously invited them to settle in Delhi where they were given quarters, allowances and even social rank. 21 But ordinary administration was made almost

17 Although the sequence of events is narrated differently by the chroniclers, Isami and the Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi agree in placing the Mongol invasion immediately after Chajju’s rebellion and before the Mandawar-Ranthambhor expedition. Amir Khusrau also seems to hint at it when describing the Sultan’s return from the campaign against Chajju (11, 23, 12-16). That the Mongol invasion must have taken place before the Sidi Maula trial is proved by the fact that Ulghu, the Mongol chief, who settled in Delhi after Abdullah’s invasion, reported Sidi’s treasonable intent (Mubarak Shahi, 65). The Sidi was arrested by Arkali Khan at Delhi while the Sultan was away owing to the Mandawar campaign. Khan-i Khakan, according to the Mubarak Shahi (64), died soon after the Mongol invasion, and Arkali Khan, a rival to his brother, had been recalled from Multan and left in charge of Delhi. Apparently, if Khan-i Khakan, an ardent disciple of the Sidi, had been alive, the Sidi would not have been arrested.

18 Barani (218) calls Abdullah ‘the grandson of the accursed Hallu (Halaku)’. The Mubarak Shahi (64) calls him ‘son of the prince of Khurasan’.

19 As an instance of his transparent honesty, Barani (196-97) relates how, in view of his life-long war against the Mongols, he spoke to his wife after his accession of his wish to be designated ‘Al Mujahid fi Sabillah’ (Fighter in the Way of God) and desired her to suggest to the qazi and shaikhs of the city, when they came to offer felicitations on the occasion of the wedding of her youngest son, that they should petition the Sultan to permit them to include this title in the Friday Khutba. But after she had done so and Qazi Fakhiruddin Naqila had actually made the request on the occasion of the new-moon felicitations, the Sultan in great humility declined it, confessing his guilt of having desired the honour which, on later consideration, he realized that he did not deserve.

20 Isami, Futuhus Salatin, (ed. Mehdi Husain, 205); Barani, 218.

21 Barani, 219.
impossible when the Sultan extended this magnanimity even to such hardened criminals as the thugs, of whom about a thousand were rounded up for proved offences of murder and highway robbery. Pitying their lot, and accepting their regrets and promises, the Sultan had them shipped off to the lower Ganges and released on the Lakhnauti frontier.

Nevertheless, the Sultan's military energy remained unimpaired. In the same year he led an expedition into Rajputana against the Chauhanas, whose power was then centred at Ranthambhor under the famed Hamira Deva and was expanding in all directions. They had practically isolated Ajmer; and even the province of Haryana felt their pressure, already intensified by the Mewati tribesmen, whom even Balban's exertions had failed to reduce. A large-scale offensive against them was indeed as urgent as the recovery of the Indus frontier. By inclination and long experience, Firuz longed for an opportunity to carry on 'holy war and fight open battles'; but, as the sequel showed, a sustained campaign to re-impose paramountcy required more calculated aggressiveness and persistence than what he admittedly possessed.

Passing through Rewari and Narnaul, the royal forces entered Alwar and invested Mandawar,\textsuperscript{22} perhaps the northern-most outpost of the Chauhanas. The fortress offered no great resistance and the ravaged countryside yielded a rich booty in cattle. Advancing towards Ranthambhor through the Kerauli region, west of the Chambal, the royal forces arrived in two weeks near Jhain, which guarded the approaches to the Chauhana capital. A reconnoitring party sent under Qara Bahadur having repulsed a Rajput sally, a larger detachment was sent the next day, which, pushing to within two farsangs of the fort, signally defeated a much stronger force of Rajputs, who foolishly came out of the fortress to engage the attackers in a frontal battle. The Chauhana commander, a renowned warrior named Gardan Saini, was killed and the vanquished Rajputs, fleeing in all directions, were pursued across the Chambal, Kunwari and Banas rivers. Following this defeat, the commandant evacuated the Jhain fortress and retired to Ranthambhor. Jhain was then dismantled.\textsuperscript{23} While the soldiers plundered and gathered booty, the Sultan's iconoclastic zeal sought

\textsuperscript{22} Barani and Mubarak Shaht call the place 'Mandor', but Isami has 'Mandawar' and the Tabaqat-i Akbri has the impossible 'Mandu'. It is impossible to identify it with any other place except Mandawar in the Siwalik hills. Only Isami (208-9) and Mubarak Shaht (64) refer to the capture of the fortress, which according to the latter, took four months. This duration presumably covered the campaigns against Jhain and Ranthambhor also.

\textsuperscript{23} Miftahul Futuh, 21-30.
satisfaction in breaking the idols even though he admired the sculptures and the carvings.\textsuperscript{24}

While Jhain was thus reduced, reportedly with surprising ease, the capture of Ranthambhor proved a more difficult proposition. The fortress was strong and situated on a steep hill. The Sultan decided on a siege and from his camp at Jhain issued orders for the construction of the necessary catapults (\textit{manghrabis}), \textit{sabats} and \textit{gargajes} and the preparation of a \textit{pasheb}. While the work was in progress, Firuz rode out to inspect. But as he looked at the impregnable fort and considered the cost of the assault in terms of the sufferings of his troops, he became sentimental; and his determination, already weakened by reports of conspiracy in the capital and in his own camp, finally gave way. Refusing to risk ‘the hair of a single Musalman for ten such forts’, he ordered an immediate withdrawal. The protesting Ahmad Chap pointed to the danger of thus emboldening the Hindus and asked him to follow at least such kings as Mahmud and Sanjar, whose undoubted piety never limited their kingly action. But Firuz countered it with no more convincing argument than to reaffirm his old convictions and with a righteous, but illogical refusal, to be compared with such worthy kings whose dominions, unlike his, ‘contained not a single idolater’.\textsuperscript{25}

\section*{FIRUZ AND CONSPIRATORS—CASE OF SIDI MAULA}

It was evident that the idealist monarch would never learn statecraft, and while Barani, equally unpolitical, showered praise on his ‘essential goodness’, murmurings among his courtiers grew loud and persistent. In private gatherings and over wine-cups, they discussed his excessive humility and woeful incapacity to inspire fear. In one such gathering during the Mandawar-Ranthambhor campaign, held at the house of Malik Tajuddin Kuchi, with wine adding to the unrestrained expression of feelings, some of the Sultan’s closest adherents uttered mouthfuls about killing the old man and raising Tajuddin Kuchi to the throne. The report of such seditious, though drunken, talk incensed even the mild Firuz; but he merely summoned them to a private audience and confronted them once again with the impassioned reiteration of his humanitarianism. He stung their conscience when, warming up, he drew his sword and dared them to kill him. The interview ended, as that of the Kara rebels had done, over blissful cups of wine, the poetry-reciting Sultan melting in tears as

\textsuperscript{24} Miftahul Futus (30) says that in the whole operation against Jhain only one Turkish soldier was wounded, while thousands of Rawats were slain!

\textsuperscript{25} Barani, 214-18.
the court wit, Nusrat Sabbah, made a clever and flattering confession, and asked forgiveness for the ‘loquacious boozers’. The most persistent of his detractors, however, were banished to their *tqtas* for the period of one year.28

In only one instance of a suspected conspiracy Firuz took firmer action, but even this was of a piece with his impulsive nature. This was the execution of the popularly venerated, foreign-born recluse, named Sidi Maula, the attraction of whose ascetic piety was heightened by a mysterious source of great wealth with which he maintained a vast *khanqah*, lavishly entertaining people of all classes. Sidi evidently belonged to an unorthodox sect of *durmishes*, and from the reign of Kaiqubad his astonishing charities had increasingly made him an institution which, latterly drew to him, along with religious devotees, most of the dispossessed Balbani amirs and officers. Among his constant visitors were also some leading men of the new regime, the scheming Qazi Jalal Kashani, and the religious-minded Crown-prince, Khan-i Khanan, who, however, died on the eve of the Mandawar expedition. The saint may not have been entirely disinterested in the resulting potentiality of his position but the report, made by the immigrant Mongol chief, Malik Ulghu, of a conspiracy to have the Sultan murdered on a Friday by two Hindu officers of the old regime, Hathya Paik and Niranjan Kotwal with a view to his own installation as the *Khalifa*, was never proved.27

A near-contemporary author, however, stresses the jealousy of a rival sect of *durmishes* to whose accusations the violent-tempered Arkali Khan, with his dislike for his elder brother’s friends, lent a credulous ear and had the accused arrested and prosecuted while the Sultan was away at Mandawar. They were brought before the Sultan on his return. Unable in any case to substantiate the firmly denied charge, and the *ulama* interdicting a suggested ordeal by fire, the Sultan, seemingly convinced of their guilt, executed the two Hindus, Hathya and Niranjan, banished Qazi Jalal and the Balbani officers, and then hotly turned to the Sidi for meddling in politics. As the latter repeated his denial, Firuz lost his composure and, in impatient anger, appealed to a group of *qalandars*, eagerly waiting for the opportunity, to avenge him ‘on this man’. And, with a callousness

26 Ibid., 190-92.

27 Barani says (210): ‘The *maulazadas* (freedmen) of Balban, who were the sons of maliks and amirs and were without means of subsistence, jobless, without *tqtas* and without soldiers, and Niranjan (or Biranjtan) Kotwal and Hatya Paik, who belonged to the group of reckless wrestlers (pahilwans) and had a living grant of one lakh of *fitals* a year in the reign of Balban but had been reduced to penury during the Jalali era; these and other dismissed high officers began to frequent the *khanqah* of Sidi Maula.’
CONSPIRACY OF ALI GURSHASP

surprising in a nature so gentle and merciful, he looked on approvingly as the Sidi, pounced upon and mercilessly knifed, was finally crushed under the feet of an elephant on Arkali Khan’s instruction. A violent dust-storm, followed by a drought lasting long enough to create famine conditions in the city and in the Siwaliks, together with the tragic end of the Sultan, continued to furnish the Sidi’s admirers with the looked-for proofs of his innocence.\(^{28}\)

Nonetheless, the sultanat survived the Sultan’s foibles and held together, as a tribute to the solidity of Balban’s work and the efforts of Firuz’s unenviably placed officers.\(^{29}\) If his heart recoiled from the sanguinary implications of a strong, centralized and expansionist state, he at least trusted his governors with the freedom to rule with conventional vigour and enterprise. While this ensured a fairly orderly administration, it also opened the way to eventual expansion, and, in so doing, ended the stagnation to which Firuz’s passivity threatened to subject the state. The process, almost symbolizing the pitiless appraisal of history, however, swept off the man himself, who with so tragic courage clung to an ideal that the world has yet to appreciate.

CONSPIRACY OF ALI GURSHASP

To the vacant governorship of Kara, Jalaluddin had appointed his deceased elder brother’s son, Ali Gurshasp (later Sultan Alauddin), whom he had brought up from infancy and had given his daughter in marriage. The young man had grown up a perfect opposite of his uncle, calculating, unscrupulous and aggressive, with an ambition which he found constantly thwarted by his haughty, sharp-tongued wife and his mother-in-law. But domestic misery only increased his thirst for avenging himself on the family and his unsympathetic critics by deeds that would free him from the galling family tutelage and ensure him an independent, perhaps glorious, existence. At Kara he found Malik Chajju’s erstwhile supporters only too willing to help him to realize his dreams and, as money was the first requisite, raids on the neighbouring Hindu states seemed to assure a working capital. Since Delhi appeared to have its eyes fixed on Rajputana, Ali turned to the Paramara state of Malwa, a country progressively declining from the turn of the century and now in the process of dismemberment by the neighbouring Baghela, Yadava and Chauhana powers,\(^{30}\) and

\(^{28}\) Isami (211-14) says that the famine lasted for two years; Barani more correctly (210) says that in the following year (1296) the monsoon was heavy.

\(^{29}\) 'During the reign of Jalaluddin', Barani tells us (205), 'it was impossible for the officers to behave in a high-handed manner with the people.'

\(^{30}\) For an account of the Paramara Kingdom in decline, see D. C. Ganguli, History of the Paramara Dynasty, Dacca, 1933.
whose temples, though occasionally plundered in the past, could still yield great religious and material satisfaction. With the Sultan's sanction, given with more zeal than calculation, Ali accordingly led, towards the end of 1293, a raiding expedition *via* Chanderi to Bhilsa. With resistance given no time to foregather, he amply rewarded himself on the ancient town and its richly endowed temples. He returned with an immense booty, in cattle, precious metals and the inevitable idol to be trampled under the zealot's feet. All this Ali shrewdly invested in winning the Sultan's greater confidence and affection. But the most valued asset he kept to himself—the assiduously gathered knowledge of the fabled wealth of the southern Hindu kingdoms, the state of their defences and the routes thereto. South of the Vindhyas was almost virgin territory for Muslim arms, for the Yadava kingdom, with a fatal unconcern for the significant course of events in the north, was merrily pursuing the age-old chivalric wars of dynastic rivalry. Ali Gurshasp, therefore, planned to enrich himself by a well-concealed raid on this kingdom and therewith to strike for independent sovereignty.

His move succeeded, for the Sultan, confronting his nephew's detractors with what he fondly believed was additional proof of his loyalty, marked his appreciation by giving him his deceased father's office of *ariz-i mamalik* and adding Awadh to his governorship. He further granted Ali's request for permission to utilize the surplus revenue (*jawazil*) of his province in enlisting extra troops to be used, as he represented, for enriching the Sultan's treasury by raids into the wealthy but lightly defended countries beyond Chanderi.

In about a year Ali had collected his equipment, and at the beginning of the winter of 1295 he set out at the head of about eight thousand picked cavalry for an assault on Deogir (Devagiri), the Yadava capital, then under Rama Chandra Deva (1271-1310), basking in the reflected glory of his earlier exploits. It was an amazing feat, performed with exceptional daring. He left Alaul Mulk, uncle of the historian, Ziauddin Barani, in charge of the Kara administration with instructions to keep Delhi constantly deluded about his real destination, and struck across Bundelkhand. His eight weeks' march through the difficult and unfriendly country was eased by the assumed manner of a fugitive fleeing from the wrath of the Sultan of Delhi, so that he met with little prepared defence at the Yadava frontier town of Ellichpur. Passing almost effortlessly through the Ghati Lajaura, he descended with the directness of lightning on the capital. With his army away on an expedition with the crown-prince, Singhana, and with provisions running low, Rama Chandra was too unnerved to accept the challenge of a siege and offered submission. But before
the invader could collect the promised ransom, the impetuous Singhana
returned with the army and, heedless of his father's importunities,
counter-attacked. But Ali's resourcefulness more than neutralized his
initial setback and the twice-defeated Rai of Devagiri had to pay a
far heavier indemnity than before, and also agreed to the victorious
soldiers plundering the city. The resulting gain, in gold and silver,
pearl and precious stones, silk-stuff and slaves, elephants and horses,
exceeded the victor's wildest dreams, for the kingdom had for cen-
turies attracted, through its ports and trading centres, vast overseas
wealth. No sultan of Delhi had ever possessed anything like it.

News of Ali Gurshasp's exploit had meanwhile trickled through
to Firuz who, although slightly hurt by his nephew's secretiveness,
was yet pleased at the prospect of so vast a treasure coming to him.
So he moved to Gwalior to receive the victorious prince who, he
fondly hoped, would come to meet him before returning to Kara.31
When rumour of Ali's return journey direct to Kara began to circulate
among the people, the Sultan summoned his council to deliberate on
the proper course of action. Realists like Ahmad Chap, who knew Ali
better, urged strong measures against such an unauthorized campaign
and warned him of the consequences of allowing the ambitious young
man to carry all his wealth straight to Kara. The Sultan was, therefore,
urged to march at once to intercept Ali at Chanderi. But Jalaluddin's
faith in his nephew could not be shaken and in spite of Ahmad's
despairing cry to 'kill us all if your Majesty means to return to Delhi',
he journeyed back to the capital, to wait hopefully for Ali's presenta-
tion of the spoils and to accept his apologies. In his court was Almas
Beg, Ali's younger brother, also married to one of the Sultan's
daughters, who, on instructions from his returning brother, schemed
to keep the old man deluded with assurances and pleasant expectations
while Ali speedily marched back to his province. From there he sent
a detailed report, confessing his guilt and asking for a letter of pardon
under the Sultan's tauqi (signature) before he could dare present
himself, 'for he was uncertain as to what his enemies might have done
to poison his uncle's mind during his one year's absence'. The Sultan
was only too ready to send the letter through special messengers. But
the latter, astounded at what they learnt at Kara of Ali's military
strength and designs, were detained and prevented from communicat-
ing with Delhi. Ali's plan, in pursuance of which he had already
arranged to secure a passage over the Ghagra, was to seize Lakhnauti,
a country which had lately asserted its independence and was now
under Balban's grandson, Sultan Ruknuddin Kaikaus. But his uncle's

31 Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi, 67.
credulity held out a richer possibility. Almas Beg succeeded in persuading the guileless old man that his brother was deeply and desperately weighed down by his sense of guilt and that, unless the Sultān personally conveyed his pardon, it was to be feared that he would commit suicide as he always carried poison in his handkerchief. Greatly concerned, and with his affectionate heart welling up for his nephew, Firuz decided to see him at once and sent Almas ahead to keep him from self-destruction with the assurance of his own expeditious arrival.

ASSASSINATION OF JALALUDDIN FIRUZ KHALJI

And so, 'his doom pulling him by the hair', as Barani puts it, heedless, and even resentful, of all counsels of caution, Firuz set out straight for the trap laid for him by his beloved nephew. Directing Ahmad Chap to take the main army by land to Kara and only a thousand soldiers journeying along the river with him, he embarked, early in the month of Ramazan 695 (July 1296) on a barge to journey down the Ganges, then swollen by heavy rains. As the royal barge neared the town of Kara on 17 Ramazan32 (20 July), Ali, leaving nothing to chance, sent Almas over to induce the Sultān to leave the troop-laden boats on the other side, 'lest his brother take fright and kill himself'. Even the few confidants who remained with the Sultān were, on the same plea, made to unbuckle their weapons, and their hearts sank as they saw Ali's troops, armed to the teeth, alarmingly drawn up on the bank of the Ganges at its confluence with the Jumna. Complaining feebly of Ali's lack of courtesy in not coming forward even now to receive him, to which Almas gave a suitably deceitful reply, Firuz resignedly sat back to recite the Quran while his attendant nobles despaired of their lives. At the landing Ali came forward with his retinue, and ceremoniously threw himself at his uncle's feet. Jalaluddin affectionately raised him, kissed him on the cheek, and chiding him for doubting his uncle's love, drew him towards the barge. The signal was then given. The first blow proved ineffectual, but as the Sultān ran towards his boat a second stroke felled him, and his severed head, raised aloft on a spear, fixedly stared under the setting sun as the faithless nephew, quickly spreading the royal canopy over his head, proclaimed himself king.33 The

32 Barani gives 17 Ramazan 695, as the date of Firuz's assassination and the proclamation of Alauddin's accession at Kara. But Amir Khusrau gives the date of Alauddin's accession as Wednesday, 16 Ramazan 695 (19 July 1296). Khusrau's date is more reliable.

33 Barani, 223-26. Only Isami (219, 233) mentions Alauddin's proper name, which is supported by Barani also (174, 234).
nobles and soldiers on the boats were killed and the army marching by land under Ahmad Chap returned to Delhi in great distress.

Although inconsequential at the end, Jalaluddin's reign bridged the experimental age of the Mameluks with the planned imperialist economy of Alauddin. History used him as an instrument to end the retrogressive, outmoded racial polity of the Turks and to set the stage for an integrated Indo-Muslim state. In this task his stubborn romanticism proved a necessary equipment, for it doubtless eased the process of transition and blunted deep-seated prejudices. Like the reformed Asoka, he aimed at ruling by human love and faith, but if he paid for its failure nobly with his own life, it was an indictment which mankind has since done little to expiate.
II. ALAUDDIN KHALJI: CONQUEST OF POWER (1296-1301)

CAPTURE OF DELHI

Ali Gurshasp, who was proclaimed Sultan with the title of ‘Alauddunya wad Din Muhammad Shah-us Sultan’, while the head of his murdered uncle was being circulated on a spear in his camp in the failing sunlight to be sent to Awadh later, was the eldest son of Jalaluddin’s elder brother, Shihabuddin Mas’ud. He had three younger brothers, Almas Beg, Qutlugh Tigin and Muhammad, but only Almas Beg finds a place in history.¹ Heinous as the murder of Jalaluddin was, a student of Muslim monarchy has to admit that such crimes were quite in consonance with its century-old traditions and, what is equally important, they did not prove that the conspirators were necessarily guilty of any moral turpitude. Amir Khusrau, who wrote in the time of Alauddin,² and Isami, who wrote when Alauddin’s family had vanished, agree in describing Alauddin as ‘a man of destiny’—a chosen instrument. ‘When God helps a man’, says the latter, ‘the whole world is obedient to him.’ Such assertions suffer from oversimplification. In the years to come Alauddin was to pride himself on the fact that, though a stranger to book-learning; he had learnt in the one school that matters—the school of experience; and as we follow his career year by year, we find him patient, cautious, bold, ruthless, and capable of planning and organizing. In fact, confronted by new and unexpected situations, he rapidly developed all the faculties that are required for the governance of men, and to strengthen his mind and will-power (we assert on the basis of good authorities) he had a firm faith in God and was confident that all his actions would be forgiven because his real object was the service of ‘the people of God’.³ According to Hajjud Dabir, he was about thirty at the time of his accession and died at the age of fifty.⁴

India has had a cultural unity from time immemorial; but Alauddin gave it such administrative unity as was possible under medieval conditions of communication and transport for the first time after the Gupta era. He knew how to say his prayers, but he never fasted and, quite against the general tradition of Muslim

¹ Isami, 220.
² Dawat Rani: ‘When help from the Unseen comes to the chosen man, his desires are realized beyond his expectations.’
³ Khaipul Majalis, 341.
⁴ Zafrul Vath, 785; quoted by Dr. K. S. Lal, Khaljis, 41.
kings, he did not go to the Friday congregational prayers. The only contemporary in whose sanctity he believed was Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, but it was against the principles of the Shaikh to meet persons of worldly authority, and Alauddin did not seek a personal interview which the Shaikh would have refused. He insisted that he was ‘a Muslim and a born-Muslim’ and thus acquainted with the Muslim ways of life and traditional faith. But so far as the Muslim ulama were concerned, he allowed this ‘army of prayer’ to be controlled, managed and provided for by his Sadrus Sudur. He took no interest in them or in their opponents, ‘the Muslim philosophers’.\(^5\) His mind was thus, fortunately, free from all a priori prejudices and fanaticisms, and he brought to his task a freshness of outlook and a capacity to learn that had been wanting in all the previous rulers of Delhi.

The first two days after his accession at Kara were devoted to the formation of a provisional government and preparations for the march to Delhi. The Sultan’s brother, Almas Beg, was given the title of Ulugh Khan; Malik Nusrat Jalesari of Nusrat Khan; Malik Yusuf Hizhabruddin of Zafar Khan; and Sanjar, the brother of the Sultan’s wife, Mahru, (who according to Isami\(^6\) had royal blood in his veins) got the title of Alp Khan. ‘Alauddin raised his confidential friends to the status of amirs, and those who were already amirs were raised to the grade of maliks.’\(^7\) The rainfall was severe. ‘The Ganges and the Jumna looked like the sea and every streamlet had swollen to the size of the Jumna and the Ganges.’ This suited Alauddin, for his first task was to enlist soldiers. So he started in the midst of the rains and directed his officers to enlist as many soldiers as possible without insisting on traditional technicalities, like testing a soldier’s capacity or asking him to produce sureties. To draw attention to the Sultan’s munificence, a small wooden munjaniq or catapult was constructed and five mans of gold-pieces were shot from it at the waiting multitude at the pitching of the royal tent in the evening.

Alauddin decided that his army was to march to Delhi in two sections, the first led by himself and Nusrat Khan via Badaun and Baran (Buland Shahr) and the other led by Zafar Khan via Koil (Aligarh). Alauddin knew the value of trained soldiers for military tasks, but the enterprise before him was not military but political.

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5 Barani, 338: ‘He was extremely slack in performing the obligations of the shari’at and did not know what it was to pray or fast. He had strong faith in traditional Islam—like the ignorant. He neither knew nor heard nor uttered the expressions (of heretical Muslims) of bad religion and bad faith.’

6 Isami, 240.

7 Barani, 242.
What he wanted was numbers and an upsurge of political opinion in his favour. 'Within two or three weeks the news that Alauddin was marching on Delhi, while scattering gold among the people and enlisting as many horsemen as he could find, spread through the villages and towns of Hindustan, and all sorts of people—military and non-military—came running to the Sultan.' By the time he reached Badaun, 56,000 horse and 60,000 foot had collected under his banners. At Baran (Buland Shahr) the great Jalali nobles—Tajul Mulk Kuchi, Malik Abaji Akhur-bek, Malik Amir Ali Diwana, Malik Usman Amir-akhur, Malik Amir Kalan, Malik Umar Surkha and Malik Hiranmar—who had been sent against him, decided to join him. Alauddin gave every one of them 30, 40 and, in some cases, even 50 mans of gold, and their soldiers got a reward of 300 silver tankas per head. 'This broke the Jalali family and the nobles at Delhi began to waver.' But the boats of the Jumna were not under his control and Alauddin had to wait till the rising of the Canopus in October, when the river became fordable.

Alauddin had naturally kept himself informed of the events at Delhi. On receiving the news of Jalaluddin's murder, the court observed three days of mourning and then, without consulting the nobles, the Malka-i Jahan placed her youngest son, Qadr Khan, a youth incapable of managing state-affairs, on the throne with the title of Ruknuddin Tbrahim. Then she removed the court from Kailugarhi to the Qasr-i Sahz inside Delhi, began to distribute the iqtas among the Jalali nobles and to pass orders on state-papers. Her second son, Arkali Khan, who had retired to his governorship of Multan without his father's permission, was deeply wounded by his mother's behaviour and decided not to come. Alauddin was cautious, if not afraid, of Arkali, who alone could match his military reputation. On hearing that Arkali was not coming, he ordered his drums to be beaten in joy. When the Jalali nobles joined Alauddin at Bāran, the Malka-i Jahan wrote to Arkali in despair, asking him to come in haste, to forgive his stupid mother's faults and to seize his father's throne. But Arkali was unmoved. It is too late, he replied. Whether Arkali could have reached Delhi in time after his father's death may be doubted. But it is difficult to explain why he did nothing to ensure his future security.

ACCESSION AND THE COALITION GOVERNMENT

In the second week of October Alauddin crossed the Jumna fords and encamped at Sirī. Ruknuddin came out to oppose him, but at about midnight the left wing of his army raised a tumult and went over to Alauddin. Towards the end of the night in utter distress
Ruknuddin re-entered the city by the Badaun Gate, collected in haste whatever cash and horses he could, and took the road to Multan by the Ghazni Gate. He was accompanied by his mother and the haram, Ulghu, Ahmad Chap and Malik Qutbuddin Alavi and his sons.

All officers of Delhi, who wanted to keep their posts, hurried to submit to Alauddin—ministers, qazis, sadrs, shuhnas, and kotwals with the keys of their forts. It was unnecessary for him to bother about anybody's individual acceptance. On 21 October 1296, (Monday, 22 Zil Hij A.H. 700) he ascended the throne at the White Palace (Qasr-i Safed) of Iltutmish and the Red Palace (Qasr-i Lal) of Balban. Till the construction of the Ilazar Sutun (thousand column) Palace at Siri, the Red Palace remained the royal residence.

In the years to come Alauddin was not afraid of challenging and crushing opposition. But at the start of his reign he wisely decided that his best course was to obtain general acceptance; so he organized a coalition government consisting of three elements—the nobles of the old Mameluk regime, who were still in office; the officers of Jalaluddin who had come over to his side; and officers appointed by Alauddin himself. The wizarat was assigned to KhwaJA Khatir, 'the best of wazirs'. Qazi Sadruddin Arif, who was appointed Sadr-i Jahan and Head Qazi of the empire brought dignity and honour to his two offices; he was not distinguished for his learning, but he knew the Delhi underworld and none of its prominent rascals could practise any fraud or deception in his court. The Saiyyid Ajal, Shaikhul Islam and Khatib of the old regime were confirmed in their posts. The diwan-i inslia (central secretariat) was assigned to Umdatul Mulk Ala Dabir. Of his two promising and brilliant sons, Malik Hamiduddin and Malik A'izuddin, one was given a high status in the court and the other was directed to look after the affairs of the secretariat. Malik Fakhruddin Kuchi, who had accompanied Sultan Jalaluddin to Kara but had been arrested and forgiven, was appointed dad-bek of Delhi. Nusrat Khan, though he held the higher office of malik naib (or regent), was appointed kotwal of Delhi during the first year of the reign. Zafar Khan was appointed minister of war; Malik Abaji Jalali got the post of akhur-bek, and Malik Hiranmar the post of naib-i barbek. Alaul Mulk, uncle of the historian, Ziauddin Barani, was assigned the territories of Kara and Awadh, and the historian's father,

8 Ibid., 350.

9 Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi, 69. His great claim to forgiveness at the hands of Alauddin lay in the fact that he had always given the wrong advice to his predecessor. The Kuchi family had survived from the Mameluk period.
Mu'idul Mulk, who had been an officer of Arkali Khan but had stayed on in Delhi, was given the governorship (nayabat wa khaajiti) of Baran (Buland Shahr). Malik Jauna Senior\(^{10}\) (qadim) was appointed naib-i vakildar. State-grants of all types and charitable endowments, etc. were not only confirmed but even increased, and new state-orders (misals) to this effect were issued. Barani sums up his impressions of this year, but primarily as a citizen of Delhi:

"The court of Sultan Alauddin was adorned by the Jalali and Alai khans and maliks in a way that no previous reign had witnessed.... The old army with the new recruits had grown in size and every man was given the salary of one year and six months as in'am in cash. In this year both the nobles and the commons had such delights and enjoyments as I have not seen in any other reign, and those older than me also cannot remember such a happy year."\(^{11}\)

But the sultanat of Delhi had to be seen with reference to the rest of India and its prospects seemed gloomy. Ninety years of Turkish domination over northern India had only partially succeeded in consolidating the power of the sultans of Delhi. The task of enforcing the imperial authority and of initiating even a seemingly effective system of administration was far from complete. Numerous discordant elements were threatening on all sides. In the west, the Ravi was the limit of the sphere of the Sultan's authority. Samana and Dipalpur were regarded as the most important frontier outposts. Beyond Lahore, the Punjab was almost a no-man's land, constantly convulsed by the risings of the Khokars or the invasions of the Mongols. Multan, at the moment, was in the hands of Arkali Khan, who was bitterly hostile to Alauddin and extended protection to fugitives from Delhi. The Rajput states still boasted of their independence. Chitor and Ranthambhor were the great centres of Rajput power; and only five years before the pride of Jalaluddin had been humiliated in an unsuccessful attempt to reduce the latter to subjection. Further south lay Gujarat, where the Vaghelas were continuing a glorious tradition of triumph and prosperity. In Central India, Dhar, Ujjain and Chanderi only occasionally succumbed to the military pressure from the north. All round the kingdom of Delhi there was a strong belt of opposition to the Turkish rule; the intrepid defiance of the chiefs of this region had been a constant source of headache to the Delhi authorities, and even strong rulers like Balban had to lead frequent military campaigns

\(^{10}\) So called to distinguish him from Muhammad bin Tughluq, who got this title later.

\(^{11}\) Barani, 248.
for their suppression. Further east, Bihar and Bengal were virtually independent. The country south of the Vindhyas was in a state of chronic political struggle as before. The Yadavas of Devagiri had recovered their lost prestige and power. The Kakityas of Warangal, the Hoysalas of Dwarasamudra, the Cholas, the Cheras and the Pandyas kept fighting with each other and had not the least idea of what the future had in store.

**MULTAN**

For an ambitious ruler like Alauddin, whose desire was to become the emperor of India, the range and variety of problems were stupendous. He may, or may not, have realized their intensity and extent, but if we may judge by results, he seems to have devoted the first two years of his reign to observing the working of the government, planning and thinking. Later on his ambition increased owing to his successes, and his military and civil talents developed through experience.

His immediate task was to eliminate the surviving members of the former Sultan's family. He entrusted the work to his two trusted generals, Ulugh Khan and Zafar Khan, who marched to Multan at the head of an army thirty to forty thousand strong. They closely invested the city, and although Arkali Khan had made adequate provisions for its defence, he was betrayed by the kotwal and the leading citizens, who saw clearly that there could be only one end to the struggle. The unfortunate members of Jalali family sought the intercession of Shaikh Ruknuddin (grandson of Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya), who succeeded in persuading the generals to promise them security of life. But the promise, if given, was not kept. Multan was occupied and the two sons of Jalaluddin with their family and followers were taken into custody. While Ulugh Khan and Zafar Khan were escorting the prisoners to Delhi, Nusrat Khan, who had brought instruction from the Sultan, met them at Abuhar and took charge of the prisoners. Arkali Khan, Ruknuddin Ibrahim, Ulghu and Ahmad Chap were blinded, their women were arrested, and their slaves and property confiscated. The sons of Sultan Jalaluddin were imprisoned in Hansi, and the sons of Arkali Khan were put to death. The *Malka-i Jahan* and other ladies of the *haram* along with Ahmad Chap were brought to Delhi, where they were kept under surveillance in the house of Nusrat Khan.

**THE INVASION OF KADOR, BATTLE OF JARAN-MANJUR**

In the winter of 1297-98 Alauddin had to face a Mongol invasion. Reduced to simple prose, the contemporary and official account of
Amir Khusrau runs as follows.\textsuperscript{12}

'The Tatar army, like a deluge, marched boldly from the Sulaiman mountains (Koh-i Judd) and crossed the Bias, the Jhelum and the Sutlej. They set fire to the fields (nai) of the Khokar villages; the houses of Qusur were destroyed; and the light (of the burning houses and villages) could be seen from the suburbs of the city. In any case, the tumult they raised was such as could not but reach the imperial ear. The deceased Ulugh Khan, who was the right hand of the state, was directed to march with the right wing of the army and the necessary officers. Crossing the distance of two marches in one day, the Khan reached Jaran-Manjur on the bank of the Sutlej on 5 February 1298 (Thursday, 2 Rabi II A.H. 697) and directed his soldiers to cross the river without the help of boats. The Mongols, who pretended to such bravery before the army of Delhi had crossed the river, fled like ants and locusts and were trampled like ants. To be short, 20,000 Mongols were sent to eternal sleep. As to the personal tuman of Kadar, the wounded were beheaded and the survivors were put in chains. Ulugh Khan celebrated this victory over the carrion-eaters of Qaidu and then brought the prisoners to Delhi where they were trampled to death by the elephants.'

\textbf{THE FALL OF THE OLD NOBILITY}

In the second year of the reign Nusrat Khan was appointed wazir; we are not told whether Khwaja Khatir was dead or had been dismissed. Alaul Mulk came to Delhi with the maliks, amirs, elephants and treasures, which Alauddin had left with him at Kara. As he had grown very fat and inactive, the office of the kotwal of Delhi was transferred to him from the slave-officers (mameluks) of Malikul Umara Fakhruddin, the former kotwal of Delhi, and all non-Turkish municipal employees (bandiyam-i Tazik) were placed under his control.

Alauddin now decided to overthrow the coalition government he had formed by liquidating all officers not appointed by him—the remnant of the officers of the old Mameluk regime as well as those

\textsuperscript{12} Khazainul Futuh, 33-37. Barani (250) is probably correct in saying that the army was led by both Zafar Khan and Ulugh Khan. But since Alauddin had developed a dislike for the memory of Zafar Khan, Khusrau makes no reference to him anywhere in the Khazainul Futuh.

Khusrau uses Tatars, Mongols and even Turks and Chinese as equivalent terms. The reference to 'the carrion-eaters of Qaidu' makes it clear that this Mongol army had come from Central Asia and had not been sent by the Il-Khan of Persia.
who had deserted to him from the family of his uncle. Barani is our only direct authority on the matter, but the record of future years is not intelligible except on the basis of what he says.\(^\text{13}\) The great curse of the Mameluk regime had been the constant conflict between the crown and its nobles or highest officers, and the persistent effort of the nobles had been to put the crown into commission, so that one of their own groups may control the whole government. The rebellion of Chajju and Amir Ali Sarjandur against Jalaluddin, and the treasonable talk of the Mameluk nobles at the court itself had shown what stuff this nobility was made of. Alauddin decided now to show his hand in a way that would leave the country in no doubt as to who was the real master. ‘After the government of Alauddin had grown firm’, Barani tells us, ‘all the Jalali maliks—who had betrayed the family of their master and joined Alauddin and obtained mans of gold and offices and iqtas from him—were arrested in the capital or in the army; some were thrown into forts and imprisoned; others were blinded and the rest were put to death.\(^\text{14}\) The money they had obtained from Alauddin was seized along with their own goods and properties. Their houses were made the property of the Sultan and their villages and gardens were brought into the khalisa. Nothing was left for their sons. Their families were overthrown, and their soldiers and slaves were assigned to the Alai amirs. Only three persons from among the Jalali maliks were spared, and till the end of Alauddin’s reign they received no injury at his hands—Malik Qutbuddin Alavi; Malik Nasiruddin Rana, the shuha of the elephants; and Malik Amir Jamal Khalji, father of Qadr Khan.\(^\text{15}\) These three had not deserted Sultan Jalaluddin and his sons nor taken any money from Sultan Alauddin. So these three remained safe, while all other Jalali amirs were torn up, root and branch. This year Nusrat Khan realized a karor of cash by his demands and confiscations and put it in the treasury.’\(^\text{16}\) According to the Muslim shari‘at, a slave is inherited by his master, he cannot marry without the permission of his master, and his children are also the slaves of his master. Whatever reasons may have inspired Sultan Mu’izzuddin Ghuri to organize a bureaucracy of slaves, the tendency of strong monarchs

\(^{13}\) Barani, 257.

\(^{14}\) With two or three exceptions, no persons from the families of the liquidated nobles are referred to in future years.

\(^{15}\) It is obvious from their surnames that none of the three nobles spared belonged to the Mameluk regime. At a rough guess, Jalaluddin at his accession had taken one-third of his high officers from the Mameluk regime. They were, of course, included in the liquidation of the Jalali officers.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., 250-51.
hereafter was to impose, though with considerable modifications, these obligations of slavery on a public service recruited from free-born men.

CONQUEST OF GUJARAT

Alauddin now embarked upon the first project of territorial expansion in his reign. According to the tradition recorded by a Rajput bard, Nainsi, the campaign originated owing to the importunities of Madhava, who came to Delhi to solicit the help of the Sultan against his master, Karan Vaghela, who had abducted his wife during his temporary absence from the capital of the kingdom. The story of the curse uttered by the unfortunate lady, Rup Sundari, as related in the Rasmala, lends support to such a presumption. Otherwise, it is inexplicable why the Sultan should select for his first attack such a distant province, which had not so far been effectually subdued by any Turkish army, and which could only be reached either through Malwa or Rajputana, both of which were outside the pale of the authority of Delhi. The Sultan was not in a position to hazard a venture unless he was assured of its success; but when such an assurance was forthcoming from a minister of Gujarat itself, there was little hesitation in launching a military project for conquering the territory.

The imperial army left the capital on 24 February 1299, under the joint command of Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan. In the course of their progress through Rajputana the generals were compelled by the Rana of Chitor to keep within limits, though they did not spare Jaisalmer. Then they crossed the Banas and seized the fort of Radosa. Having set foot on the soil of Gujarat, Ulugh Khan and his colleague subjected the country to wholesale plunder and terrorism. Karan Vaghela, having been taken by surprise, sought safety in a precipitate flight. During the pursuit which followed, his treasures and his women, including the chief queen, Kamla Devi, fell into the hands of the enemy. She was honourably escorted to Delhi and Alauddin took her into his haram. Besides the capital, Anhilwara, other prosperous towns of Gujarat were all sacked and an enormous booty was collected by the invaders. The temple of Somnath, which had been rebuilt by Kumarapala (1143-74), was demolished. Amir Khusrau has thus described this act of vandalism: 'They made the temple of Somnath prostrate itself towards the dignified Ka'bah.... You may say that temple first offered its prayer and then had a bath.'

Nusrat Khan then proceeded to Khambayat (Cambay). He

17 Khazinul Futuh, 48.
seized cash and valuables from the Muslim merchants (khwajas) of Khambayat, who had become extremely rich. He took the slave, Kafur Hazardinari, who was later to became the malik naib of the empire, by force from his master and brought him to the Sultan.

Gujarat now passed into the hands of the ruler of Delhi. The rapidity and ease with which it was occupied shows that either its ruler, Karan, was unpopular among his subjects, or that his military and administrative organization had become obsolete. No near-contemporary historian has discussed the causes of its fall. But Isami tells us that when Rai Karan consulted his ministers (wazirs) at Anhilwara, they frankly told him that there was no alternative to flight. 'The enemy has come and you are unprepared; you are asleep and he has drawn his sword.' But after the Turks had departed, he could collect an army and reconquer the land.18 Ferishta adds: 'Rai Karan fled to Rama Deva, the ruler of Devagiri in the Deccan, for safety, but after some time he marched to Baglana, which is a territory of Gujarat adjoining the Deccan, and established himself there with the help of Rama Deva.'19 Alp Khan, the Sultan's brother-in-law, was appointed governor of Gujarat and Karan seems to have been left in peace till the winter of 1306-7.

On their way back, near Jalor, Ulugh and Nusrat had to face a serious mutiny. The soldiers, Isami tells us, had grown very rich owing to the plunder of Gujarat and they resented Ulugh Khan's demanding the Sultan's share by tortures. 'Four officers, Muhammad Shah, Kabhru, Yalhaq and Burraq20—who were Mongols and converts to Islam but could plunder like the Afghans—had collected a lot of booty, which they were not prepared to surrender.' So very early one morning they attacked the camp of Ulugh Khan with two or three thousand horsemen. Ulugh Khan, who was in the lavatory, succeeded in escaping to Nusrat's camp. But the rebels slew Malik A'izzuddin, brother of Nusrat, who was Ulugh's hajib. They found the son of a sister of Alauddin asleep in the camp and thinking that he was Ulugh Khan, they slew him also. Then the imperial horse and foot collected before Nusrat's camp and the New Muslim amirs and horsemen took to flight. Some of them, like Muhammad Shah and Kabhru, sought the protection of Rai Hamir of Ranthambhor; others, like Yalhaq and Burraq, went to Rai Karan, who was then staying at Nandurbar. Though the conspirators escaped, their women and

18 Isami, 244-45.
19 Ferishta, 103.
20 The Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi, on the basis of an authority not mentioned, gives the following list of Mongol rebels—Yalhaq, Kisra, Baqi, Tamghan, Muhammad Shah, Tamar Bugha, Shadi Bugha and Qutluq Bugha.
children at Delhi had to pay for their sins with their honour and their lives. The wives of A‘izzuddin’s murderers were exposed to the humiliation of scavanger’s embraces and their innocent babies were struck on their heads till they were smashed to bits. ‘The arrest and punishment of women and children for the crimes of men’, Barani tells us, ‘began from this year. Before this in Delhi women and children were not molested on account of the offences of their men.’

SIWISTAN

The year that saw the invasion of Gujarat also witnessed the invasion of Siwistan (Sibi) by the Mongol Saldi, who occupied the fort. Zafar Khan was sent to deal with the invaders. In spite of a barrage of arrows from the garrison, he forced his way into the fort and compelled the Mongols to make an abject surrender. Saldi and his brother with their entire following were brought in fetters to Delhi. This established the reputation of Zafar Khan, who was then governor of Samana, in the public mind. Ulugh Khan became jealous of him, and Alauddin, so Barani tells us, began to ponder as to what steps he should adopt to get rid of such a brilliant officer—poison him or blind him or send him with an army to conquer Lakhnauti and establish himself there. Barani’s suspicion is not justified. Alauddin trusted Zafar Khan implicitly till the latter disobeyed his express orders at the battle of Kili. After that his attitude to the memory of Zafar Khan changed as is proved by the fact that Khusrau’s Khazainul Futuh intentionally omits all references to him.

PROPHET AND ALEXANDER

Some time after Zafar Khan’s return from Siwistan, Alauddin’s critics spread two rumours about him, which Barani, writing over half a century later, asserted to be proved facts and which medieval as well as modern historians have carelessly copied from him. Alauddin (so Barani wants us to believe) declared that the Arabian Prophet had Four Friends (the Pious Caliphs) with whose help he had spread his Faith so that his name will be remembered till the end of time. Alauddin too had four ‘Khans’—Ulugh, Nusrat, Zafar and Alp—who had attained to the grandeur of kings. He would with their help establish a new religion and attain to eternal fame. There are several difficulties here. If Alauddin wanted to get rid of Zafar Khan, how could he consider him as one of the co-founders of a new faith? Secondly, as Barani is never tired of telling us, Alauddin never associated with the Muslim ulama; and his faith in Islam was

21 Barani, 253; Isami, 244-45.
firm like the faith of the illiterate and the ignorant. How could such a man think of establishing a new creed? No principle of the new creed is given to us by Barani, who is our only authority for this baseless gossip. Isami is silent about the matter; other writers of the period, like Amir Khurd and Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh, had a deep respect for Alauddin in spite of his failure in the sphere of religious rites and bring no such charge against him.

Alauddin had about this time assumed the title of ‘the Second Alexander’ (Sikandar-i Sani) and had it recited in the Khutba and superscribed on his coins. This was nothing novel; other Muslim kings, the ill-starred Alauddin Muhammad Khwarazm Shah for example, had also assumed this title. But it should not be imagined that Alauddin ever thought that he could rival the conquests not only of the Alexander of history but of the Alexander of Persian romance—the conqueror of the rub‘-i maskun or the fourth inhabited part of the globe. Barani gives to his uncle, Alaul Mulk, the credit of removing Alauddin’s erroneous ideas. The Sultan promised that no words about the establishment of a new religion would ever cross his lips. As to the plans of conquests, the kotwal drew Alauddin’s attention to the fact that the proper sphere of his activity was the ‘territory of Hindustan’. He had to stop the Mongol invasions and to crush the independent rulers of northern India; after this had been done, he could sit safely on his throne and send his officers to plunder the treasuries of distant rais and levy an annual tribute from them, but they were to be left to rule their kingdoms as before. It cannot be too strongly insisted that these ‘two designs’ are utterly incompatible with the character and state-policy of Alauddin, even as they have been portrayed to us by Barani himself. The greatest crisis of his life was soon to prove that Alauddin was not a drunkard talking nonsense with his flattering friends but a stern realist and a warrior-statesman of the highest calibre, who insisted on keeping all important affairs under his personal control.

**INVASION OF QUTLUGH KHWAJA; BATTLE OF KILI**

Towards the end of 1299 Dawa, the Khan of Trans-Oxiana, despatched his son, Qutlugh Khwaja with 20 tumans (200,000 soldiers) to conquer Delhi.23 It was a journey of six months and the Mongol
preparations must have been carefully made. Since their object was to conquer and govern the country, they plundered no cities and reduced no forts on their way. The route followed is not given, but one may guess that, like Timur in 1398, Qutlugh Khwaja chose a route that had no large cities on the way and on which the countryside and small towns could just supply his army the cattle, grain and fodder it needed. 'When the Mongols crossed the Indus, all the forts on the route began to tremble.' The army of Multan took refuge in its forts; their garrisons had only courage to attack the Mongol camp during the dark nights. Zafar Khan, who was at Kuhram, invited Qutlugh to battle, but the latter paid no attention to him. 'Kings only fight kings,' he told Zafar's messenger, and invited Zafar to meet him under his master's banner at Delhi. As was to be expected, Delhi was filled with fugitives and there was not enough space for them in the mosques, shops and even the streets. The caravans failed to come and the prices of commodities rose very high. The Mongols finally encamped at Kili, some six miles from the Delhi suburbs.

Isami tells us that Alauddin had only a week or two at his disposal; so probably news of the Mongols was sent to him only after they had crossed the Indus. He came out of the Red Palace, fixed his military camp by the bank of the Jumna at Siri and summoned post-haste all officers whom his orders could reach. It was a critical hour; and Alaul Mulk in strict confidence advised him to follow the precepts of former kings (and of text-books) and not to risk his kingdom on the doubtful result of a single battle. The Delhi army was accustomed to fighting Hindu rais; it was not acquainted with Mongol tactics of retreat, ambush and the like. Why does the Sultan not resort to diplomacy and negotiations by sending messengers to the enemy and at least gain some time? Alauddin summoned his nobles in order to give a public reply. After repeating Alaul Mulk's arguments and paying him a sincere compliment—'He deserves the wizariat but I

Barani (254-61) and Isami (245-61) give us fairly long accounts, which though differing in some details, agree in substance. It is possible to reconstruct the events by a critical study of the two authorities. Barani says that the Mongols started at the end of third year of the reign; so we may safely put their campaign in India in the winter of 1299-1300.

The figure of 20 tumans, or two lakhs, is too large, even if women and camp followers are included. It would have been impossible to find food for so many men and women and fodder for their horses. Medieval army figures have to be taken with a grain of salt. The army with which Chengiz Khan marched from Mongolia did not amount to one lakh, and in order to find provisions for it, he had to march it in separate contingents. Qutlugh Khwaja is said to have kept his soldiers together and would not allow even ten men to separate themselves from the main army. This would have made the task of finding provisions even more difficult,
have only appointed him kotwal of Delhi on account of his incapacitating corpulence—he proceeded to give his decision as the head of the state.

'There is a proverb—"You cannot steal a camel and expect to disappear unseen". Similarly you cannot govern the empire of Delhi and escape the challenges it entails. The enemy has traversed two thousand karohs to challenge me to battle under the Minar of Delhi. If at this moment I show any weakness, neither the mass of the people nor the brave warriors of the land will have any respect left for me; add to it, posterity will laugh at my beard. No, happen what may, I will march tomorrow from Siri to Kili and give battle to Qutlugh Khwaja and see to which of us God grants victory.'

He put the city and the Palace in charge of Alaul Mulk and ordered him to kiss the keys, hand them over to the victor, and serve him loyally and faithfully. He had no desire to drag down Delhi and the country in his fall. After Alauddin had left, Alaul Mulk closed all the gates of Delhi except the Badaun Gate, obviously for flight to the Doab if it should be necessary.

A careful examination of the battle of Kili conclusively proves that the Mongols were no longer worthy of the reputation Chengiz had won for them. Their ambitions remained, but their capacity had vanished. Also since Halaku’s defeat at the hands of the Egyptians, the invincibility of the Mongols had become an old wife’s tale. It was hardly worthwhile undertaking a six months’ journey to fight such a battle.

At Kili the two armies were arranged in the formal medieval order. The river was to the right and a mass of thorns and bushes to the left of the Delhi army. Alauddin took up his position in the centre. Towards the right he placed Zafar Khan supported (among others) by the distinguished rais and Indian-born (Hindu) warriors. On the left Alauddin placed Nusrat Khan; Ulugh Khan was stationed behind Nusrat to give him the support necessary. Akat Khan and his men were ordered to stand in front of the Sultan. The army covered several miles from right to left and it was difficult to control it from the

24 Though Alaul Mulk only throws out vague hints, a compromise was only possible on two conditions—submission to Dawa Khan as overlord and a surrender of Alauddin’s Devagiri treasure. Alauddin was, consequently, not prepared for any negotiations. At the same time he had a shrewd idea that he could win without fighting, for the Mongols were unaware of the resistance Delhi could put up. Isami makes no reference to Alaul Mulk’s suggestion or Alauddin’s reply.

25 Barani, 255-59,
centre. Still Alauddin had no intention of staking the fortunes of Delhi merely on a soldier's battle; so he issued a firm injunction to the effect that 'no officer was to move from his place without the Sultan's order; and if he did so, his head would be severed from his body'. The officers knew fully well that this was not an empty threat. In the Mongol army Qutlugh Khwaja commanded the centre, Hijlak the left wing and Tamar Bugha the right wing, while Targhi was given a tuman (10,000 soldiers) to hide in ambush and attack where necessary.' According to Isami four envoys came to Alauddin from Qutlugh Khwaja with a message: 'No one remembers of such a king and such an army in Hindustan. The request is that my envoys be permitted to go round your camp and inquire about the name of your chief officers.' It suited Alauddin to give this permission and the messengers duly reported back to Qutlugh Khwaja.

When the two armies, ready for battle, stood face to face, Alauddin was in no hurry to give the order to fight. He had to take an over-all view of the situation. More and more officers and soldiers would be coming to him from the east. Behind the enemy were so many forts, garrisoned by his soldiers, and cities loyal to Delhi, The Mongol army, consisting of both men and women, must have been tired after its long journey, and its provisions may fall short. If the Mongols made a sudden onslaught in the hope of capturing Delhi, he was there to fight, but delay was certainly in his favour and he would prove to the Mongols that their wisest policy was to go back from a country where no one wanted them. But at this moment his plans were frustrated by his greatest officer. Zafar Khan's impulse to fight overcame his better judgement. Without obtaining the Sultan's permission, he attacked Hijlak's army in front of him and he followed it in hot pursuit without caring for the rest of the battle-field. This gave the Mongols an opportunity of following their well-known device of feigned retreat. Zafar's foot-soldiers were left behind and even the best of his horsemen could not keep him company. When after pursuing the enemy for about 18 karohs, he turned round to take stock of the situation, he found that he had only a thousand horsemen with him. Since the other wings of the army had remained stationary (according to Alauddin's order), Targhi was able to put his ten thousand men between Zafar Khan and the Delhi army. Zafar Khan could not return; Targhi's men covered an area of two miles behind him. He consulted his officers—Usman akhur-bek, Usman Yaghan, Ali Shah Rana and others—in such way as was possible under the
circumstances. If they returned to Alauddin, he would punish them for disobedience. But return was impossible as the Mongols had completely surrounded them. So they decided to die fighting to the last man. Since there were no survivors, it is difficult to say what happened. But Isami states that Zafar succeeded in killing one-half of Targhi's men. Then he was killed by an arrow which passed through his armour and pierced his heart.27

Zafar Khan's reckless attack established his reputation for valour and showed that man for man the Indian could fight and defeat the Mongol. Still technically the Mongols were victors on the first day and the Indian officers were depressed. When the armies met in battle order next morning, Alauddin's officers approached him with the suggestion that he should withdraw behind the security of the Delhi ramparts and fight the enemy from there.28 But Alauddin, who had his own calculations, would not hear of it. 'If yesterday a section of the army has been destroyed because it disobeyed my orders in its haste', he replied, 'the past cannot be recalled. I am not ignorant of the dangers that surround me on all sides; yet if I have to move at all, I will only move forward.' Still he would not give the order to attack, and since Qutlugh was equally reluctant, the armies stood face to face from morning to sunset. On the third day the armies again stood face to face, but after nightfall the Mongols retreated ten miles towards their homeland. Alauddin considered it wisest to give the enemy a safe exit and returned to Delhi. 'The whole city was thrown into jubilation,' Isami says, 'no one cared to think of the dead.' Qutlugh Khwaja died soon after his return to Trans-Oxiana.29 Alauddin's reputation for over-all command had been fully established. The officers were allowed to go to their iqtas.

CONQUEST OF RANTHAMBHOR; THE THREE REBELLIONS (1299-1300)

Modern international law permits a state to give asylum to political refugees from another state; even in case of ordinary crimes, extradi-
tion can only be demanded on the basis of treaties. In medieval India conditions were different: giving asylum to political refugees from another kingdom was considered an 'unfriendly act', though not necessarily a cause for war. On returning to his governorship of Bayana, Ulugh Khan sent messengers to Hamir Deva of Ranthambhor asking that, as he was a friendly ruler, he should either put to death Muhammad Shah, Kabhru and the Muslim Mongols who had sought refuge with him or send them to Ulugh Khan; if he failed to do so, he should prepare for war. Hamir's counsellors earnestly advised him not to endanger his dynasty for persons who had no claims on him. But Hamir refused to yield. 'O Khan', his reply ran, 'I have enough money and enough soldiers and no desire to quarrel with any one. But I am not afraid to fight, and I will not give up the two or three Turks who have fled to me from fear of their lives.' So the die was cast. When his Hindu secretaries explained Hamir's reply, Ulugh started for Ranthambhor. Sultan Alauddin, who must have been kept informed of everything, ordered Nusrat Khan, who was governor of Awadh that year, to proceed to help Ulugh Khan. The two khans captured Jhain and then laid siege to Ranthambhor. But one day, while directing the siege operations, Nusrat Khan went too near the ramparts; he was hit by a munjaniq-stone and died after two or three days. This caused a consternation in the besieging army and Hamir took advantage of it. He came out with his twelve thousand horse and a lot of foot-soldiers, defeated Ulugh Khan in battle and drove him back to

from Delhi. Khusrau does not refer to any of the three rebellions, but details are given by Barani (272-78) and Isami (261-69). But Isami (269-71) commits the error of putting the rebellion of Akat Khan during the Chitor campaign.

31 That is, as framed for the Rai by Isami (261-63), who is our only authority for this correspondence.

32 The Mongols, Muhammad Shah and Kabhru, must have had a number of followers, for the Khazainul Futuh (51) states: 'Some New Muslims from among the ill-starred Mongols, who had turned their faces from Islam and joined the Saturnians... had lighted fires in three towers of the fort.'

33 Jhain, after its capture, was given the name of the New City (Shahr-i Nau). Dr. K. S. Lal writes in his Khaljis (101n): 'Neither Jhain nor any city bearing its changed name, Nau Shahr, is traceable on the maps now. A small place "Naigaon", which exactly means Shahr-i Nau, lies at a short distance from Ranthambhor. This may probably be identified with the Jhain of Barani.'

34 Dr. K. S. Lal writes: 'In all probability the sang-i maghrabi, or western-stone, was some kind of missile used in warfare in Alauddin's days.' He very correctly refuses to identify it with the cannon-ball. (Khaljis, 102n). The munjaniq-stones were artificially rounded stones, smaller than foot-balls but considerably larger than cricket-balls; the stroke of the beam of the munjaniq took them a fairly long distance with considerable force. (I found a lot of these stones in the crumbling ramparts of the Chitor fort in 1922. The marks of the chiselling could be clearly seen—error: H).
Jhain. Ulugh informed the Sultan of his distressing situation; it would be a blow to the imperial prestige if he gave up the siege, but if he remained where he was for a month or two, he would be overpowered by the Hindus. Sultan Jalaluddin had been right in his estimate of the strength of Ranthambhhor; only the genius of Alauddin and his over-all command of the resources of the state could reduce the fort.

_Akat Khan’s Rebellion_

Alauddin ordered his officers to meet him at Tilpat, the first stage from Delhi, but while his men were collecting, he spent his time in hunting. This gave an opportunity to Sulaiman Shah Akat Khan, son of the Sultan’s deceased brother, Muhammad, who held the post of vakildar and had been given the command of the right wing at Kili after Zafar Khan’s death. One night the Sultan with a few soldiers remained in the hunting field and did not return to the royal tent; early next morning he ordered the horsemen to draw a circle (nargah) to drive the game towards him, while he sat on a mondha (reed-chair) waiting for them to complete their work. At that moment Akat Khan and the Mongol Muslims in his service, who had conspired to kill the Sultan, rode forward shouting ‘Tiger! Tiger!’ and began to shoot arrows at him. Alauddin used his reed-chair as his shield; a slave, named Manik (or Nayak), threw himself in front of the Sultan and received four arrow-wounds; then his paiks (personal guards) moved forward and protected him with their shields. It was winter-time and the Sultan’s coat and cloak (qaba use dagla) were stuffed with cotton. Still he received two deep arrow-wounds in his arm and fell down unconscious owing to loss of blood. When Akat Khan came near, the paiks faced him with drawn swords, but since at the same time they shouted—‘The Sultan is dead; why cut off the head of a corpse?’—Akat was satisfied and proceeded to the royal camp, where he took his seat on the throne and declared that he had killed the Sultan. Like the automatons they were, the court-officers began to welcome the new king and the amirs present offered their congratulations. After all no one would have ventured to sit on the royal throne unless he had really killed the Sultan.

It was only when Akat Khan wanted to enter the _haram_ that he met with resistance. Malik Dinar, the officer-in-charge of the _haram_ and his subordinates, put on their armours, met Akat Khan at the _haram-_gate and told him that they would not allow him to enter.

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35 Tilpat is a plain about 12 miles east of old Delhi and south of Kailugarhi (Dr. K. S. Lal, _Khaljis_, 104n).
Alauddin’s haram unless he showed them Alauddin’s head. The head, as Stanley Lane-Poole appropriately remarks, soon appeared but on its own proper shoulders. When Alauddin recovered consciousness, his first instinct was to fly to Ulugh Khan at Jhain because he suspected a deep-laid plot. But Malik Hamiduddin advised him not to let the conspiracy mature; if a night passed without the emperor’s whereabouts being known, those who accepted Akat Khan would be driven to cling to him from fear. Alauddin acted on this advice. By the time he reached the royal camp, he was surrounded by five or six hundred horsemen and Akat’s show completely collapsed. He fled to Afghanpur, but two officers pursued him, cut off his head and brought it to Alauddin. The Sultan felt sad. ‘I have often had that head in my lap’, he said. Akat’s younger brother, Qutlugh Khan, was put to death immediately. During the time he stayed at Tilpat to recover from his wounds, Alauddin inquired into the conspiracy and all whom he considered guilty were severely punished.

A direct assault by horse and foot on Ranthambhor was out of the question. In shooting munjanigs and arrows and throwing stones and fire, the advantage lay with the garrison. Alauddin determined to reach the top of the fort by the prolonged and arduous process of constructing a pasheb, which was sure to cost a lot of lives. Some idea of how this was done is given by Barani.

‘The fort had been already surrounded; after the Sultan’s arrival the siege was pressed with greater vigour. Weavers were brought from the surrounding country and the bags sewn by them were distributed among the soldiers. The soldiers filled the bags with earth and threw them into the ditch. Thus with shouts of “Haiy! Haiy!” they laid the foundation of the pasheb and raised the gargaj.’

The maghrabis had been installed and shot stones at the garrison. But the garrison kept destroying the pasheb by throwing stones and fire. Many people were killed on both sides. ‘The Delhi army plundered the country till Dhar and brought the territory under its control.’ It took a long time before the mound of sand-bags could rise to the top of the ramparts and an ascending road built upon it for horse and foot to cross. The loss of life among the besiegers must have been heavy, but Alauddin’s firm discipline—he demanded back three years’ pay from every deserter—kept the army to its duty and

36 We have to contemplate a road ascending to the top of the fort on these earth-filled bags. The lower part is obviously the pasheb (from pa, foot) and the upper part is the gargaj.

37 Barani, 288.
not a single horse or foot deserted from the front. According to the *Khazainul Futuh*, the full siege began in March or April (Rajab) and continued through the summer heat into the rainy season. There were two more rebellions but Alauddin had determined to conquer Ranthambhor and did not stir from the spot.

**Rebellion of Malik Umar and Mangu Khan**

Two sons of a sister of Alauddin—Malik Umar, governor of Badaun, and his brother, Mangu Khan, governor of Awadh (probably appointed in succession to Nusrat Khan)—rebelled on seeing Alauddin busy at Ranthambhor and began to enlist the soldiers of Hindustan. But they could do nothing serious. Officers sent by Alauddin captured and brought them to Ranthambhor. The Sultan had them put to death in his presence: ‘their eyes were carved out like slices of melon’.

**Rebellion of Haji Maula:** When Alau Mulk was appointed kotwal of Delhi, the lower and middle grade Indian-born (Tāzi) staff of the Delhi municipality had not been dismissed; there could be no danger from it in normal times. Alau Mulk seems to have died some time after the battle of Kili. He was succeeded by two officers; Bayazid Tirmizi was appointed kotwal of Delhi, but the kotwalship of Siri, where the Sultan was constructing a new palace and city, the fort-wall of which seems have been completed, was assigned to Alauddin Ayaz (father of the more famous Muhammad Ayaz, wazir of Muhammad bin Tughluq). Bayazid Tirmizi was intensely unpopular in the city owing to his harshness; and this, along with the Sultan’s preoccupation at Ranthambhor, gave Haji Maula, a freed-man of Fakhiruddin, the former kotwal and one of his senior staff-officers, who was now shuhnah of the township of Bartol in the Doab, the chance of raising a rebellion in Delhi. The Haji, according to Barani, was a vicious, wicked and reckless mischief-maker, who had won the kotwali staff of the old regime to his side.

On a midday in Ramazan (10 May to 8 June), when the intense summer heat had driven every one in-door, Haji Maula entered the Badaun Gate with some soldiers; and proceeding to the house of Bayazid, summoned him from his underground room (firo-khana) to hear an order he had brought from the Sultan. The unsuspecting kotwal came out alone in his slippers and the Haji ordered him to be killed. He showed to the people around him a document which he

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38 Barani calls him Tirmizi, but that could only be his surname after the well-known town of Tirmiz on the Oxus. Fereishta calls him Bayazid on the basis of some authority not mentioned.
alleged was a farman of the Sultan in obedience to which he had put the kotwal to death. He then summoned Alauddin. Ayaz, but the latter was informed of his evil designs and closed the gates of Siri. Helped by the kotwali employees and the hooligans he could muster, the Haji captured the Red Palace, including the royal treasury, armoury, horse-stables and prison. He set the prisoners free and some of them undertook to follow him. He then rode from the Red Palace to the house of an Alavi, who was known as ‘Shahinshah’ and was the descendant of a daughter of Sultan Iltutmish; 39 he brought the Alavi by force and seated him on the royal throne. All officers whom the Haji could capture were compelled to kiss the Alavi’s hands, while the Haji assigned the imperial offices among the rebels. A free distribution of the state-treasure, weapons and horses enabled the Haji to control Delhi and to terrorize its citizens for about a week. On the fourth day after the rebellion, Malik Hamiduddin, 40 the amir-i koh, along with his sons and relations, and some horsemen of the late Zafar Khan, who had come from Amroha for review (arz), broke into the city through the western or Ghazni Gate. After two days of street fighting, Hamiduddin succeeded in driving the Haji and his men towards the Bhandarkal Gate and there, in the street of the shoemakers, he dragged the Haji down from his horse, sat on his breast and, though the Haji’s followers kept striking their swords at him and wounded him in several places, he did not get up till he had put the Haji to death. He then proceeded to the Red Palace, executed the unfortunate Alavi and paraded his head through Delhi on a spear.

The punishments that followed can well be imagined. The first concern of the restored regime was the royal treasure. ‘All persons who had taken money from the Haji were captured and imprisoned, and all money he had distributed was brought back to the treasury.’ After some six or seven days, Ulugh Khan was sent post-haste to Delhi and alighted at the Mu‘izzi Palace outside the city. All rebels

39 An Alavi means a descendant of Hazrat Ali by one of his wives other than the Prophet’s daughter, Bibi Fatima. The descendants of Ali and Fatima have the status of Sa‘yiyids. Ferishta says the Alavi referred to was generally known as ‘Shahinshah’ Barani calls him Nabis-i Shah Najaf (Grandson of Shah Najaf—i.e. Hazrat Ali) but this seems to be a clerical mistake.

40 According to Ferishta, Malik Hamiduddin went out of the city by the Badaun Gate, collected the loyalists (including the late Zafar Khan’s horsemen) outside the city and then re-entered the city by the Ghazni Gate. Barani simply says that he forced his way into the city by the Ghazni Gate. Since Hamiduddin was present at Tilpat and also at the siege of Ranthambhor, Dr. K. S. Lal (Khaljis, 110) seems to be correct in saying that Alauddin kept the revolt a secret but sent Malik Hamiduddin to suppress it.
were taken before him and he ordered them to be put to death. Though the grandsons of Malikul Umara Fakhruddin, the former kotwal, knew nothing of the rebellion, they were all put to death and no trace of his family was left.

The news of the revolt was carried to Alauddin as quickly as possible, but he left the matter to his officers and kept it secret from the army. By the beginning of July the pasheb seems to have been completed. But at the same time the provisions of the garrison had also been exhausted. 'The distress in the garrison was such,' Amir Khusrau tells us, 'that people wanted to purchase one grain of corn for two grains of gold and could not get it. Owing to lack of water and green leaves, the fort had become a desert of thorns.' 41 One night Hamir lighted a big fire for the jauhar-rite. The ladies, led by his senior rani, Ranga Devi, 42 perished in the flames; then Hamir Deva marched with his men to fight and die at the head of the pasheb. Most of the Mongols died fighting. When the Sultan entered the fort on 10 July 1301, he found Muhammad Shah lying wounded. 'If I have your wounds treated and you recover, how will you behave towards me?' the Sultan asked. 'If I recover,' the wounded Mongol replied, 'I will kill you and raise the son of Hamir Deva to the throne.' The Sultan in anger ordered Muhammad Shah to be trampled under the feet of an elephant; but afterwards on recollecting the courage and loyalty of the dead man, he ordered him to be buried decently. 43 Ranmal and other Rajputs, who had fled to the Sultan from the Rai, were put to death. They had been disloyal to their own chief and Alauddin said that he did not expect them to be loyal to him. 44 The fort with all it contained was handed over as a present to Ulugh Khan and the Sultan returned to Delhi. But as he was angry with the citizens and had exiled many sadrs from Delhi, he did not enter the city for a month but passed his time in hunting at Andrī.

41 Khazainul Futuh, 52-53.
42 Khusrau and all Persian historians refer to the jauhar-rite; the name of the senior rani is given by Dr. K. S. Lal (Khaljis, 112) on the basis of Har Bilas Sarda’s Hammira, 44.
43 Firishta, 108.
44 Firishta (108) only refers to ‘Ranmal and others’, but Dr. K. S. Lal (Khaljis, 113) on the basis of Har Bilas Sarda’s Hammira (38-42) writes: ‘Ranmal, who had gone to Alauddin to settle terms on behalf of the Rajputs, agreed to desert to the Sultan, and obtained a written statement from him granting him complete amnesty. Ranmal showed this document to his Rajput friends and some of them together with Ratanpal left the beleaguered fortress for the royal camp. Both Ranmal and Ratanpal are stated to have been ministers of Ilamir.'
and Thala. Ulugh collected a large army for the conquest of Warangal and Ma’abar, but he died after four or five months while on his way to Delhi. The Sultan was greatly depressed and gave a lot of money in charity for the salvation of his brother’s soul.

45 Isami, 269. Barani says that ‘as he had caused resentment among the citizens and exiled many sadrs, Alauddin did not enter the city but stayed in the suburbs’ (112).

46 There is no reason for believing in Isami’s statement that Ulugh Khan had been poisoned at Alauddin’s order. Isami is very confused here.
III. ALAUDDIN KHALJI: MEASURES FOR PREVENTING REBELLIONS; LAND REVENUE REFORMS; CHITOR; TARGHI (1301-03)

FOUR MEASURES FOR SUPPRESSING REBELLIONS

There had been three rebellions since Alauddin’s accession; so while pressing the siege of Ranthambhor the Sultan held meetings of his confidential council (majlis-i khas) to answer the question: ‘What are the causes of rebellion?’ ‘If these causes are discovered’, the Sultan said, ‘I will immediately remove all these causes.’ Most of the highly efficient officers to whom he owed his initial successes had died. But their successors were up to the standard. Barani refers to Malik A’inul Mulk Multani and the brothers, Malik Hamiduddin and Malik A’izzuddin (sons of Ala Dahir), by name but adds that some other wise officers were also summoned. In listing the causes of rebellion after some days and nights of discussion, the council showed no fear of the Sultan and no regard for the interests or the opinions of its own official group.

‘There are four causes of rebellion. First, the ignorance of the king concerning the good and bad acts of the people. Second, liquor; people having organized drinking parties, talk freely, ally themselves with each other and hatch conspiracies and rebellions. Third, the unity, affection and relationships of the maliks and amirs and their frequenting each other’s houses, so that if one of them is punished, a hundred other nobles will join him owing to their blood-ties and affection. Fourth, money; if there is no money in the hands of the people, they will apply themselves to earning their livelihood and no one will think of rebellion or conspiracy.’

(1) Confiscation:

Alauddin gave precedence to the seizing of money, but Barani’s exaggerated language should not lead us to believe that the Sultan went beyond what was strictly permitted by medieval legality. No one was plundered on account of his wealth. At his accession Alauddin had not only confirmed but increased charitable endowments and state-grants of all types. Now he issued an order cancelling them: ‘Wherever there was a village held by state-grant (milk),

1 Barani, 282-87. Though Barani alone describes these measures in detail, confirmatory evidence is available from other contemporary authorities.
state-gift (in'am) or charitable endowment (waqf), it was by a stroke of the pen to be brought back (baz arund) into the khalisa.’ Nothing was taken into the khalisa, which did not originally belong to it; also the medieval state claimed to be the final authority with reference to all charitable endowments, by whomsoever made. We know for certain that Ala'uddin permitted many exceptions to his order. Even Barani admits that a few thousand tankas were left to the assignees in Delhi. Still the general order was meant for the whole kingdom. ‘In Delhi’, Barani tells, ‘little gold was left except in the houses of maliks, amirs, state-employees (kardaran), the Hindu Multani merchants and Hindu bankers (sahas).’

(2) Organization of the Intelligence System

Since it was necessary to keep the Sultan well-informed, it was arranged that he should receive regular reports from three sources—the officer-in-charge; the barids or intelligence officers, whose duty it was to collect information and send it to the king; and munhis or spies. The two chief places concerning which information was required were the houses of the nobles and the public markets. Everything that happened in the houses of the nobles was conveyed to the king in the reports of the spies; nothing in the reports was overlooked and proper explanations were demanded. The nobles trembled in their houses from fear of the spies, and when they went to the royal palace they preferred to communicate to each other by signs. ‘In short they were guilty of no word or deed that would deserve a reprimand or punishment.’

(3) Prohibition in Delhi

There were no religious elements in Ala'uddin’s prohibition, for he did not object to drinking as such. But since the measure was politically necessary, he personally gave up drinking. The royal drinking vessels of glass and porcelain were broken before the Badaun Gate, and wine from the royal jars was poured out, creating mud and mire as in the rainy season. Then officers mounted on elephants proclaimed

2 e.g. the two villages granted to Isami’s ancestors were not taken back. Isami, 382-83.

3 The barids or intelligence officers were publicly known to be such; they had authority to make official inquiries and it was the duty of the local officers to keep them well-informed. For a short account of the duties of the barids, see Barani’s Fatawa-i Tahaddari in the Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanat by Habib and Afsar Begum, Advice VIII, Section i (30-33). The munhi (literally a person who informs concerning things forbidden) was really a spy and Firishta is not wrong in substituting the word jasus for Barani’s munhi.
in the streets and lanes of Delhi that no one was to drink or sell liquor or go near it. The licensed tavern-keepers and distillers of liquor were driven out of Delhi and the revenue from them was written off. Persons with self-respect gave up drinking at the first warning. But others distilled liquor from sugar in their houses and sold it at a high price; they also tried to get jars of liquor from outside the city hidden in carts under wood and grass. Alaüddin ordered dry wells to be dug near the Badaun Gate, and persons who were found disobeying his order were thrown into them; most of them died, and those who survived regained their health only after prolonged treatment. It was possible at the worst of times to go ten or twelve karohs out of Delhi for a good drink. But no drink was available within four or five karohs of Delhi in suburbs like Ghiyaspur, Indarpat and Kailugarhi. Ultimately, Alaüddin relented and passed an order that if a man distilled liquor in his own house for his own consumption but was not guilty of selling it or of calling a drinking party, he was not to be molested and the spies were not to enter his house. Gambling and the smoking of bhang were also prohibited.⁴

(4) Control of the Nobles

Officers surviving from the previous reigns had been totally liqui dated by Alaüddin; this lesson must have been sufficient. He had now to deal only with officers appointed by himself and they were in no position to protest. Writing about half a century after the event, Barani recorded as follows: 'The Sultan ordered the maliks, amirs, officers of the court, and persons of responsibility and status not to go to each other's houses or to collect parties at banquets; there were to be no intermarriages among them unless the Sultan had been informed and his permission obtained; also they were not to permit the public to frequent their houses.' Barani insists that these orders were sternly enforced. Hospitality and entertainment disappeared from the houses of the nobles; they lived with great care and did not allow any conspirator, mischief-maker or man of bad reputation to come near them; and even when they met in the royal palace, they could not sit shoulder to shoulder and talk at ease. Ferishta adds: 'If

⁴ Since the addition of salt turns wine into vinegar, Alaüddin's prohibition has been referred to by Khusrau (Khazainul Futuh, 17-18) as follows: 'This pure Being (i.e. the Sultan) has caused wine, which is the daughter of grape, the sister of sugar and the mother of all wickedness, to be reformed along with all her vicious associates, so that wine has sworn, out of regard for the claims of salt, that she will always remain in the form of vinegar.' Khusrau then proceeds, in the same florid language, to state that the Sultan compelled the prostitutes to get married, but it is difficult to take this statement seriously.
occasionally a noble had to put up a guest or to arrange a marriage-alliance, he had to write to Saiyvid Khan Wazir, whom contemporaries called Fitna Angez Khan (Mischief-Maker) and flatter him a lot so that he may obtain the Sultan's permission at an appropriate moment.\(^5\) That esprit de corps, which had been the curse of the Mameluk nobility, was not allowed to grow up in the nobility of Alauddin. Perhaps the pendulum swung too much to the other extreme. The officers were so habituated to obeying the Sultan that they extended (as we shall see) the same unquestioning obedience to his favourite, whatever his worth, and even to his murderer.

**The Sultan and the Hindu Chiefs**

The land revenue system of India cannot be properly understood unless the theological literature of the Musalmans on the subject is completely ignored. Arabia is a desert studded with some God-given oases; some four or five districts of Iran south of the Caspian sea have a rainfall of about 80 inches a year, and there is a very weak monsoon in the Iranian provinces of Shiraz and Fars. But apart from this, the extensive region from Iraq to the Chinese frontier has an average cyclonic (not monsoonic) rainfall of about four inches a year and depends entirely upon canals and artificial irrigation by qanats and kareezes; the two latter terms indicate underground channels built by the efforts of generations. In this extensive region it is not land-rights but water-rights that matter most for the purpose of cultivation, and obviously principles that have worked there cannot be applied to a country like ours, which depends primarily on the monsoon for its cultivation. This idea was first put forward by Mr. Moreland, who finding Imam Yusuf's famous work, the *Kitabul Khiraj*, useless for his purpose, did not proceed any further. We have to start with the Hindu system as our basis.\(^6\)

'I have chosen the term intermediary', says Mr. Moreland, 'to denote all the various classes authorized or permitted by the king to collect his share and to retain a portion or the whole. Intermediaries may be classed as chiefs, representatives, assignees, grantees and farmers.'\(^7\) Now the independent ruler of medieval India is the rai. But since the title of rai was also assumed by subordinate chiefs, the really independent rai's took high-sounding Sanskrit titles, which our Persian authorities have not cared to translate. The chiefs of the Hindu period have been classified by Dr. Irfan Habib as 'Samantas,


\(^6\) Moreland: *Agrarian System of Moslem India*, Chapter I(3).

\(^7\) *Ibid.*
Ranakas (Ranas), Rautas (Rawats), Thakuras (Thakurs) and Rajputras. The terms Samantas and Rajputras (or Rajputs) are not found in the historical literature of the Delhi sultanat. Moreland's 'representatives' are to be identified with Barani's khuts, muqaddams and chaudharis. They were the chief figures in what Moreland calls 'group-assessment'. A village or a group of villages was assessed at a fixed amount, probably based on tradition, by the Delhi ministry of revenue and the 'representative' undertook to collect this amount from the cultivators or the peasants. Moreland restricts the term peasant to the cultivator in order to distinguish him from the 'farmer' or pure speculator, who contracted with the state for the collection of revenue for an extensive area. Finally, whatever the written terms of an assignment or grant, they were legally always revocable by the Sultan at his pleasure.

It is unfortunate that after making such clear distinctions, Moreland fails to apply them with reference to Alauddin's land reforms. In the territory of a chief, the Sultan was not legally entitled to interfere between the chief and the cultivators so long as the agreed tribute was paid. But the Sultan had the legal right to see that the representatives did their business properly. Alauddin's reforms were confined entirely to the representatives—i.e. to khuts, chaudharis and muqaddams. But it is better first to examine two remarks by contemporaries, which were not within Moreland's reach.

In a work written for presentation to Alauddin Khalji in 1311, Amir Khusrau writes with reference to the year 1305: 'When the spearmen of the victorious army had put antimony with their spearp-points in the eyes of the more myopic rais, some of the great zamindars (samindaran-i buzurg), who were more far-sighted, laid aside their insolence (independence) from fear of the eye-piercing arrows of the Turks, and with open eyes came to the sublime court. His

8 Dr. Irfan Habib: 'The Social Distribution of Landed Property in Pre-British India'. (Paper read before the International Economic History Conference, Munich, August, 1965). The term, Rajputra, probably meant the sons, or at least near relations, of a rai. With reference to the evolution of the term, Rajput, which is never used by the historians of the Delhi sultanat, Dr. Irfan Habib makes the following suggestion: 'A very interesting development, to which little attention has been paid so far, appears to be the social consolidation of this superior rural class, through the absorption of its various elements, as clans or sub-castes, into the great Rajput caste over the larger part of Northern India. Both the term Rajput (Rajaputra) as name for the caste, and the sense of the unity of its components, appear suddenly in the Persian authorities of the sixteenth century, and must, therefore, have quietly evolved in the preceding period. This caste-cohesion of the rural aristocracy possibly developed from a real class-cohesion, as the higher elements were pressed into the lower ranks of the rural aristocracy' (p. 34).
imperial Majesty regarded each of them with the eye of kindness and cast more rays of favours on their heads than they had expected. As a result no insolent Hindu (rais) remained in the realm of Hind; they had either closed their eyes on the (red) coloured bed of the battle-field or opened their eyes after prostrating their heads before the royal threshold.'9 Alauddin, we have to conclude, was prepared for a compromise with the Hindu rais, who came to his court; and they were obviously numerous with reference to the court held on 4 Jamadi II A.H. 711 (19 October 1312), for Khusrau remarks: 'Owing to the prostration of the great maliks (before the throne), the earth seemed to rise in hillocks, while owing to the prostration of the rais the ground was coloured saffron owing to the tikas on their foreheads.'10

Learning at the feet of experience—and of experience alone—and discarding as stupid all a priori theories of the ecclesiastics, Alauddin realized the limitations of his power. He was a Muslim ruler of a non-Muslim land and he knew that he could only govern on principles acceptable to the Hindu masses. From his point of view the real difference between the Hindus and the Musalmans lay in the fact that while the Hindu masses as well as classes believed in the principles of heredity and caste, the educated Musalmans, who were casteless, wanted a political regime in which career was open to talent. So that, while in consonance with the tradition of ages, he could dismiss all Muslim officers in government service, and he exercised this power without recognizing any limits, he had to leave the hereditary rais and their people to their traditional ways of life, subject, of course, to such tribute to the central power as the rais had promised to give. If an independent rai was overthrown, a similar arrangement had to be made with the rawats or chiefs, who had been subordinate to him. The life of the average Hindu in the territories of the rais was not disturbed. Life was greatly changed in the great cities of the Delhi empire, but within the rai-governed India, custom—and the principle of heredity—survived in full force.

We know from many sources that this policy of the administration

9 Khazainul Futuh, 55. From the context of the work, 'Hind' here means northern India or Hindustan.
10 Khazainul Futuh, 168. When a Muslim prostrated himself before the throne, the heralds (naqibs) cried, Bismillah (In the name of God!) but when a Hindu did so, they cried, Hadakallah (May God lead thee aright!). Mystic disciples used to prostrate themselves before their pir or shaihkhs; this practice was justified by Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and his arguments in favour of it are summarized in a paragraph of the Fuwat'dul Fuw'ad, but his senior disciple, Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh, deprecated the practice.
to compromise was bitterly criticized by a small but virulent party of extreme Muslim ecclesiastics, who were so unpractical as to imagine that they could liquidate Hinduism in India in the same way as the Prophet had liquidated polytheism in Arabia. There was a difference in view-points, but there was no difference about facts. The two following paragraphs from Barani’s Fatawa-i Jahandari (written after 1357) are a fair specimen of this extreme ecclesiastical opinion of the unpractical, extreme right.

‘The Muslim king will not be able to establish the honour of theism (tawhid) and the supremacy of Islam unless he strives with all his courage to overthrow infidelity and to slaughter its leaders (imams), who in India are the Brahmins. He should make a firm resolve to overpower, capture, enslave and degrade the infidels. All the strength and power of the king and the holy warriors of Islam should be concentrated in holy campaigns and holy wars; and they should risk themselves in the enterprise so that the true faith may uproot the false creeds; and then it will look as if these false creeds had never existed, because they will have been deprived of all their glamour. On the other hand, if the Muslim king, in spite of the power and position which God has given him, is merely content to take the poll-tax (jizya) and tribute (khiraj) from the Hindus and preserves both infidels and infidelity and refuses to risk his power in attempting to overthrow them, what difference will there be in this respect between the kings of Islam and the rais of the infidels? For the rais of the infidels also exact poll-tax (jizya) and tribute (khiraj) from the Hindus, who belong to their own false creed, and fill their treasuries with money so obtained; in fact, they collect a hundred times more taxes.’

The sultanat of Delhi grew and flourished for a little less than two centuries for it gave to India something India needed. But India did not need a ‘holy war’ of the type Barani contemplated and all sultans of Delhi rejected the idea of a ‘theological mission’. Barani knew this better than anyone else. He continues:

‘But the desire for overthrowing infidels and knocking down idolators does not fill the hearts of the Muslim kings (of India). On the other hand, out of consideration for the fact that the infidels and polytheists are payers of tribute and protected persons (zimmis), these infidels are honoured, distinguished, favoured and made eminent; the kings bestow drums, banners, ornaments, cloaks of brocade and caparisoned horses upon them, and appoint
them to governorships, high posts and offices. And in their capital (Delhi), owing to the status of which the status of all other Muslim cities is raised, Muslim kings not only allow but are pleased with the fact that infidels, polytheists, idol-worshippers and cow-dung (sargin) worshippers build houses like palaces, wear clothes of brocade and ride Arab horses caparisoned with gold and silver ornaments. They are equipped with a hundred thousand sources of strength. They live in delights and comforts. They take Musalmans into their service and make them run before their horses; the poor Musalmans beg of them at their doors; and in the capital of Islam, owing to which the edifice of Islam is elevated, they are called rais (great rulers), ranas (minor rulers), thakurs (warriors), sakhis (bankers), mehtas11 (administrators) and pundits (priests).12

**Alauddin’s Land Revenue Reforms**

It was necessary to quote Barani at some length, because the only account we have of Alauddin’s land revenue reforms is from his pen. Barani makes it clear that the rais had full power of taxing, or over-taxing, their subjects. And the power of taxing implied the power of having forts and keeping armed soldiers. Many rais and rawats were under an obligation to come to the help of the local or the central administration; keeping soldiers in arms would, therefore, also be a duty. Since Hindu law is traditional law, caste-law or tribal law, the rais and rawats would have their own judiciary. We hear of no judicial appeals from them to Delhi.

Barani came from a family of government officers and could not have failed to distinguish the rais, ranas and rawats from the smaller fry of the headmen of one or more villages whom he calls khuts, muqaddams and chaudhars. Muqaddam is an Arabic word meaning the leading man or first man, and in our context it means the head-man of a village or a village-group. Chaudhari is a widely used Hindi word but Barani uses it as equivalent to muqaddam. Khut is a non-Hindi word; its first and last letters are Persian or Arabic, but when it fell into the hands of persons ignorant of Persian, its form changed. The nearest Persian word to it is khat or deed by which the khut may have undertaken to collect the revenue of the villages put

11 The term, mehta, as used by Barani, does not seem to mean a clerk but an officer of a much higher status. Barani himself tells us that when Muhammad bin Tughluq deposed a rai in Gujarat, he appointed a mehta in his place. So the word ‘administrator’ is a suitable equivalent.

12 Habib and Afsar Begum; Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanat; Fatawa-i Jahandari, Advice XI, 40-48.
in his charge by the government. Moreland is correct in using the term, 'group-assessment', for the villages with which we are here concerned, but, unlike Barani, he does not make a clear distinction between the chiefs (rais, ranas and rawats), with whose peasantry the revenue ministry did not interfere, and the village headmen, whose work was subject to the control of the ministry. Persian histories of the thirteenth century tell us nothing about the land revenue system, but it is a fair supposition that since the government had no proper staff in the rural areas, it did not bother about the treatment of the agricultural under-dogs so long as the fixed revenue was paid. Alauddin was the first ruler to take a step in organizing a new revenue system in villages which had been subject to 'group-assessment'.

First as to the complaints about them which the Sultan made to Qazi Mughisuddin of Bayana. 'It has been repeatedly reported to me that the khuts and mugaddams ride fine horses, wear excellent clothes, go out hunting, shoot with Persian bows and make war on each other. (a) But they do not pay a single jital in khiraj, jizya, ghari and charai from their own lands. (b) In addition to this, they levy the perquisites of khuti (huquq-i khuti) from their villages. They hold parties, drink wine and show their pride in a hundred ways. Some of them do not come to the revenue office, whether summoned or not, and pay no regard to the revenue collectors (muhassilan) . . . Not even a hundred karohs of my territory are obedient to me in the proper way.'

What remedy? 'Alauddin', Barani tells us, 'next asked his wise men for measures by which the "Hindu" may be suppressed.... and every one from the khut to the balahar may pay khiraj on one principle and the khiraj-burden of the strong may not be thrown on to the weak.' By the term, 'Hindu', Barani always means the upper class Hindu, and in this context, the headman. The term, balahar, has been interpreted to mean the 'sweeper' but Barani uses the term to indicate the cultivator of the lowest caste.

'For the realization of this object, which is the basic object of all administration, two laws (zabitas) were laid down. First, every one who cultivates, whether his plot be large or small, must do so

13 Barani, 291.
14 Moreland, Agrarian System, 32n: 'Barani speaks of the "Hindus", but here and in various other passages where the phrase occurs, the context makes it plain that he means the upper classes, not the peasants. Taking his book as a whole, I would infer that he thought of the kingdom as consisting not of two elements but of three—Muslims, Hindus and the "herds" or peasants.' Had Mr. Moreland studied Barani's Fatouca-i Jahanbiri, he would have been convinced that our author also included all low-born Muslims' among the herds.
according to measurement and produce per biswa and they were without any variation to pay half. In this payment there was to be no difference between the khuts and the balahars. No perquisites of khuti were to be left in the hands of the khuts.\textsuperscript{15} Secondly, with reference to buffaloes and goats—\textit{in fact all milk-giving cattle—}the pasture was fixed and \textit{assigned}, and the demand of tax (for the pasture-land) was made at the house of the peasant. Thus there was to be no corruption—“no camel-cat business” (\textit{shutur-gurba})—in the collection of revenue (\textit{khiraj}); the burden of the strong was not to be thrown on the weak; the weak and the strong were to pay according to the same principle (\textit{hukm}).\textsuperscript{16}

Firishta, without indicating his authority, states that the following maximum of cattle was fixed for the \textit{muqaddam} as well as for the ordinary peasant—four bullocks for cultivation purposes, two cows, two buffaloes and twelve goats and sheep (\textit{gosfand}). If this is correct, there must have been no lack of pasture-land.

These two laws for the first time brought the state into direct relation with the cultivator. Barani implies, but forgets to state explicitly, that this needed the employment of an enormous staff, which he classifies as \textit{muhassils} (demanders of tribute), \textit{amils} (revenue collectors), \textit{gumashtas} (agents), \textit{mutasarrifs} (accountants or auditors), \textit{uhdadaran-i dafatir} (persons in charge of offices) and \textit{nawisandas} (writers or clerks).\textsuperscript{17} The basic record was the \textit{bihi} (register) of the \textit{patwari} or village-accountant. He could not have kept his records in Persian; so we have to conclude that a large proportion of revenue officers, who worked at the centre and at the district levels, had to have a knowledge of Persian as well as the local language, which for the larger area would have been Hindi. It is also probable that a large proportion of the newly employed persons were Hindus.

Alauddin seems to have had no difficulty in suppressing the \textit{chaudhars}, \textit{khuts} and \textit{muqaddams}, who were soon deprived of their real or supposed wealth. Their obedience reached such a pitch that a footman from the town revenue office would tie the necks of twenty \textit{khuts}, \textit{muqaddams} and \textit{chaudhars} together and kick and

\textsuperscript{15} Firishta interprets this as follows: ‘The perquisites of the \textit{muqaddams} were collected and put into the treasury (109).’ But this would raise the demand of the state to more than half the produce and still leave a difference between the demand made on the \textit{khut} (\textit{muqaddam}) and the ordinary cultivator. It would be more in consonance with Barani’s own statement to conclude that these perquisites were totally abolished.

\textsuperscript{16} Barani, 287.

\textsuperscript{17} It is not possible to find exact English equivalents for these officers, clerks, etc., but Barani’s list gives a rough idea of the work that had to be done.
thrasl them for the realization of tribute. It was impossible for the Hindu (village headman) to raise his head. No gold, silver, tankas, jitals or superfluous commodities, which are the causes of rebellion, were to be found in the houses of the Hindus, and owing to their lack of means, the wives of the khuts and muqaddams went and worked for wages in the houses of the Musalmans.'

The real problem was to organize the new revenue system. 'Sharaf Qaini (or Qai), the revenue minister of the empire, who was unrivalled and excelled all his contemporaries in the art of writing and calligraphy as well as technical knowledge, sagacity, efficiency, eloquence, and the capacity of making investigations, applied himself to this work for several years and put in the greatest efforts. (As a result) the villages in the neighbourhood of Delhi and (its) towns (qasbas) the territory of the Doab and from Bayana to Jhain and from Palam to Dipalpur and Lahore and the whole territory of Samana and Sunam and from Rewari to Nagaur and from Kara to Kanauj and from Amroha and Afghanpur to Kabar and from Dibhai to Badaun and Kharak and Kopla and the whole of Kateh (Rohilkhand) was, for the purpose of the khiraj-demand in accordance with the principle of measurement and produce per biswa and ghari (house-tax) and charai (pasture-tax), treated (as if) it was a single village. He made his work so effective that disobedience, rebellion, (and the habit of) riding horses, keeping arms, wearing good clothes and eating betels totally disappeared from among the chaudhatis, khuts and muqaddams. There was a uniform law for all in the exaction of the khiraj.'

In view of Barani's confused geography, one is inclined to accept Moreland's interpretation: 'Taking the list as it stands, we learn that the regulations were applied by degrees to Delhi, the River Country and the rest of the Doab. To the east, Rohilkhand was included but not Awadh or Bihar, to the south, portions of Malwa and Rajputana

18 Both the grammar and the geography of this sentence of Barani leave much to be desired. It has been translated literally and intentionally left unpunctuated, as in the original.

Karhi and Charai—Charai obviously means the tax on pasture-land collected from the houses of the cultivators. The word Karhi is meaningless. Professor Hodivala suggests that it should be read as ghari (from Hindi ghar—house). If so, we have to assume either that there was a separate house-tax in addition to the agricultural tax and pasture-tax or that, since the pasture-tax was always collected at the peasant's house (unlike the agricultural tax, which could be more conveniently collected at the field, specially when it was in kind), Barani uses the words, chari and ghari, as names for the same tax—the tax for the pasture-land collected at the peasant's house. The latter seems to be the more rational interpretation (Hodivala, 273).

19 Barani, 288.
were included, but not Gujarat; while on the west all the Punjab provinces are indicated with the exception of Multan.\textsuperscript{20} Unfortunately, after coining two very useful modern terms, first chiefs, which neatly agrees with the rais, ranas and rawats\textsuperscript{21} of contemporary writers, and secondly representatives or cultivators representing their fellow-cultivators for the purpose of land-assessment, who are the chaudharis, khuts and muqaddams of Barani, Mr. Moreland writes as if Alauddin liquidated all the chiefs in the territory mentioned.\textsuperscript{22}

In the course of some four pages Barani refers to these headmen (khuts, muqaddams and chaudharis) and their rights at least eight times. He was only too well-acquainted with the terms, rais, ranas and rawats, but does not use them in this connection; he certainly would have been glad to do so, if they had been involved. But it was not Alauddin's policy to interfere with the peasantry of the chiefs or to undertake responsibilities for which he had not the proper trained personnel. We have, therefore, to conclude that within the area confusedly indicated by Barani, and more precisely by Moreland, the regulations were only enforced in villages for which the land revenue had been paid by the headmen and that these villages, interspersed perhaps with villages of the chiefs, were the true 'khalisa' of Alauddin.

20 Agrarian System, 34.

21 Khusrau in his Khazinul Futuh uses the term rawats for chiefs subordinate to their rais, but for military purposes he occasionally calls them muqaddams. He has only once used the term, great zamindars (zamindaran-i buzurg).

22 Mr. Moreland's identification of the headman with the chief led him to the following conclusion, which it is difficult to accept. 'A demand of half the produce cannot have left the ordinary peasant with any substantial surplus, and would thus strike at the private revenue which the chiefs were suspected of levying, while the assessment of the chiefs' holdings at full rates would reduce them practically to the economic position of peasants, and the grazing tax would operate to diminish their income from uncultivated land. The economic result would be to draw the bulk, if not the whole, of the producer's surplus into the treasury; to stereotype the standard of living of the ordinary peasant, and to reduce the standard of living of the chiefs, who would not be in a position to maintain troops, or accumulate supplies of horses and other military requirements.' (Agrarian System, 33)

There are difficulties here. (1) Barani's statement that Alauddin required half the produce in all cases should not be taken too literally; Alauddin himself suggested its modification in extreme cases. (2) The liquidation of the headmen was only temporary; Ghilasuddin Tughluq 'recognized' them again and Barani declares that they were prosperous when he wrote his book in the reign of Firuz Shah. (3) The chiefs (rais, ranas, rawats) had fought under Alauddin's banner at Kili and there was no question of their liquidation. (4) Alauddin had not the means, even if he had the wish, to draw the whole of the producer's surplus into the treasury at a stroke of the pen. It needed a staff which he could not control, and which, in any case, was not available. Had he made the attempt, the bulk of the producer's surplus would have gone into the black market.
Khaliqi. In these villages the government dealt with the peasants direct; Alauddin did not believe in assigning khalisa villages to his officers. The territories of the chiefs were left untouched. Of course, while the Delhi sultanat was strong, these chiefs paid their dues regularly and, consequently, references to them are only occasional. But after the death of Firuz Shah, they came into prominence with pre-Alauddin genealogies and as leaders of castes, tribes or groups that had survived from the pre-Muslim period. Dr. Irfan Habib’s suggestion that Alauddin consciously utilized the conflict between the two rural ‘classes’ by standing forth as the protector of the ‘weak’ against the ‘strong’ in these villages is perfectly reasonable, provided by the ‘strong’ we only understand the ‘lower’ rural aristocracy or the headmen. As to Barani’s statement that one-half of the produce was to be taken ‘without any variation’, we have to remember that Barani also attributes to Alauddin an order that ‘the cultivators were to be left with so much of agricultural produce and milk and curd as may suffice them from year to year but they were not to accumulate wealth’. In the practical philosophy of Alauddin Khaliqi, protection against famines and similar misfortunes was a function of the state; the peasant’s resources could never suffice for such contingencies.

It is impossible to say why in some villages the tribute had been levied, obviously separately for every village, through the headmen and in other cases demanded for the whole of his territory in a lump sum from the chief. Probably the distinction was an inheritance from the Hindu period, or, in cases where the chiefs had been liquidated owing to war, the Delhi ministry of revenue may have assigned the duty of collecting the tribute to a number of headmen.

Barani is firm in stating that direct collection of tribute from the peasants led to another evil—corruption among the officers and workers of the revenue ministry. Mere dismissals for corruption or bribery went unnoticed. ‘The same Sharaf Qaini, naib wasir, took extreme measures to realize everything that was due from the officials (kar-kuns), accountants (mutasarrifs), persons in charge of offices (uhdadaran-i dafatir), agents (gumashtas) and demanders of tribute (muhassils). He discovered from the bihi (registers) of the patwaris (village accountants) every jital that was due from every one of them, and in accordance (with this record) exacted it by blows of the stick, racks, bonds and chains. It was impossible for any one to obtain even a tanka dishonestly or take anything in bribe from the Hindus or the Musalmans. He reduced dishonest amils, accountants and other (corrupt) revenue officers to such destitution and poverty that, owing to their inability to meet demands of one thousand or five hundred tankas, they remained in bonds and chains for years. People
considered the work of an amil, accountant and revenue officer as worse than fever; revenue clerkship was considered a great disgrace and people would not give their daughters in marriage to a revenue clerk; accountancy was accepted only by persons who were sick of their lives; and most of the days of the accountants and amils were passed in prison under kicks and blows. Alauddin estimated that about ten thousand revenue officers had been reduced to destitution in Delhi alone. The number of prisoners set free by Mubarak Shah at his accession in Delhi and the provinces is estimated by Barani as amounting to seventeen or eighteen thousand, but according to Isami this number included both corrupt revenue officials and political offenders.

CONVERSATION WITH QAZI MUGHIS

The discovery of Barani's Fatawa-i Jahandari enables us to dismiss as unhistorical the speeches attributed to various persons by Barani in his Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi, unless he was personally present or quotes reliable authorities. One of the persons speaking only expresses the opinions we find in Barani's Fatawa-i Jahandari, even to the extent of repeating Barani's errors. The speech of the other person is framed by Barani in consonance with what Barani conceived to be his character, much as a modern dramatist would do. Now Barani gives us a detailed account of a conversation between the Sultan and Qazi Mughisuddin of Bayana, which, so he alleges, took place after the revenue regulations had been enforced. It is impossible to say that no such conversation took place; but some fifty years had passed and Barani has obviously composed the speeches of both parties. To make the conversation effective, he had to make the Sultan more ignorant of Islam than a person who had reached the throne of Delhi by his own efforts could possibly have been; on the other hand, it was not possible for Barani to endow Qazi Mughis with a knowledge of Muslim theology and scriptures he himself did not possess.

'Sultan Alauddin was a king devoid of education, and he never associated with religious scholars (ulama). When he attained to kingship, he was quite convinced that government and administration were affairs quite independent of the rules and orders of the shari'at; and that while the former appertained to kings, the latter had been assigned to qazis and muftis (jurisconsults). In accordance with this conviction of his, he did whatever he considered to be good for the

23 Barani, 288-89.
24 Isami, 347. It is very difficult to guess the total number of the revenue staff from the number of those who were punished.
administration of the state, whether permitted by the shari'at or not. He never inquired about any religious principle (mas'ala) concerning the administration and very few scholars frequented his company. However, Qazi Ziauddin of Bayana, Maulana Zaheer Lang and Maulana Mushhid Kuhrami were invited to the royal meals and dined with the amirs in the outer hall. Qazi Mughisuddin of Bayana had access to the Sultan and sat in the confidential Majlis (Majlis-i Khilwat) with the amirs.'

The conversation of the Sultan with Qazi Mughis covered four points.

(1) First, what is the status of the Hindus as payers of tribute? Honesty would have required the Qazi to say that the Hindus are not referred to by name either in the Quran or the authentic collection of the Prophet's Hadises (precepts), and that the ulama have based their arguments merely on analogy (qiyas) from the Prophet's peaceful arrangements with the Zoroastrians of Bahrain; and that there was considerable difference of opinion on the matter. Instead of this the Qazi uttered two provable lies—lies very dear to Barani's heart, but lies nonetheless. First, that 'the Hindus were the greatest enemies of the Prophet Muhammad and that the Prophet has ordered the Hindus to be killed, plundered and enslaved.' The Prophet never came across a Hindu in his life and no such order is found in the six authentic Sunni collections of the Prophet's Hadises. Secondly, that while Imam Abu Hanifa, 'to whose school we belong' has permitted peace with Hindus on the payment of the jizya, other religious scholars have left no alternative for them except 'Islam or the sword'. This again shows a terrible ignorance on Barani's part, which he repeats with greater emphasis in the Fatawa-i Jahandari.25

(2) Secondly, Alauddin inquired, has the shari'at said anything about the punishment of corrupt state-employees, who steal public money, accept bribes, make incorrect totals, etc? There could be only one answer to the question, for it was notorious that the shari'at was absolutely silent about public law. 'I have not read about this in any book', the Qazi replied. The Sultan could punish corrupt officials in such way as he thinks best, but it is not permitted to cut off a

25 See Habib and Afsar Begum: Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanat, Advice XI, 49-51. The editors prove by quotations from Imam Shaf'ii's works that he never had the ideas Barani attributes to him; on the other hand, he looked at the Treaty of Hudaibia between the Prophet and the Quraish, which ensured the freedom of religious choice to the Arabs, as the greatest of the early victories of Islam. When mis-representing Islam, Barani is quite often below contempt.
man's hands for stealing from the public treasury.'²⁶ The Sultan remarked that he had ordered decent salaries to be paid to the employees of the ministry of revenue, but they misbehaved nonetheless.

(3) Thirdly, to whom did the treasure of Devagiri belong? Alauddin claimed that it belonged to him personally. He had obtained it before he ascended the throne and he had kept it separate from the public treasury. A true interpreter of the shari’at would have declared that this plunder or loot was unlawful misappropriation,²⁷ but Barani, who believed that plundering non-Muslims was justified in all circumstances, made the Qazi declare that it belonged to the 'Public Treasury of the Musalmans'. The Sultan dismissed the suggestion.

(4) Fourthly, the Sultan wanted to know what claims he and his family had on the public treasury. Here again the Quran and the Hadises are silent. The Qazi said that there were three alternatives—according to the Traditions of the Pious Caliphs the Sultan was only entitled to the salary of 234 tankas a year, which he gave to his horsemen; if he desired to follow a moderate path, he would take the same salary as he gave to his highest officers; if he wanted to act according to precepts of worldly religious scholars, he could take something more than he gave to these officers. But he hastened to add that, if his opinion was wanted from the view-point of political prudence, he would advise that the royal expenditure be increased a thousand times, for the dignity of the king conduces to the stability of the state.

At this stage Barani, who was writing long after Alauddin's family had vanished and used to wonder what would happen to Alauddin on the Day of Judgement, composed two paragraphs to show how Alauddin tried to justify himself before Qazi Mughis and might try to justify his ways before God himself.

'You say my acts are against the shari’at. Now this is how I act. From the horseman who fails to come to the review (arz), I have ordered three years salary to be demanded back. I cast into dry wells all who drink or sell liquor. If a man rapes (sifah mi-kunad) another man's wife, I order the man to be castrated (and the woman I order to be killed).²⁸ In cases of rebellions, I slay both

²⁶ Misappropriation between partners does not amount to theft (sirqah) for which the Quran prescribes the severance of the hands. So in his Fatawa-i Jahandari, Barani remarks: 'For misappropriation and other offences against the Public Treasury (Baitul Mal), in which all Musalmans are partners, there is neither death-penalty nor amputation of hands.' (Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanat, 62).

²⁷ This was the opinion of the Qazi of Ghazni concerning the plunder of Sultan Mahmud. (See Habib, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, Preface to the Second Edition.)

²⁸ The addition of this clause is probably the error of some copyist.
the good and the bad, the mature and the immature; and I reduce their women and children to poverty and destitution. I demand back public money from corrupt revenue officers by kicks and blows, and till the last jital has been realized, I keep them in bonds and chains. Political offenders I imprison for life. Will you say all this against the shari'at?"

When the Qazi, who claimed to have prepared for death, came to see him next day, the Sultan gave him the robe he was wearing, presented him a thousand tankas and continued the conversation. 'Maulana Mughis! Though I have no knowledge and have read no book, still I was born a Musalman and my ancestors have been Muslims for so many generations. To prevent rebellions in which thousands of lives are lost, I give such orders to the people as I consider to be beneficial for them and the state. But the people of these days are bold, heedless and do not obey me properly; so it has become necessary for me to mete out harsh punishments to them to ensure obedience. I issue commands which I consider to be beneficial to the state and appear prudent under the circumstances. I do not know whether they are permitted by the shari'at or not. I do not know how God will treat me on the Day of Judgement. But, Maulana Mughis, I say one thing in my prayer to God: "O Lord, thou knowest that if one man violates the wife of another, he does me no harm in my kingdom; if he steals, he takes nothing from my inheritance; if he drinks wine, he does me no personal harm; if he takes his salary and does not come to the review, the work of the review is not held up by the absence of ten or twenty horsemen. Considering these four groups I carry out the orders of the Prophet."29 But in these days men have appeared who from one to a lakh, and from a lakh to five and ten lakhs, have no other work in life except talking sedition and twirling their moustaches, heedless of this life and the next. And I, an ignorant man who can neither read nor write—I am unable to read anything except Alhamd, Qul huwallah, Dua-i Qunut and At Tahiyat30—I have ordered that if in my kingdom a married man rapes another man's wife, he is to be castrated, but in spite of this harsh and fearful order, so many persons are brought to my court who have raped the wives of others.31 In spite of the fact that three years'

29 It is impossible to coordinate the actions of Alauddin with the authentic injunctions of the Prophet, for the simple reason that the circumstances of Alauddin's time were entirely different.

30 These are necessary parts of the Muslim prayer and are recited in Arabic. So Alauddin must have known the alphabet and the vowel-points.

31 The shari'at-books, on the implicit understanding that their recommendations were not to be enforced, prescribed stoning to death as the punishment for adultery.
salary is demanded back from them, there is no review at which one hundred or two hundred horsemen are not absent; they take the money, do not come to the review and then pass their lives in prison. Owing to the corruption (duzdil) of revenue clerks (nawisanda) and amils, I have reduced ten thousand of them to destitution and put worms in their bodies. Still they do not give up their ways, you might say that revenue clerkship and corruption were twins! For the sale and consumption of liquor, I have killed so many persons by casting them into dry wells, and continue to do so. What liquor will they drink or sell in these wells? But no one has succeeded in putting right the people of God. How will I?'

INVASION OF WARANGAL; CONQUEST OF CHITOR

For the winter of 1302-3 Alauddin was in a position to organize two campaigns. The plunder obtained from Devagiri naturally suggested a campaign against Warangal, the capital of Teltingana, which was then governed by the Kakitya Rai, Pratap Rudra Deva, whom the Persian historians call 'Laddar Deo'. Ulugh Khan had begun to prepare for it, but his death put an end to his plans. Alauddin, while deciding to march personally against Chitor, directed all the amirs and horse and foot of Hindustan to proceed against Warangal. The supreme command was given to Malik Jauna (senior), the dadbek-i hazrat, and Malik Chajju, governor of Kara, who was a nephew of the deceased Nusrat Khan. We do not know when this army started and it has been suggested that, since Malwa had not yet been conquered, it may have marched through Bengal.32 But all we can say for certain is that it took a long time over the journey and failed disastrously in the enterprise. 'When they reached Warangal, the monsoon had started and rainfall stood in their way. Consequently, the army of Hindustan could accomplish nothing in Warangal and the Sultan summoned it back. Towards the beginning of the winter, 1303, it succeeded in reaching Hindustan, thinned in numbers and with its baggage lost.'33

For the campaign against Chitor we have to rely mainly upon Amir Khusrau, who was personally present.34 The careers of the great

32 Ferishta, 14, says that the army was sent to Warangal through Bengal.
33 Barani, 300.
34 Khazainul Futuh, 60-63; Dawal Rani, 66-67.
ranas—Kumbh, Sanga and Pratap—have given to the dynasty of Chitor a grandeur and a dignity which no other Rajput medieval family can rival. Still, next to Ranthambhor, it was the most powerful of the Rajput states at the time of Alaouddin's accession and its continued independence was a standing challenge to the Delhi empire. The fort, which has often been described, was formidable. 'The fortified hill of Chitor is an isolated mass of rock rising steeply from the plain, three miles and a quarter long and some twelve hundred yards wide in the centre. The circumference at the base is more than eight miles and the height nowhere exceeds four or five hundred feet.'35 But a man who climbs these 400 or 500 feet, not a difficult task in peace-time, will find himself face to face with a vertical escarp and stone-wall some forty feet high. The fort is said to have had some eighty-four reservoirs, the greatest of them being a lake in front of the Rai's palace-fort. 'The fort', says Khusrau, 'was the paradise of the Hindus, with springs and lawns on every side. It had a Rai with an organized army, heavily armoured but light-footed; compared with the thrones of other Hindus, his throne was higher than the seventh heaven (haft kursi).'</36 To the east of the hill and at some distance from it, there is a confluence of two streams, the Gambheri and the Berach, which form a small doab. To the north of the fort there is a hillock, which Khusrau calls Chatrvari, but which is generally referred to as Chitori.

The imperial army beat its drums for the march with the black canopy of the Sultan on Monday, 28 January 1303 (8 Jamadi II A.H. 702). We are not told when it arrived at Chitor, but the royal camp was pitched in the doab between the Gambheri and the Berach and the army invested the fort on all sides. Alaouddin preferred to direct operations from his residential pavilion on the Chitori hillock. 'During the two months of the rainy season', Khusrau tells us, 'the deluge of the besieger's swords reached up to the "waist" of the hill but could not proceed any further. Strange the fort that could not be hit on the head even by hailstones.' The Sultan ordered the fort to be pelted with munjanig-stones, while the soldiers in their armours attacked it from all sides. Khusrau makes no reference to the construction of a pasheb, but implies that a frontal attack had twice failed. Epidemic or famine may have paralysed the garrison. The words that follow seem to imply that the Rai surrendered on his own initiative. On Monday, 25 August 1303 (8 Jamadi II A.H. 702) the Sultan entered the fort and Khusrau claims to have entered the fort

35 V. A. Smith, Akbar, 82-83.
36 Khusrau, Dawal Rani, 66-67.
with him. Rai Ratan Sen, who had been on his throne only for a year or two and had received no substantial help from his fellow-rais, 'came out of his stone-gate, like a spark out of stone, crossed the river and ran towards the royal tent and thus obtained security from the flashing sword. . . . Though he was a rebel, still the morning wind of royal virtues would not allow any hot wind to blow over him.' Khusrau could not have been incorrect about a matter like this; we have to conclude, therefore, that the jauhar-rite of Chitor is a fabrication of later days. Khusrau has referred to the jauhar at Ranthambhor and he would have certainly referred to one at Chitor, had there been any.

The protection of the Rai was extended to his family but apparently not to his muqaddams. Khusrau says that the Sultan in his wrath ordered three thousand muqaddams\(^{37}\) to be put to death 'so that the humble ra'iyyat, which had been unable to raise its head, may prosper'. Chitor was renamed Khizrabad and assigned to the heir-apparent, Khizr Khan, aged seven or eight years, along with a red canopy, a khilat of gold brocade, two yellow and black banners and a two-coloured baton (durbash). The administration, according to Isami, was put in charge of Malik Shahin, the naib-i barbek, a slave of Alauddin whom he used to call his son.\(^{38}\) This done the Sultan hurried back to Delhi, for he must by now have heard of the Mongol advance on his capital.

TARCHI INVESTS DELHI

Alauddin had denuded both Delhi and Hindustan of their troops for two distant campaigns and he may have taken soldiers from the frontier forts also. The Mongols in Trans-Oxiana heard of this and Targhi was sent post-haste to capture Delhi with thirty or forty thousand horsemen.\(^{39}\) The enterprise could only have succeeded if Targhi

\(^{37}\) The printed text says 'thirty thousand muqaddams', but this is obviously an error. In Persian three and thirty (sth and st) can be written in much the same way. The muqaddams were not mere soldiers but rauwats with cultivators subordinate to them. The primary cause of their destruction was that 'the ra'iyyat may prosper'. It is inconceivable that there could have been thirty thousand such muqaddams in the Chitor fort. The reason given by Khusrau would not justify the killing of ordinary soldiers. Confirmation of this is also found in Tod's statement. 'Mention has already been made of the adjuration, "by the sin of the sack of Chitor"; of these sacks they enumerate three and a half. This is the half, for though the city was not stormed, the best and bravest were cut off' (Rajasthan, Vol. I, 309).

\(^{38}\) Isami, 272. Khizr Khan was of about the same age as Mubarak Shah, who ascended the throne at the age of nineteen in 1316.

\(^{39}\) Barani, 300. Some manuscripts say that Targhi had only 'twenty or thirty thousand horsemen'.
reached Delhi before the Sultan’s return. But this he failed to do. Still the situation was critical, perhaps amusing. There were not at Multan, Dipalpur and Samana forces strong enough to stop the Mongol advance or even to retreat to help the Sultan at Delhi. Alaunuddin had been at Delhi for a month when the Mongols invested it; the weapons of his army had been ruined during the siege of Chitor in the rainy season and he had no time to hold a review of the army and to reequip it with horses and weapons. Malik Jauna (senior) had returned with his frustrated army to the Doab, but since the Mongols had captured all the fords of the Jumna, the army of Hindustan had to stay in Koil (Aligarh) and Badaun and could not come to Delhi in spite of the royal summons.

Under these circumstances the Sultan came out of the city with the few horsemen he had and pitched his camp at Siri. He ordered a ditch to be dug round his camp and outside the ditch he constructed a wooden rampart with doors from the houses of the city. He gave up the idea of a battle but was very careful about the protection of his camp and his armed foot-soldiers kept watch day and night. Five fully armed elephants were stationed before every contingent. There were two or three conflicts between the advance-guards of the armies but neither side won a decisive victory and the Mongols were unable to break into the royal camp, which was their main objective. Barani, who was in Delhi at the time, says that such fear of the Mongols had not been witnessed in the city on any previous occasion, and that if Targhi had stayed by the bank of the Jumna for another month ‘the danger was that a tumult would have arisen in the city and it would have gone out of hand’. The movement of caravans had stopped and, consequently, there was a scarcity of water, wood and fodder. But as Alaunuddin was unable to protect the whole of the city, ‘the Mongol horsemen came up to the Chauta-i Subhani, Mori, Hudhudi and the bank of the Hauz-i Sultan (Royal Tank) and they sold the Sultan’s corn and other commodities (to the citizens) at a cheap rate; consequently, there was no great scarcity of corn. Targhi could find no way of attacking and overthrowing the Sultan’s army; and owing to the prayers of the helpless, the accursed Targhi returned with his

40 Barani, 130-32. It is impossible to identify Mori and Hudhudi. The raised platform, called Chauta-i Subhani, is sometimes referred to by our histories. Khusrav tells us that, since the Hauz-i Shamst (Sultan Shamsuddin’s Tank) had been filled up with mud, Alaunuddin had it dug up again so that water began to come out of the ground and rain-water also collected in the tank (Khazainul Fath, 30-39). Though Khusrav is silent about it, Alaunuddin seems to have constructed another tank also for his expanding Delhi, probably after 1311. Hauz-i Sultan here seems to refer to the Hauz-i Shamst.
spoils to his country after besieging Delhi for two months. Barani says that wise men were surprised at Delhi escaping unscathed, but Targhi had really lost the game when he found that the Sultan had already returned to Delhi and was in a position to direct operations over the whole country. Further stay in a hostile country would have meant the destruction of his whole army.

**THE PADMINI LEGEND; CHITOR DURING ALAUDDIN’S REIGN**

A historian, who studies the originals, is unable to find any place for the Padmini legend in the year 1303. Khusrau, Barani, Isami and all near-contemporary writers are silent about it. Alauddin captured Chitor and hurried back to Delhi; he forgave Ratan Sen and we have no reasons for thinking that he bothered about the Rai’s wives or women. But in 1540—i.e. 237 years after the fall of Chitor—Malik Muhammad of Jais, a small town near Rae Bareli in Awadh, wrote a Hindi poem, *Padmawat*, which has deservedly taken a very prominent place in classical Hindi literature. Though Malik Muhammad Jaisi may have written Hindi in the Persian script, Awadh tradition says that he tried to avoid Persian words so far as possible. We need not be surprised that in his great allegory (as he himself confesses) “Chitor” stands for the “body”, the “Raja” for the “mind”, “Ceylon” for the “heart”, “Padmini” for “wisdom” ... and “Alauddin” for “lust”. Planning a romance, the author was under no obligation to respect the facts of history, the limitations of geography or even the principles of the prevailing Hindu castes and customs. According to him Alauddin could not conquer Chitor even after a siege of eight years. But he captured the Rai by a trick, took him to Delhi and refused to restore him unless the Rai’s wife, Padmini, a Ceylonese princess whom the Rai had obtained after twelve years of wooing in that distant island, was surrendered to him. But the Rai was brought back safely to Chitor according to the well-known trick of Hindu warriors going in female litters to Delhi and only jumping out of them when they had reached the Rai’s prison.

Dr. K. S. Lal correctly remarks that no authority available to us before the *Padmawat* has referred to this legend. Persian writers like Feriishta, who only knew of the *Padmawat* story by hearsay, have twisted it to conform it in some way to the known facts of history. Rajput bards, who could understand it but knew nothing of Delhi history, welcomed it and elaborated its contents, with no regard for

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41 The story that Targhi retreated because he had been overcome by fear owing to the prayers of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya is a fabrication of later days.
historical facts. A great scholar of Rajasthan history, the late Dr. Gauri Shankar Ojha, has explained at length the factual improbabilities of the legend and his opinion is conclusive.

No contemporary historian tells us clearly how Chitor was governed during Alauddin’s reign. Khizr Khan was, of course, only a nominal governor and did not live at Chitor, and Malik Shahin, according to Isami, fled away from fear of the Sultan to Rai Karan of Gujarat. Alauddin seems to have given up the idea of governing Chitor directly, though he kept a garrison there.\(^{42}\) ‘The Sultan’, Ferishta tells us, ‘in accordance with the demands of prudence transferred Chitor from Khizr Khan to a son of the Rai’s sister, Maldeo, who had been in his service and showed every sign of loyalty. This prince in a short time established his power in the region and all Rajputs were pleased with his government and supported it. He was loyal to the end of the Sultan’s reign. He came to the court every year with the presents of his country and returned after receiving a horse and a special robe of honour. He took part in every campaign to which he was ordered with 5,000 horse and 10,000 foot and evinced great valour.’\(^{43}\) The fact that an inscription of Alauddin, dated May 1310 (month of Zil Hijjah A.H. 709), is found in Chitor is not inconsistent with the fact that the principality accepted Alauddin as its overlord and had a garrison of his in the fort. But when Alauddin was on his death-bed, Ferishta tells us, ‘the Rai of Chitor rebelled, tied up the hands and necks of the Sultan’s officers and men, who were in the fort, and threw them down from the ramparts’.\(^{44}\) Chitor thus regained its freedom. About 1321, after the death of Maldeo, Hamir, Rana of Sisoda, established his rule over Mewar and his descendants continued to rule the place till Indian independence.

\(^{42}\) Barani (323) gives us a list of Alauddin’s governors and Malik Abu Mohammad is given as governor of Chitor.

\(^{43}\) Ferishta, 115. Tod, on the other hand, says, ‘Maldeo remained with the royal garrison at Chitor, but Hamir desolated the plains and left to his enemies only the fortified towns which could be safely inhabited.’ The inscription of Zil Hijj, 709 (May 1310) quoted by Dr. K. S. Lal (Khaljis, 131n) does not militate against the fact that Alauddin governed Chitor through a Hindu prince. Dr. K. S. Lal erroneously attributes the throwing of the Muslims from the ramparts to the year 1311-12; Ferishta definitely states that this happened when Alauddin was on his death-bed in 1316, and there had also been a rebellion in Gujarat. According to Dr. K. S. Lal, Maldeo was the brother of Kanhar Deva Chauhan, the Songra chief of Jalor (Khaljis, 130). The transfer of Chitor to Maldeo must have taken place immediately after the flight of Malik Shahin. So far as we can see, Shahin’s administration was shortlived.

\(^{44}\) Ferishta, 123.
IV. ALAUDDIN KHALJI: THE ECONOMIC REGULATIONS

THE OBJECT OF THE REGULATIONS

'The invasion of Targhi', Barani tells us, 'was a misfortune of considerable importance; it awoke Alauddin from his senseless dreams and he gave up the idea of leading campaigns and besieging forts. He built his palace in Siri and resided there; Siri, consequently, became his capital and its buildings and population increased. The old fort-wall of Delhi was repaired. Under his orders the old forts on the route of the Mongols were also repaired and new forts were built where necessary. He ordered well-known and efficient kotwals to be put in charge of these forts and plenty of munjaniqs and iradas to be constructed. Clever artisans were to be employed and weapons of all types were to be kept ready. Stores of grain and fodder were also to be collected. At Samana and Dipalpur a large force of efficient soldiers was to be enlisted and kept ready. The iqtas on the Mongol frontier were strengthened by the appointment of efficient and experienced amirs, walis and army officers.'

These arrangements proved quite sufficient for the Mongol hordes that were to come. But Alauddin applied himself for some years in settling the prices of commodities and Barani gives us a detailed account of what was done. A student of Barani need not have any hesitation in accepting the following judgement of Mr. Moreland: 'Ziya Barani had no motive for inventing such a story, and, what is more significant, he did not possess the power of economic analysis which would have been needed for the invention... It is quite inconceivable that a writer like Ziya Barani could have invented these essential features (of Alauddin's economic regulations) out of his head; but it is quite conceivable that, in the economic condition of the time, a king like Alauddin aided, as he certainly was, by competent ministers, should by degrees have arrived at the essentials of the policy he was determined to enforce. He was, it must be remembered, strong where modern systems are weak, for he could rely on an elaborate system of spies and there was no sentimental objection in the way of effective punishment.' Barani is not our only authority, but what other contemporary writers give us is only confirmatory evidence. Barani alone supplies the details.

1 Barani, 302-3.
2 Agrarian System, 36-37.
In his *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi* Barani writes as if the object of Alauddin’s economic regulations was merely the maintenance of a strong and efficient army against the Mongols. This army had to be paid out of the normal revenues of the state. On this basis Alauddin suggested a yearly salary of 234 *tankas* for a trained and well-equipped man with one horse and 78 *tankas* extra for a man with two horses.\(^3\) If he paid more, his hoard of treasure would be exhausted in five or six years. The ministers said that the horsemen could live on these wages if the prices of commodities were reduced. Alauddin agreed on condition that this was done without his having to resort ‘to killing, death-penalties and a Pharoah-like terrorism’. State-force was not to be used except against persons guilty of crimes; the object was not to overthrow but to maintain and strengthen the normal conditions of business. But Barani, after first declaring that the economic regulations were primarily a military measure, explains in some detail how Alauddin regulated the price of commodities that had no importance for the military; also the regulations were maintained long after the military need for them had vanished. In his ‘Advice on Price-control’ in the *Fatawa-i Jahandari*, which is meant for the average king, who cannot combat famines, Barani advocates price-control as a measure of public welfare necessary at all times. ‘The policies and the enterprises of the state are *interdependent. For example, just as the army cannot be stable without payment from the treasury, similarly it cannot be stabilized without the low price of commodities, and just as the cheapness of commodities is necessary for the proper organization of the army, in the same way without the cheap price of the means of livelihood there can be no prosperity, splendour and stability among the people.’ A ruler is helpless during a famine, which is due to the complete failure of rain.\(^3\) But

\(^3\) The grammar of Barani’s sentence here (as it has survived to us) leaves much to be desired. But 234 *tankas* + 78 *tankas* for the second horse is the generally accepted interpretation. Ferishta, however, writes as follows: ‘After the prices of the means of livelihood and of the weapons of war had been reduced, the king fixed the yearly salary of soldiers according to the following grades: first, 234 *tankas*; second, 156 *tankas*; third, 78 *tankas*. When the officers acted according to this order, four lakhs and seventy-five thousand horsemen were put on the register (114).’ There is an obvious error here; 78 *tankas* a year could not have maintained a horseman. It may have been the yearly salary of a foot-soldier, though Barani is silent on the point. 475,000 may have been the total number of Alauddin’s troops, central and local, foot and horse. But here again no contemporary authority gives us the total of Alauddin’s troops, or even of his horsemen. We only get occasional references to the number of troops employed on a particular campaign. The Mongols came on horseback, and foot-soldiers would have been useless against their mobile columns. But there was plenty of other military work, which foot-soldiers could do.
during the period of plentiful vegetation, when rainfall comes as a blessing, and crops, fruits, cultivated fields and gardens grow in luxurious abundance, the transport-merchants (saudagar-i karawan) and market-merchants (saudagar-i bazari), nevertheless, adopt the practice of selling at high prices; and owing to the great profits which result from high prices, all men of wealth take to business and regrating (ihtikar). Regrating—i.e. purchasing at a low price and selling at a high price—was only possible for the rich; and since the Hindus had a monopoly of banking and big business, regrating (for Barani) meant that money went from the houses of the Musalmans to the houses of the Hindus.4

In the early years of Firuz Shah's reign, Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh, the senior khalifa (successor) of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, recalled a conversation about Alauddin, which has been summarized by Hamid Qalandar. Qazi Hamiduddin, the Malikut Tujjar (Prince of Merchants) came to Awadh and gave a banquet. When the other guests had departed, the Qazi narrated the following incident to the Shaikh. 'I once entered Sultan Alauddin's chamber and found him sitting bare-headed on a low-stool (tangi), with his feet on the ground, unconscious and absorbed in some deep thought. I went near, but since the Sultan took no notice of me, I came out and informed Malik Qarā Beg, who was my companion in the Sultan's Majlis, of what I had seen. Qara Beg approached the Sultan and engaged him in a conversation. I then came near the Sultan and said, "King of the Musalmans, I have a request." "Speak out", he replied. "I came into the chamber and found the Sultan bare-headed and absorbed in some thought. What was the Sultan thinking about?" "Hear me", the Sultan replied, "For some time this idea has been coming to my mind. God Almighty has so many creatures, but he has placed me at their head. Now I, too, should do something the benefit of which may accrue to all the people. I said to myself, what can I do? If I give away all the treasures I possess—and a hundred such treasures more—they will not reach all the people. If I give away all my villages and territories (wilayatha), they too will not suffice. So I was thinking over the problem—what should I do so that my work may benefit all the people? Just now an idea has come to me and I will explain it to you. I said to myself that if I reduce the price of grain, the benefit of it will accrue to all the people. But how is the price of grain to be reduced? I will order all the (Hindu) Nayaks of the empire, who bring grain to Delhi, to be summoned. Some of them have ten thousand transport animals while others have

twenty thousand. I will summon them, give them robes and money from the treasury (for their business) and for the expenses of their families, so that they may bring grain and sell it at the rate I fix." So the Sultan ordered, and grain began to come from all sides. In a few days its price fell to seven jitals a man. Butter (rughan, ghi), sugar and other commodities also became cheap and all the people began to benefit from the Sultan's work.' After quoting Qazi Hamid, the Shaikh added, 'What a king was Alauddin, God's mercy on him!' A person, who was present, remarked, 'People make pilgrimages to his tomb, tie threads (round its railings) and their prayers are fulfilled.'

The Khazainul Futuh of Amir Khusrau, our earliest authority, was written in 13116 for presentation to the Sultan and also for publication. Though the achievements of the army by then had been phenomenal, Khusrau praises the administrative and economic measures of Alauddin not with reference to the army but to the public welfare. Some of his paragraphs deserve quotation in simplified English.

'Every one, who has a brain capable of thinking, will realize that the status of the good administrator (jahandar) is higher than that of the conqueror (jahangir)... Precedence has been given in this book to administrative over military affairs... The fortunate star of the mass of the people arose on the day when it was revealed to the heart of the Sultan that God had made him a ruler over them. The Sultan's fostering care for the sons of Adam is greater than that of the sun for the moon and the stars... First, from east to west and north to south, he has several times remitted the khiraj of the ra'iyyat; (secondly), he has by the blows of his sword brought to the imperial exchequer the treasures of the rais of Hind, which they had collected star by star from the time of Mahraj and Bikramajit.'

'Next, in order to make cheap the livelihood of the mass of the people, he has lessened the tax-burden of the artisans, who used to

5 Khairul Majalis, 231, Persian text edited by Prof. Khalilq Nizami. Shaikh Nasiruddin, according to Professor Nizami, was born in Awadh about 1278-77 and died at Delhi in 1356. He first met Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya at the age of forty-three, i.e. about the year 1310. But he came to settle in the great Shaikh's khanqah later. The principles of the Chistic Silsilah in those days did not permit a Shaikh to call on a Sultan or his nobles, and in the authentic surviving Chishti Malfuzat (Conversations) references to the ruling king are avoided. But it was permitted to speak of dead kings, whose dynasties had vanished. The conversations of Shaikh Nasiruddin seem to indicate that Alauddin was respected (within limits) in the khanqah of Shaikh Nizamuddin.

6 A supplementary chapter on the Ma'abar campaign was added after 1313.
7 Khazainul Futuh, 12-14.
sell their commodities at a high price. He has appointed an honest ra'is (controller) over them, so that he may talk to the glib-tongued shopkeepers with the whip of justice and give the power of speech to those who had none. Wise investigators were appointed to inquire into the stone-weights (kept by the shopkeepers). Every dark-hearted shopkeeper, who transacted business with his heart of stone, was deprived by them of his stones (weights) by the blows of the whip. Their sternness and severity was so great that all the weights (stones) became (so to say) of iron and their correct weight was inscribed upon them. So that anyone who gave less weight, would find that this iron became a chain round his neck, and, if he misbehaved still further, the chain would become a sword and the extreme penalty would be meted out to him. When the artisans witnessed this severity, they did not vary the iron-regulations (mizan-i ahan), but considered them an iron fort round themselves and the inscriptions (on the weights) as a protection for their souls. You may say, in general, that the inscriptions were not on iron (measures) but on their hearts of iron.8

"Further, to ensure peace for the mass of his subjects, he has wielded his sword in such a way that from the bank of the river of the Sind to the (eastern) Ocean no one has heard the name of thief, robber or pick-pocket. Night-prowlers, who used to set fire to villages, now look after the roads with a lighted lamp. If a piece of rope disappears, it has either to be found or compensation for it given."9

"Further, since this Rain of Mercy has such a great regard for general prosperity and abundance, and for the happiness and comfort of the select as well as the commons, he has maintained the low price of grain, which is beneficial both to the residents of the cities and the villages, in days when not a drop of water has fallen from the stingy clouds. Whenever there was no water left in the white clouds and men were faced with disaster, he has created amplitude for the mass of the people by supplies from the royal granaries."10

"Further, he has established the Darul Adl (Palace of Justice), broader than the forehead of honest workers, for all manufactured goods (zarb) on which the public is dependent. He has ordered all cloth and other commodities, brought from outside, to be unpacked here and nowhere else, and once unpacked, they are not to be packed up again." Khusrau enumerates several varieties of high grade cloth,

8 Ibid., 16. It is not safe to conclude from Khusrau's figures of speech that the shopkeepers were compelled to keep certified iron-weights instead of stone-weights.
9 Ibid., 18-19.
most of which have no meaning for us—kirpas, harir, Bihari, guli baqli, shir, galim, juz, khuz, Devagiri and mahadevanagri. ‘All varieties of dry fruits (tafakkuh), which grow out of the soil, but the list of which would be too long, and all necessities of life for the select and the commons have been provided here by royal justice, so that every one, without noise or tumult, may justly buy what he considers to be best and most suitable—and may also do justice to the generosity of the king.’\(^\text{11}\)

These remarks of Khusrau may certainly be taken as confirming what his friend, Barani, was to record over forty-five years later. But it will be necessary to distinguish Barani’s facts from his conclusions. We have also to realize that he can only tell us what he saw personally at Delhi and that he leaves us to conclude what happened in the rest of the empire.

Naturally the first question that arises is the principle on which the Economic Regulations were based. Unfortunately, all medieval and modern historians have missed this point, because Barani has put this principle in the middle of his discussion of the ‘general markets’ in his Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi. ‘Alauddin’, he tells us, ‘laboured day and night to settle the production-cost (bar-award) of everything before himself—even of such paltry things as needles, combs, slippers, shoes, bowls, pots and caps.’\(^\text{12}\) But when writing the Fatawa-i Jahandari he did not get confused in details and stated Alauddin’s principle more clearly: ‘The king should settle before his own throne the prices of all things according to the principle of production-cost (bar-award).’\(^\text{13}\) Barani (or rather Alauddin) came very near to the Marxian principle that ‘prices depend upon the socially necessary labour-time’. But Marx was dealing with a ‘free-market’ which had grown up as the result of capitalism, industrial competition and modern transport; Alauddin had to impose the calculated price according to production-cost on an eastern and medieval society. The great difficulty was in fixing the price of grain; after that had been done, the prices of other commodities could be fixed after giving the merchants the profits of their investments, and the skilled and unskilled workers the wages of their labour. Alauddin’s administration had made the roads safe; there was no lack of capital, but transport was disorganized, and the merchants were accused of regrating. Alauddin, as we shall see, made regulations (mizan) for some merchants, whom the state subsidized and controlled, and this indirectly brought the whole system into a

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11 Ibid., 21-23.
12 Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi, 316.
13 Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanat, 35.
line. He did not—and could not—reduce prices by state-force; so we need not be surprised if in the time of some later rulers, who paid little attention to this matter, prices were quite as cheap. This only proves that Alauddin's calculations were correct and that he was striving for a normal market.

Alauddin seems to have left the Hindu bankers (sahas) untouched. He did not need their assistance, but their opportunities of investments and lending must have increased with the volume of guaranteed profits under the regulations (zawabit, singular zabita). There were two Hindu mercantile communities, however, who had a near-monopoly over two necessities of life—the Nayaks\(^\text{14}\) who traded in grain and the Multani merchants who traded in cloth. Alauddin converted their monopolies (based on tradition or competition) into state-controlled monopolies. His regulations must have caused them personal discomforts, but this was compensated by the fact that their business increased and their profits were guaranteed.

Before we attempt to explain Barani's account of the regulations, the currency and weights of the day have to be examined. 'The tanka of that time', Ferishta tells us, 'was one tola of minted gold or silver; and a silver tanka was equal to fifty jital or copper coins.\(^\text{15}\) The weight of this jital is not known; some say it was one tola but others think that, like the copper coin of these days, a jital was two tolas minus one-quarter of a tola in weight. The man of those days consisted of forty sirs and a sir was 24 tolas in weight.' Since later rulers insisted on debasing the currency, the silver tanka of Alauddin, with its high silver content, remained the standard of reference for

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\(^{14}\) The word, Nayak, seems to have become restricted in its meaning in later days. Alauddin uses it to mean merchants who transported grain and some of whom could place 10,000 or 20,000 beasts of burden at his disposal. Nayak is definitely the Hindi name for a Hindu mercantile community. The most prominent Nayak of the day, Malik Nayak Akhur-bek Maisara, governor of Samana and Sunam, is referred to by Amir Khusrau as a 'Hindu officer of the sublime court' (Dowal Rant, 61). The Musalmans were paralysed in the sphere of business because both law and public opinion objected to their taking interest. This meant, in practice, that Muslim merchants or industrialists would have to depend upon their own cash and could expect no credit facilities. Barani is correct about the 'sinfulness of regrating'; it was difficult to avoid regrating, or the charge of it; so the Muslim mullahs advised their flock not to deal in grain at all.

The Hindu Multani merchants were well-situated both for trade with southern India and export and import trade with foreign countries. They alone were in a position to get the Sultan the high-class silk fabrics of the Deccan and the South. Very naturally they had a big representation of their group at Delhi.

\(^{15}\) Ferishta, 114. Mr. Nelson Wright is inclined to think that it would be more correct to say that a tanka was equal to 48 jitals. But in a system of bi-metallic currency, slight variations were inevitable (Nelson Wright, 72).
two centuries and a half till the appearance of Sher Shah’s rupee. The weight of the tola has changed through the centuries, but if we take a tola as equal to 180 grains (troy), then (according to Dr. Irfan Habib’s calculations) a man of Alauddin would be equal to 25.44 lbs (avoirdupois) and 12.35 present-day sirs.

Alauddin organized the following markets in Delhi for various commodities—(a) the Central Grain Market or Mundi with subsidiary controlled grocers’ shops in every quarter (mohalla) of the city; (b) the Sera-i Adl which was the exclusive market for cloth, sugar, herbs (nabat), dry fruits (nerva), butter and lamp-oil (rughan-i chiragh); (c) the markets for horses, slaves and cattle; and (d) the general markets for all other commodities.

The ‘Mandi’ or Grain Market

The First and most difficult Regulation (Zabita) concerned the fixation of price for all varieties of grain. We are not told by what calculations this price-list was arrived at, but we are assured by Khusrau, and repeatedly by Barani, that no rise of prices was permitted. The price per man prescribed by the government was as follows: wheat, 7½ jitals; barley, 4 jitals; rice (shali), 5 jitals; mash (pulses), 5 jitals; gram (nakhud), 5 jitals; moth, 3 jitals. ‘So long as Alauddin lived, monsoon or no monsoon, there was not the slightest rise in these prices. The permanence of prices in the grain market was a wonder of the age.’

Calculating in terms of present-day sir, we may conclude roughly that for an Alai tanka (which was equal in weight but higher in silver content than the rupee of the British Indian empire) a citizen of Delhi could purchase 88 sirs of wheat, 98 sirs of gram, rice or mash and over 205 sirs of moth. Owing to difficulties of calculation, there is probably a marginal error of 15 per cent to 20 per cent in these figures. But they give a rough impression of the grain-value of the Alai tanka, and that is all that can be attempted.

The Second Regulation appertained to the appointment of Malik Qabul Ulugh Khani as controller (shuhna) of the Grain Market. He was a wise and experienced malik, who had access to the throne. He was given extensive territories (iqt-a-i buzurg) and a large number

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16 This was the official rate of the British government.
17 The term ‘Ulugh Khani’ indicates that he had been in the service of Ulugh Khan. As will be seen from the succeeding paragraphs, Malik Qabul was in charge not only of the Delhi Grain Market but of the whole grain supply system. His real function was that of a Grain Controller. An officer subordinate to him must have been in immediate charge of the Delhi Grain Market, and it is safer to assume that it is this officer who was twice bastinadoed for recommending a rise in prices.
of horse and foot added to his dignity and power.' He was given an assistant controller from among his friends; at the same time Alauddin appointed as barid (intelligence officer) of the Grain Market a responsible person who knew the Sultan's mind.

The Third Regulation\(^1\) appertained to the collection of grain in the royal (sultani) stores. 'The Sultan ordered the whole of the khiraj of the Khalisa towns in the Doab to be demanded in kind and taken to the royal stores in the city.' In Jhain (or Shahr-i Nau) and its towns, half the Sultan's share was demanded in kind. The grain was first stored in Jhain and then sent to Delhi. 'In consequence there was no mohalla in Delhi in which two or three houses were not fully stocked with the Sultan's grain.'

The Fourth Regulation assigned the grain-transport merchants to Malik Qabul. 'The Sultan ordered that all grain-transport merchants of the empire were to be made subjects of the controller of the Grain Market, and their leaders (muqaddams) with collars and chains round their necks were handed over to him. The Sultan ordered Malik Qabul to keep them before himself in the market and not to remove their collars and chains till they fulfilled the conditions imposed upon them. They were to become one body (corporation, yak wujud) by giving sureties for each other. They were to settle with their wives, children, goods and cattle in the villages on the bank of the Jumna and a shuhna was to be appointed by Malik Qabul to supervise their operations.' In normal times these transport merchants brought so much grain to Delhi that it was unnecessary to touch the royal stores.

The Fifth Regulation was a general and stern prohibition of regrating (ihtikar). The central ministry took a written deed from all its agents and officers in the Doab that they would not permit any one to regrate; and in case regrating was discovered, the officers concerned would have to answer before the throne. The regrated grain was confiscated and the regrater was severely punished. It was impossible for a merchant, a village-assignee, a grocer or any one else to regrate a man of grain or to sell a man or half a man of grain in his own house above the official rates.

The Sixth Regulation required a deed to be taken from the administrative and revenue officers of the country to the effect that

\(^1\) These regulations are not in the form framed by Alauddin. Barani is recollecting the steps taken and putting them in logical sequence. With reference to grain he has first given us a list of 8 regulations and explained each in a separate paragraphs. By an unfortunate oversight, Regulation 3 of the list becomes Regulation 2 of the explanatory paragraph and 2 becomes 3. I have followed the number given in the explanatory paragraphs by Barani himself.
they would have the grain delivered by the cultivators to the grain merchants at a cash price from their fields (without taking it to their houses). With reference to the Doab, which is nearer to the city, the central ministry, at the Sultan's instruction, took deeds from its shuhnas and mutasarrifs (revenue officers) that they would demand khiraj from the cultivators with such severity that it would be impossible for them to take the grain from the fields to their houses for the purpose of regrating, and they would have to sell it to the transport merchants at a low price...But the villagers had the option of taking as much of their grain as they could to the market and selling it there for their own profit at the official rates.19

According to the Seventh Regulation the Sultan received daily reports about the Grain Market from three independent sources—first, from the controller of the market (shuhna-i mandi), second, from the barids (intelligence officers) and, lastly, from the secret spies (munhis), who had been appointed. Nothing was overlooked. Alaeddin at the beginning of his reign was not quite illiterate. Firishta says that owing to the mass of the reports of spies he had to wade through, he acquired the capacity of reading hastily scribbled Persian with the greatest ease.20 When the market controller once or twice recommended an increase of half a jital in the price of grain, he got twenty blows of the rod. People behaved honestly because they knew that the Sultan was being informed of everything by his spies.

There was no famine in Delhi during Alaeddin's reign and no rise in prices. But the following Regulation for rationing was fixed for times when the rains failed. To the grocers (baqqals) of every mohalla, in accordance with its population, a daily allowance of grain was given from the central market. Further, the central market allowed any member of the general public to purchase half a man of grain at one time, and it also, in proportion to their dependants, supplied grain direct to nobles and men of distinction, who had no villages or lands of their own.21 Good order had to be maintained in the market, specially during times of drought; if a weak or helpless man was trampled underfoot, the shuhna in charge was sure to be punished.

19 Barani, 307-308. This option, left to the cultivator, would act as a check on the local revenue officers, if they insisted on reducing the price of the cultivator's grain beyond a certain point. According to Firishta, the cultivator could sell his grain at the official rates at the nearest town (qasbah), going to Delhi was not necessary.
21 Barani, 308.
THE SERA-I ADL

The Sera-i Adl (Palace of Justice) was the exclusive, and to a large extent a subsidized, market for manufactured commodities and merchandise brought from a long distance, from territories outside the Sultan’s dominion and even from foreign countries. These specified commodities were cloth, sugar, herbs,22 dry fruits, butter (rughan-i sutur, ghi) and lamp-oil (rughan-i chirag). They can be kept for a considerable time without being spoilt. The First Regulation dealt with the establishment of the Sera-i Adl. On the inner side of the Badaun Gate near the Koshak-i Sabz (Green Palace), an extensive piece of land had been lying useless for a long time. The Sera-i Adl was built here. Since the commodities stocked were of considerable value, the more important shops must have been strongly built. The Sultan ordered that every commodity brought by the merchants, either with their own money or with government money, was to be brought to the Sera-i Adl and not taken to a private house or to another market.23 If this order was disobeyed, or if any commodity was sold even a jital above the official rates, the commodity was to be confiscated and the seller was to be severely punished.23 ‘Owing to this order all commodities valued from one tanka to ten thousand tankas were only brought to the Sera-i Adl.’ The market remained open from the morning till the afternoon prayer (namaz-i digar), which would mean till about an hour after midday.

With reference to the Second Regulation, Barani gives us some items of the official price-list. But so far as silk fabrics are concerned, the list suffers from the fact that he gives us the prices without specifying the size; perhaps there was a standard size which he thought his readers would keep in mind. In any case, these fabrics have disappeared, and it is only worthwhile quoting their prices to assure the reader that the finest weavers were well-paid. (a) Silk fabrics—khuzz-i Delhi, 16 tankas; khuzz-i konla, 6 tankas; mashru24 shi’ri (fine), 3 tankas; shirin (fine), 5 tankas; shirin (medium), 3 tankas; shirin (coarse), 2 tankas; salahati (coarse), 2 tankas. (b) The size of the following cotton cloths are not given, but they seem to have been of the size of an ordinary bed-spread—burd (fine) with red lining, 6 jitals;25 burd (coarse), 36 jitals; astart-i Nagauri (red), 24 jitals; astar (coarse),

22 Our Yunani physicians throughout the middle ages kept prescribing many herbs, which grow in Persia and Central Asia; they just followed Avicenna in the matter.
23 Or, as Khusrav points it poetically, ‘If anyone opened his packages elsewhere, his joints were to be “opened” with the sword.’ (Khazamat Futuh 23).
24 Mashru means a fabric of mixed silk and cotton, which the Shar’at permits a Muslim man to wear.
25 ‘8 jitals’ is obviously a copyist’s mistake.
12 jitals; a chadar, 10 jitals. Further for one tanka a man could buy 40 yards of coarse, or 20 yards of fine-woven cotton cloth. (c) Other commodities—one sir of crystalline sugar (misri), 2½ jitals; one sir of coarse sugar, 1½ jitals; 3 sirs of brown sugar, 1 jital; 1½ sir of ghi, 1 jital; 3 sirs of sesame oil, 1 jital; five sirs of salt, 1 jital. 'The price of other commodities, whether coarse of fine', Barani says, 'can be estimated from the list I have given.'

The Third Regulation concerned the registration of merchants. 'The Sultan ordered all merchants of Delhi, whether Hindus or Muslims, and all merchants of the empire, whether Hindus or Muslims, to be registered with the ministry of commerce (diwan-i riyasat); and their business was to be regulated. In accordance with the royal orders, regulations (mizan) were made for all merchants. So far as Delhi was concerned, a deed was taken from merchants, who had been importing commodities into the city, that they would bring the same commodities and the same quantities of them every year and sell them at the official rates in the Sera-i Adl. The "regulated merchants" (saudagar-i mizani) brought so much merchandise from the provinces and adjoining territories that it accumulated in the Sera-i Adl and could not be sold.'

The Fourth Regulation appertained to the Multani merchants. The commodities of the Sera-i Adl were brought by 'the regulated merchants' from long distances and they would need a subsidy in case of more costly goods. The prices had been fixed in the interest of the consumers, but they could only be maintained if they were sold direct to the consumers, and merchants were not allowed to take them out for resale at higher prices. With reference to this question Barani states: 'Both the merchants of Delhi and of the provinces tried to purchase fine, high grade and costly cloth, such as could not be found in the neighbourhood, in the Sera-i Adl at the official rates and take it outside and sell it at a high rate.' Alauddin had a bureaucracy, which knew how to administer and fight. But business was not its line. So the requisite power and responsibility had to be given to a leading group of the mercantile community. 'Sultan Alauddin ordered 20 lakhs (20,00,000) of tankas to be given from the treasury to rich Multani merchants and they were made officers of the Sera-i Adl. The Multanis were asked to bring commodities from all directions of the empire and sell them at the official rates in the Sera-i Adl in such a way that they may not fall into the hands of the (ordinary) merchants.'

26 Gur, apparently, was not brought here.
27 This is the price of salt given by Ferishta (114). Barani's text here is quite illegible in all manuscripts.
their business within the margin permitted. So we need only notice Barani's price-list.

Slaves:

'The price of a female slave for domestic work was fixed between 5 and 12 tankas, and of a female slave who was needed as a concubine (kanizak-i kihari) between 20 and 30 or 40 tankas. Very few slaves were sold for 100 or 200 tankas. If a slave, who cannot now be purchased for 1,000 or 2,000 tankas, appeared in the market, no one would have had the courage to purchase him from fear of the reports of the spies. The price of a handsome young male slave was between 20 and 30 tankas. The price of a slave experienced in his work was from 10 to 15 tankas, but young slaves inexperienced in any work only fetched 7 or 8 tankas.'

Cattle:

'The best beasts of burden, which now cost 30 to 40 tankas, were priced at 4 or, at the most, 5 tankas. (Further prices were as follows.) Male cattle for breeding purposes (sutur-i jufti), 3 tankas; cows for meat, 1½ to 2 tankas; cows giving milk, 3 to 4 tankas; female buffalo for milk, 10 to 12 tankas; buffalo for meat, 5 to 6 tankas; a fat goat or sheep, from 10 to 12 or 14 jital.'

THE GENERAL MARKETS

Malik Qabul had been specially appointed as Grain Controller and the Grain Market was put in his charge. The Sera-i Adl was put under the immediate control of the rich Multani merchants. But the general markets, scattered throughout the city, were under the control of the ministry of commerce (diwan-i riyasat). Alauddin did not disturb this arrangement. But according to Barani, Alauddin with a staff working under him settled the price according to production-cost (hukm-i bar-award) for everything, however insignificant—hats, socks, combs, needles, sugar-cane, vegetables, pottage, soup, hilwa, reuri,30 varieties of bread, fish, betel-leaves, colours, areca-nuts, roses and green plants; in fact, of all things sold in the general markets. 'The price-list sanctioned by the throne was given to the ministry of commerce.'

'The shopkeepers', says Barani, 'consider themselves the sole authority for deciding the price of the commodities they sell; they are a shameless, bold, deceitful, knavish, insolent, desperate, lying and insolent group... Great kings and wazirs have failed in controlling their sales and purchases.' Alauddin gave careful thought to the

30 Hilwa and reuri are well-known Indian sweets.
selection of a proper minister of commerce and selected Yaqub Nazir for the post, and to increase his dignity he also appointed him *muhtasib*\(^{31}\) (censor) and *nazir* (superintendent of weights and measures) of the empire. Yaqub, according to Barani, was well-acquainted with the temperament of the people and the complexities of business. While 'reliable and honest' on the one hand, he was also 'hard-hearted, severe, rude and cruel'. 'Such an officer brought dignity and grandeur to the commerce ministry.' Yaqub appointed a *shuhna* or superintendent for every market, and brought dishonest shopkeepers to book by a regime of kicks, blows, chains and other degrading punishments. The *shuhnas* were directed to see to the enforcement of the price-list and to the maintenance of proper prices from day to day of commodities which could not be included in the list. 'All persons, old and young, agreed that a person so severe as Yaqub Nazir had never been in charge of the commerce ministry.' He would check the rates of a market ten or even twenty times and thrash the shopkeepers ruthlessly for charging above the price-list. These severities compelled the shopkeepers to reduce their prices, but they did not give up all their tricks, such as using false weights, keeping aside their best commodities and telling lies to young and ignorant purchasers. As a last measure Alauddin repeatedly resorted to the trick of sending children employed in the royal pigeon-house to make purchases in the market. Yaqub Nazir inquired into these purchases, and if a shopkeeper had not given full weight, he then and there ordered double the amount (of the weight due) to be carved out of the flesh of the shopkeeper. 'These repeated punishments at last put the market right.'

**Review of Barani's Account**

In writing his account of the regulations mostly from memory in the *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, Barani has given an almost exclusive importance to the city of Delhi. He has overlooked the provincial capitals, the *qasbas* (towns) and even the rural areas. The Delhi sultans, whatever their other misfortunes, did not, like the Roman emperors, live in fear of the mob of the capital or the revolt of the army. There was no reason why Alauddin should have plundered the Doab.

\(^{31}\) It is not possible to find an English equivalent for the term, *muhtasib*. Broadly speaking, the *muhtasib* was assigned the duty of maintaining the public moral life of the city in his charge, but he could not try a legal case or enter a house. The duties of a *muhtasib* in India were often combined with other duties, particularly of the *kotwal*. As *muhtasib* of the empire, Yaqub Nazir would be able to control all local *muhtasibs*. According to Mawardi (*Akhamsus Sultaniah*), the superintendence of weights and measures came within the normal duties of the *muhtasib*.
peasants for the sake of the Delhi citizens only and incurred a needless and prolonged headache. Reviewing the question of price-control in the Fatwa-i Jahandari, Barani remarks: "The king should also know that every arrangement (naqsh) in the matter of buying and selling and price-fixation, which he makes for his capital, will also appear in all his provinces. The officers and the ra'iyyat of his country will accept it and follow it." Mr. Moreland, in order to give a meaning to Barani's half-told story, thinks that Delhi was isolated from the rest of the country. 'No attempt', he says, 'was made to keep down prices throughout the country; effort was limited to Delhi, where the standing army was concentrated; and the regulations extended to a region sufficiently large to ensure the isolation of the Delhi market.' (This argument overlooks the fact that low-prices in Delhi only would not help the army, which was drawn from the whole of the country; the needs of the families of the soldiers (and horsemen) could not be overlooked; they had claims to at least half, if not more, of the wages of their bread-winners, and since they lived in all parts of the empire, in rural areas as well as in cities and small towns, the mere reduction of prices in Delhi would hardly bring any relief to them, or help the state in reducing the salaries of the horsemen. The basic fact, however, is that Alauddin did not want or desire an isolated Delhi market.) The Sultan was keen that the commodities of the Sera-i Adl should not go out of it; but in case this was done, he had no means of preventing anything from being taken from Delhi to the provinces. Secondly, if the Multani merchants were to bring commodities from distant provinces, how could they do so without exporting north Indian products to distant regions? The cash given to them would just suffice as a subsidy for bringing costly silk fabrics for the nobles and other rich persons in Delhi.

Ferishta must, therefore, be considered correct in concluding that the regulations were meant for the greater part of Alauddin's dominions; if enforced in Delhi alone, they would be meaningless, even as a means of lowering the salary of horsemen. Thus before giving the price-list of grain at Delhi, Ferishta remarks: 'The prices at Delhi were as follows; the prices in the rest of the empire can be estimated from them.' Similarly with reference to the price of cloth and commodities of the Sera-i Adl he says, 'The prices at Delhi have been noted to give an idea of prices in other territories.' Also, horsemen were enlisted at all important towns and the government would

32 Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanat, 36.
33 Agrarian System, 37. Neither Moreland nor Dr. K. S. Lal pays attention to Alauddin's basic principle that the prices of commodities should be determined by production-cost (nirkh-i bar-award).
have to pay for the price of horses at local rates; lowering the price of horses at Delhi by government order would only prevent horses reared in the provinces from being brought to the Delhi market. ‘Since Delhi was the great place for the concourse of people,’ Ferishtā says, ‘I am giving as an example the price of horses fixed there.’

Barani seems to assume that the object of Alauddin was to save not the whole of his dominions but only Delhi from famine. This has led him draft his Third Regulation in a way that insults the intelligence of the reader; for we are told that the whole of the state-revenue of the khalisa-villages of the Doab, which meant one-half of the total khalisa-produce, and half the total revenue of the khalisa-villages of Jhain, which meant one-fourth of the total khalisa-produce, was to be levied in kind and taken to Delhi. This would result in Delhi being over-stocked with grain while other cities and towns (qasbas) were left to starve. Similarly, the Sixth Regulation seems to imply that after the cultivators in the khalisa-villages had paid one-half of their produce as khiraj, they were also compelled to part with the rest at a price, so that they had no grain left for their own families. This would have left them to starve, and cultivation would have come to an end. Barani is using his own language and not quoting an official document; so Ferishtā found himself justified in rewriting the two regulations:

‘Second Regulation—The share of the revenue ministry in the royal khalisa was to be levied in the form of grain and collected and stored in the towns (qasabat); if there was insufficient grain in the market, grain from the official stores was to be sold at the official rates,...

‘Fifth Regulation—The ra’iyyat, apart from the grain needed for their own consumption, were to sell their produce at their fields; they were not to take a single grain to their houses in addition to the quantity agreed upon. The revenue-officers were to collect the required produce in an appropriate manner, so that the ra’iyyat may be paid the cash price of their grain at the fields, and may not take to their houses more than their own share; they were to have no grain for regrating.”

Thus rewritten, the regulations give us a clearer idea of what happened. The state-share of the khalisa-produce was levied in kind and stocked in all towns and cities—and not in Delhi only; and the cultivators were then asked either to sell to the grain-merchants what was over and above their needs on their fields or to take their produce

34 Ferishtā, 112-13. The second and fifth regulations of Ferishtā are the third and sixth regulations of Barani.
to the nearest town and sell it there at the official rates. The amount of grain per head required by a peasant-family could be easily calculated; in times of famine, as Khusrav tells us, the land-tax of the *khalisa-villages* was remitted. The price of grain and other commodities would, of course, be higher in Delhi than in the town and cities of the empire. The only exceptions were the subsidized high-grade silk fabrics.

The economic regulations of Alauddin are the greatest administrative achievement of the sultanat period. Ferishta writing in the reign of Jahangir (1606-7) remarks: ‘To the end of Alauddin’s reign these prices remained steady and there was no change in them owing to lack of rain or other causes that bring famine. It was a unique and remarkable achievement. Nothing like this had been accomplished before and no one can say whether it will be possible again.’35 In the early days of Firuz Shah’s reign, Hamid Qalandar summarized a statement of Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh.36 ‘In those days entertainments were common. During the days of the pilgrimages and on the last Wednesday of the month of Safar,37 it was difficult to find (sitting) accommodation in the public enclosures, in the public gardens or by the side of the tanks. There was music and dancing on every side. These feasts would cost a *tanka* or more.’ Then he recollected the plenitude of Alauddin’s time and said,

‘How cheap were things then. During those days there was no beggar without his cotton-stuffed garment. And how much did this cotton-stuffed garment (*libaicha*) cost? One *tanka* if of coarse cotton cloth and 2 *tankas* and 20 *jitals*, if of striped cotton cloth. The outer cloth (*jamgi kaminah*) would cost 30 *jitals* and the inner cotton cloth (*astar*) 12 *jitals*. The cost of cotton can be estimated from this. The wages of the tailor and the cotton-carder would be from four to six *jitals*. In these days they will not sew a stuffed-cotton garment for less than a *tanka*. (Malik) Kafur Muhrdar used to have many stuffed-cotton garments prepared and distributed among the poor.’

Barani is only partially right in his analysis of the causes of Alauddin’s success.38 Much was due to the personal attention and

35 Ferishta, 112.
36 Khaīrul Majalis, 430.
37 This is a day for rejoicing for the Musalmans in gratitude for the Prophet’s recovery from a very serious illness.
38 Barani (312) states that ‘the wise men of that time’ said that this stabilization of grain and commodities at low prices was due to four causes—(i) Sternness of the Sultan’s orders; (ii) High taxation; (iii) Lack of money in the hands of the people;
the genius of the emperor and the honesty and severity of his officers. But first, Alauddin did not, and could not, reduce prices by state-force; Barani, in contemplating Alauddin’s punishments, forgets his own repeated statements that Alauddin settled prices according to production-cost (nirkh-i bar-award). He punished defaulters and cheats severely, but that is all he did. Secondly, his practical insight told him that in economic affairs as in administration, his supervision may extend to great lengths but his direct control had to be limited. His control of the grain produce, in particular, was limited to that marginal portion the manipulation of which could keep the markets steady in the cities and towns of the empire; and the state-share of the khalisa-produce gave him that marginal portion. Had he tried to go beyond that he would have failed. Apart from the subsidized and controlled commodities of the Sera-i Adl and the punishments of the guilty, he allowed every one to work for his own welfare, provided he worked honestly. The fall of prices would give a temporary advantage to wage-earners, because wages would not fall as rapidly as prices. One has to assume that Alauddin knew this. The great advantage of his system was its security; a man would know what wages he would get and what commodities he could purchase. The tragedy lay in the fact that everything depended upon the life and health of one man. It was beyond Alauddin’s power to give to ‘the people of God’ a security which God had denied to him.

(iv) Honest and harsh-minded officers, who neither took bribes, nor had a personal regard for anyone. These ‘wise men’ apparently did not know the ABC of economics. High taxation and lack of precious metals in the hands of the people would cause a rise of prices, which no effort of the Sultan and his officers could prevent. Barani is quoting others. But did he himself understand the principle of ‘production-cost’, to which he refers as the basic principle? If you keep compelling merchants to sell below their purchase-price and do not leave the peasant enough of grain and cash to live on from year to year, both will perish, and the result will be a phenomenal rise in prices, which no state-force can prevent.