Chapter I

Introduction

I - The Advent of Muslim Rule: Political Situation.

II – The Ulama and the Rulers
INTRODUCTION

I. The Advent of Muslim Rule: Political Situations:

A remarkable part of Indian history during the medieval period begins with the Subcontinent’s contact with Islam, which had a deep influence on social, cultural, political and economic life of the country. The Arab’s first contact with India was commercial and cultural and not political. The coastline of Southern India is so near to Arabia that growth of commercial relations between the two was inevitable. Arab traders sailed to the Indian coast and carried Indian goods to the European markets through Syria and Egypt. Many of them had their coastal settlement in India and enjoyed perfect freedom to perform their religious rites and live their community life under the Hindu rulers. The Indo-Arab trade continued even after the Arabs had embraced Islam.¹

The reign of Umayyad Caliph Walid I is known for the expansion of the Khilafat. During this period great conquests were made both in the east and in the west. In the course of the conquest Central Asia, Asia Minor, Africa, Spain and Sindh were conquered under the governorship of Hajaj bin Yusuf.²

(i) Conquest of Sindh

Muhammad bin Qasim a youth of Seventeen was the first Muslim general to set foot on Indian soil. He was the

nephew and son-in-law of Hajaj bin Yusuf. The cause of this expedition was a Sri Lankan merchant ship carrying gifts and letters of goodwill for Hajaj and the widows and children of some Arab traders who had died in Sri Lanka. While on its way to Arabia it was attacked and looted by Sindhi pirates near Debul. They took Muslim women and children as captives. When Hajaj came to know he asked king Dahir, the ruler of Sindh to release the Muslim prisoners and for the restoration of the goods looted. But he received in evasive reply. Many attempts were made to punish the king along with the pirates but all efforts failed.

Finally Muhammad bin Qasim led a military expedition and attacked the kingdom of Dahir who was ultimately defeated and killed in 712 A.D. Muhammad bin Qasim then proceeded to conquer Multan, which surrendered after a valiant resistance. After the capture of Multan he advanced to the borders of the Kingdom of Kashmir. Hajaj bin Yusuf died in 714 A.D. and next the year Walid too died. He was succeeded by his younger brother Sulaiman who recalled Muhammad bin Qasim from India.3

Muhammad bin Qasim during his tenure as governor also gave privileged positions to the Brahmins. Not only in religious matters but also in administrative spheres. He treated the Hindus as “people of the book” dhimmis. When the question of repairing a damaged temple came up before Muhammad bin Qasim he referred the matter to Hajaj bin Yusuf. Hajaj consulted the ulama and wrote back declaring that so long as non muslims paid their dues to

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the state they were free to live in whatever manner they liked.⁴

When the Abbasids overthrew the Umayyads in 750 A.D. they appointed their own officials in Sindh. The Abbasid Caliph Hisham who came to Sindh in 757 A.D. carried out successful attacks against Gujarat and other neighbouring states but no permanent addition to Arab dominion were made. Arab control over Sindh slackened with the process of disintegration being accelerated by tribal conflicts among Arabs. In course of time Multan become independent of Mansura while the Hindus reestablished themselves in Alor.⁵

The Arab conquest of Sindh was of great significance. The Arabs were deeply influenced by Indian culture and civilization. Hindus and Buddhists were granted the status of dhimmis. Indian books were translated into Arabic. The early political and religious tension was also diluted by the friendly social conduct of the Muslims and liberal religious outlook of the Indians. The Arab settlements in Sindh and Multan made Islam a part and parcel of the Indian religious life. Many Indians embraced Islam voluntarily as its peaceful propagation was carried on by the Muslim saints and the ulama in other parts of India.⁶

(ii) Ghaznavids (977 A.D. – 1186 A.D.)

It was nearly three centuries later that the second phase of the conquest of India began by the Ghaznavids (Turks)

⁴ Muhammad Qamaruddin, Society & Culture in Medieval India (712-1526), (New Delhi, 1985), p.6.
⁵ Ibid , p. 6.
under the Samanids of Bukhara. The Turkish slaves gained great political and military importance. The kingdom of Ghazna founded by the Alptigin who was the slave of the Samanids Amir. Alptigin rebelled against the Samanids and established himself at Ghazna in 962 A.D. where his slave and son-in-law Sebuktigin succeeded him in 977 A.D. and laid the foundations of the Ghaznavid dynasty and proceeded to expand his dominions. Jaipal of Waihind felt alarmed over the growing power of the neighbouring Turkish state and he decided to destroy it. He, therefore, invaded Ghazna. The two armies met between Lamghan and Ghazna and Jaipal was defeated. From now Ghazna became the base of operations against India. Sebuktigin died in 997 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Mahmud.⁷

Mahmud of Ghazna sent many successful expeditions to India in his brilliant military career. Mahmud Ghaznavi began by defeating the infatigable Jaipal in 1001 and then took Kangra in 1009 A.D. Mathura and Kannauj in 1018 and 1019 and Gwalior in 1022 but his most famous invasion was the attack on the Somnath temple in 1024-1026. Mahmud enriched his capital with the wealth of all the countries he conquered and ruled over a vast Empire extending from Delhi almost to Baghdad. Returning to Ghazna Mahmud died in 1030 A.D. after an eventful reign of 32 years. Mahmud had no doubt demolished and plundered many temples but he had never converted anyone to Islam by force. In his dealings with his own

Hindu subjects he was tolerant as is evident from the employment of Hindus in his service.  

He was a patron of art and learning and a large number of scholars and poets adorned his court. It was under his patronage that the renowned Persian epic *Shahnama* was written by Firdausi. He also made Persian the state language. It was during his reign that the famous *Abu Raihan al Beruni* visited India and left a wonderful account of this country in his renowned work entitled *Kitab-al-Hind Sayyid Ali Hujwiri* known as Data Ganj Baksh was the focal point of religious studies at Lahore at this time. His fame as an author rests on *Kashf-al-Mahjub*, the oldest extant work on Sufism.

Mahmud's successor Masud 1031 A.D. maintained control over Lahore and when he heard that its governor Ahmad Niyaltigin had rebellious intentions, he sent a hindu general Tilak against him. Niyaltigin was defeated and killed.  

(iii) Ghorids (1175 A.D. – 1205 A.D.)

The Ghaznavids were followed by the Ghorids. After the death of Mahamud in 1030 A.D. there were occasional incursion into India from the Ghaznavids base at Lahore but no major territorial changes took place and India enjoyed peace for a country and a half. It was in the last quarter of the 12th century that the Ghorids turned their attention towards India.

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The real founder of the Turkish rule in northern India was Shihabuddin Ghori. He belonged to a ruling house of Ghurr in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{10}

Shihabuddin Muhammad Ghori did not confine himself like Mahmud to military raids and glory but laid firm foundations of the Muslim Empire in the Indian subcontinent. After Mahmud's death the Ghaznavid Empire disintegrated under his weak successors. The Seljuk Turks deprived them of Central Asian possessions while within Afghanistan they faced the most serious challenge from the Ghorids. There was repeated fighting between the Ghaznavids and the chief of Ghurr for dominance over Afghanistan.

After consolidating his hold over Ghazna he directed his attention towards the conquest of India. Like Mahmud of Ghazna he also led several expeditions during the course of his long reign of thirty years.\textsuperscript{11} In 1175 A.D. he occupied Multan and Uch from the Karamatia rulers. In 1178 A.D. he marched towards Anhilvara the capital of Gujarat. In 1179 A.D. he established himself in Peshawar and two years later he led an expedition to Lahore. In 1186 Mohammad Ghori defeated Khusrou Malik and took possession of Lahore and established his sovereignty there. The conquest of Lahore provided him with a base of operation for launching his attacks against Rajputs.\textsuperscript{12} Ghori also conquered Bhatinda while returning to Ghazna he

\textsuperscript{11} J.L. Mehta, \textit{op cit.}, p.76; also S. Moinul Haq, \textit{op cit.}, p.21.
\textsuperscript{12} K.A. Nizami, \textit{Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India During the Thirteenth Century} (Delhi, 1961) p. 78. See Hafiz Malik, \textit{Muslim Nationalism In India and Pakistan} (Washington, 1963). p. 16.
received information that Prithvi Raj, King of Delhi and Ajmer advanced against him with all his force at a place called Tarain. A terrible battle took place in which Muhammad Ghori was seriously wounded and was compelled to fall back upon Lahore. In 1192 A.D. the two armies met again on the battlefield of Tarain, Prithvi Raj was taken prisoner and Ajmer came into possession of the conqueror. Muhammad Ghori returned to Ghazna leaving Qutbuddin Aibak to rule in India in his absence. After two years he returned and invaded Kanauj and its ruler Jaychandra was defeated. Ghori next proceeded against Benaras and then after appointing Qutbuddin as his governor of India returned to Ghazna.

Meanwhile in 1193 A.D. Qutbuddin Aibak had occupied Delhi. In 1202 A.D. Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji a brilliant officer of Qutbuddin Aibak conquered Bihar and established himself in Bengal. Qutbuddin conquered Kalinjar. Ghiyath al Din the elder brother of Muhammad Ghori died in 1203 A.D. and he became the independent ruler and assumed the title of Muizuddin. He heard the news of a revolt by Khokhars in Punjab, he came to Punjab crushed the revolt. On his return journey to Ghazna he was assassinated at Dhanyak District Jhelum probably by an Ismaili fanatic.

The sudden death of Sultan Muhammad Ghori came as a great shock to the rising Muslim power in India but his task had been almost accomplished. Nearly all of Northern India was under the Muslim rule and in Qutbuddin Aibak,

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13 S.M. Ikram, op cit., pp. 52-55.
Iltutmish, Nasiruddin Qabacha and Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad bin Bakhtyar Khilji. He had left a group of capable generals who could complete his task. 

**(iv) Slave Dynasty (1206-90)**

Since Muhammad Ghori had no son to inherit his Empire he had passion for acquiring Turkish slaves whom he treated with affection and care. His Empire was divided among his Turkish slaves these were the early Sultans of Delhi. The line started with Qutbuddin Aibak. He was one of these trusted slave officers of Muhammad Ghori.

Qutbuddin Aibak was the first independent Muslim king in the Indian Subcontinent was originally a slave and the rulers who succeeded him for nearly ninety years were either slaves or descendents of slaves. After the death of Muhammad Ghori Aibak inherited his Indian possessions and set up as an independent ruler with the head quarters at Lahore. He thus laid the foundation of the first independent Turkish kingdom in northern India in 1206 A.D.

Qutbuddin Aibak had in his early life been sold to the Qadi Fakhruddin Abdul Aziz of Nishapur he learnt to read the Quran acquired the art of horsemanship, riding and archery. After the Qadi's death he was sold to Shihabuddin Muhammad Ghori under whom he served with distinction and in course of time was made the viceroy of the Indian possessions. He did not strike coins nor got the

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Khutba read in his name or assume the title Sultan. In 1208 AD he went to Ghazna it was there that Ghiyath al Din Muhammad the nephew and legal successor of Muhammad Ghori conferred upon him the title of Sultan.\textsuperscript{16}

During this period he did not make fresh conquest. His main objective was to establish separate entity of the Turkish state in India. In order to achieve this objective he kept himself aloof from the Central Asian politics and offered tough resistance to the rulers of Ghazna and others he avoided clash with Rajput chiefs and granted civil liberties to the Hindus in return for the payment of Jazia.\textsuperscript{17}

Qutbuddin rightly regarded as the founder of Muslim rule. He was a military leader of high calibre. Although he ruled only for a short period during which military campaigns engage much of his attention he was not unmindful of the need of putting his administration on a sound basis.

By sheer dint of merit and sustained effort he rose to the position of power and glory from humble origins. He was generous, lover of justice, and a good administrator. He cleared the roads of robbers, promoted trade and commerce and encouraged education. He was tolerant and employed many Hindus in his army and the revenue administration.\textsuperscript{18}

Qutbuddin was a man of letters. Hasan Nizami and Fakhre Mudir dedicated their books to him. It is however unfortunate for him that he could not survive long to reap

\textsuperscript{16} J.L. Mehta, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 78.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 102
the fruits of his labours but succeeded in leaving a
centralized and powerful Muslim state in India and the
standard of Islam remained for centuries in the land where
he had planted it. At his death his son Aram was placed on
the throne but he was incapable of ruling, so the nobles of
Delhi invited Iltutmish (1211-1236) to come over from
Badaun where he was governor.¹⁹

Shamsuddin Iltutmish was a slave of Qutbuddin Aibak
Iltutmish was a very intelligent administrator. Though he
began his career as a slave of Qutbuddin by sheer merit,
loyalty and devotion he had risen to positions of trust. He
was a great Muslim divine even in the days of Muhammad
Ghori his talent had been recognized.

Iltutmish had to face a very difficult task at that time
the Muslim rule in India was far from consolidated and
powerful military generals in Bengal, Punjab and Multan
challenged his supremacy.²⁰ He first consolidated his
authority in the areas of Delhi, Badaun and Benares, and
then dealt with his Muslim opponents one by one.²¹

Iltumish died in April 1236. He made secure the
foundation of the young Muslim Empire; which but for this
ceaseless and sustained effort could not have survived.

He received recognition from the caliphs of Baghdad
who in 1229 A.D. sent to him letters patent of investiture
and other insignia of royalty. This legalized his position as
Sultan and gave him a recognized status in the Muslim

²⁰ Muhammad Qamaruddin, op cit., p. 33; see also, J.D. Rees, The Muslim Epoch (Delhi, 1894),
p.62.
World. It was his uncommon intelligence, singleness of purpose and devotion to duty, perseverance, sense of integrity above all his extraordinary courage and bravery, which enabled him to achieve such greatness.

He was pious and kind hearted and strictly followed the teachings of Islam and showed great respect to the sufi, divines and doctors of religion.\textsuperscript{22}

Ilutmish was a patron of Art and learning. Because of Mongol upheavals in Central Asia hundreds of Muslim theologians, scholars and artists sought shelter in Delhi. Ilutmish extended liberal patronage to them. Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtyar Kaki who had once decided to leave Delhi and go away to Ajmer, being harrassed by the Shaykh-ul-Islam, Shaykh Najmuddin Sughra, was persuaded to change his mind by the Sultan himself. He had intimate terms with Shaykh Bahauddin Zakariya. The sultan was a man of broad views and tolerant of philosophical speculation. Ilutmish died after a long reign of twenty-six years. Ilutmish may rightly be called the greatest statesman of the early Turkish Empire.\textsuperscript{23}

Ilutmish left three sons and a daughter. His eldest son Nasiruddin Mahmud died during his lifetime and Ruknuddin was his immediate successor but was inefficient, dissolute and fiercely oppressive. So the nobles placed his sister Razia 1236-40 A.D. on the throne of Delhi. Razia was the only woman who ever ascended the throne of Delhi. The provincial governors refused at first to

\textsuperscript{22} Pakistan History Board, op. cit., pp. 124-7.
acknowledge her sovereignty but they soon paid allegiance to her when they found how she had established peace in the country. Razia's reign lasted about three years and a half. Razia strengthened her position as an independent ruler. She refused to fall under the domination of the Shamsi nobles. In order to break the monopoly of power of the Turkish nobles she began to offer high offices to capable non-Turks. Although she was astute in her dealings with men and was superior in diplomacy to her opponents but the time was not yet ripe for women rulers so circumstances were very much against her. Both Razia and her husband Altunia were killed by the forces of her brother Muizuddin Bahram.24

Her successors proved worthless and a period of confusion followed which lasted for some years. The Mongols invaded the Punjab and looted Lahore. Six years of misrule made the nobles think of a better successor. They looked around and their choice fell on Nasiruddin Mahmud (1246-1266).

Nasiruddin Mahmud was an educated and intelligent man of gentle and pious disposition who had no illusions about the new role assigned to him. He therefore did not take much interest in the state affairs partly because of political expediency he adopted an attitude of complete self surrender towards the men in power and played a puppet in their hands. He was a good calligraphist and in his spare time he copied the Quran. He encouraged learning and the college ‘the_Nasiriya’ was established by him in Delhi.

24 Pakistan History Board, op. cit., p. 128; See Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, History of History Writings in Medieval India Contemporary Historians, (Calcutta, 1977).
during his reign Minhaj-al-Siraj the famous writer of Tabqat-e-Nasiri also wrote his history during his reign and named it after him. After a reign of twenty years Nasiruddin died in 1266 and was succeeded by his able minister Ghiyth al Din Balban.\textsuperscript{25}

Ghiyth al Din Balban has been brought to Delhi as a slave but like Ilutmish and Qutbuddin had risen to power through sheer merit and ability.

Ghiyth al Din Balban was one of the forty Turkish slaves of Shamsuddin Ilutmish better known as Chahelgani or the forty.\textsuperscript{26} He belonged to a Ilbari tribe. Ghiyth al Din Balban was a wise and sagacious ruler endowed with many rare virtues and talent. He was an experienced hand in the art of government and directed the affairs of the state with judgement.\textsuperscript{27}

During Balbans’s reign Tughral Khan rebelled in Bengal and proclaimed his independence but was soon defeated and then Balban appointed his son Bughra Khan to act as governor of Bengal. Balban raised the prestige and power of the Delhi Sultanate and became famous all over Asia. Balban conducted himself as a deeply religious man. He offered the daily prayers and observed other Islamic rituals. He paid respects to the Ulama and saints and held discussions with them on Shariat and religious philosophy. His devotion to Baba Farid was great and he used to visit tombs of saints and took rounds to see mystics and scholars. He respected the sacred law of Islam.

\textsuperscript{25} Yusuf Husain, \textit{Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture} (Bombay, 1957), p. 73.
\textsuperscript{26} Aziz Ahmad, \textit{op. cit.}, p.254.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid, p.259
and was always just but could be very stern when occasion demanded. He was also a great patron of learning. Amir Khusro (Tuti-e-Hind or the parrot of India) the poet was his counsellor friend and secretary. Balban died in 1286 and was succeeded by his grandson Kaikobad. Kaikobad appointed a Samanid officer named Jalaluddin Khilji as his chief minister, but three years later when Kaikobad fell ill, Jalaluddin slew his master and ascended the throne of Delhi. The ruling dynasty of Balban thus came to an end. It also marked the end of the so-called Slave Dynasty founded by Qutbuddin Aibak.²⁸

The ablest kings of this dynasty were all slaves who had risen to eminence through ability and grit. Their achievements lay in establishing the Muslim rule over the whole of Northern India from Bengal to Kabul. They brought a new social order, which was based on equality of opportunity and status. The people saw that high office was not barred to men of low birth. If one possessed merit, worked hard to achieve one’s end and was loyal in service, promotion would not be denied. He was the first among Muslim rulers who drafted Hindu soldiers in the army, employed Hindu agents and gave them civil rights. Rebellion was however punished severely whether the culprit was a Hindu or Muslim. The Muslims established schools and encouraged teachers to come from abroad. They also tried to establish a centralized government. It is true that some of the early Mosques were built of material collected from temples, which had been demolished during

²⁸ K.B. Ahsanullah, op. cit., p. 441; see also Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, op. cit.
the early invasions, but no temple was deliberately pulled down to build a Mosque.\textsuperscript{29}

Altogether, a more spacious and a brighter era ushered in India by men who prayed in the open, treated men as equals, believed in no spiritual hierarchy and admired the individuality of man.

(v) Khiljis (1290-1320): Balban's successors were so incompetent that the dynasty of the so called slave kings soon died out and another house took charge of the infant Muslim state of India. During the party struggles after Balban's death Jalaluddin Khilji who was an inhabitant of Khalj and Turk by race, overcame the others and assumed the title and power of a Sultan.

The Turks had held the nobles of Delhi under subjugation for eighty long years so they hated and despised the Khiljis and were most reluctant to acknowledge their supremacy. Jalaluddin personally was extremely kind hearted and an expert in all military affairs.\textsuperscript{30} He was an old man of seventy when he came to the throne but he was by no means a weak king two years after his ascession the Mongols invaded India under a grandson of Halaku Khan. Jalaluddin went out to meet the 1.5 Lakh strong Mongol army and inflicted a crushing defeat on them; but afterwards allowed them to return home in peace. Thousands of the Mongols who had been taken prisoners embraced Islam and were allowed to settle down In India. He was a man of non-political temperament

\textsuperscript{29} Hafeez Malik, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{30} Mahomed Kasim Ferishta, \textit{op. cit.}, vol.1, p. 158; See K.B.A. Ahsanullah, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 441.
and his excessive mildness and humane approach to the state affairs hurt the pride of those who had brought about the khilji revolution. Jalaluddin failed to fulfill their aspirations.31

Sultan Jalaluddin Khilji was murdered by his nephew and son-in-law Alauddin Khilji in 1296. It was during the reign of Alauddin Khilji that the first conquests were made in the south. The Mongols had continued to threaten India and towards the close of 1299 they raided as far as Delhi. But Alauddin marched out with a force of 300,000 men and the Mongols were beaten back beyond the Indian Frontier. In 1306 Sultan Alauddin Khilji completed the conquest of South India he was now Emperor of the whole of India and he was truly powerful. He ruled as an autocrat. He was a semi-literate Sultan who sternly curbed the power of the nobility and did not let the ulama interfere with his political work. But he granted the theologians the status of saintly figures and men of letters with liberal patronage. All posts in the Judicial and educational establishments were reserved for them they also enjoyed sufficient freedom of action in tackling the socio-religious problems.32

Emperor Alauddin was followed by weak rulers who were mere puppets in the hands of Malik Kafur. Kafur blinded the sons of Alauddin and then began to rule with a heavy hand. His manner is however was so atrocious and his acts so barbarous that the royal guards instigated by the nobles rose against him and one night killed him. They

looked for an heir and found one son of Alauddin still alive though in prison. His name was Qutbuddin Mubarak (1316-1320) a lad of seventeen and of not too strong character. But an heir had to be chosen and he was therefore made Sultan. The choice was not however a good one and the young Sultan had not been long on the throne when he began to live a life which was in strong contrast with the one lived by his stern father. He found low companions one of whom was a low caste Hindu from Gujarat who pretended to accept Islam under the name of Khusro Khan. In the end, it was Khusro Khan who raised a private army in Gujarat of 40,000 soldiers marched on Delhi and in 1320 put the Sultan to death.33

Khusro who ascended the throne with the title of Nasiruddin committed even worse atrocities than Mubarak. He married Dewal Devi, the beautiful widow of prince Khizr Khan and gave the ladies of the royal household as wives to his low caste followers. Aiming at Hindu raj he openly scoffed at Islamic rites, during his short reign, the Quran was desecrated by his orders and Idols were setup in the Mosques, Even the Hindus were horrified at his excesses and the Muslims were aghast. They begged Ghazi Malik who was Governor of Dipalpur in the Punjab to save the Sultanate. He came down finally with his army defeated Nasiruddin Khusro assembled the nobles and asked them if they had any Khilji prince whom they wanted to put on the throne. There was no one left so they asked Ghazi Malik

Ghiyath al Din to take over the government. He agreed to do so and became the first Tughluq Sultan.  

(vi) Tughluq Dynasty (1320-1412):- Ghazi Malik ascended the throne of Delhi in 1320 under the title of Ghiyath al Din. Tughluq and laid the foundations of Tughluq Dynasty. Ghiyath al Din Tughluq was an old man but he had a fine record of more victories against the Mongols than any man in living memory. He was still vigorous and during his short reign he re-conquered Warrangal in North Deccan and in 1324 A.D. conquered East Bengal. He died as result of conspiracy in which many suspected the hand of prince Juna, the Sultan's eldest son.

Ghiyath al Din Tughluq was an able general and a benevolent ruler he was always anxious for the welfare of his subjects. He patronized literary men and religious institutions. The departments of justice were reformed and a most efficient postal service was introduced. He built a strong fort called Tughluqabad for the defence of North Western Frontier against the Mongol attacks.

Ghiyath al Din's son Juna Khan succeeded his father under the title of Muhammad Tughluq in 1325 A.D. This king was an extraordinary man. He has been described as the most striking figure in medieval history. Some have called him a great general and a mad genius. Certainly he was very learned for he could talk on philosophy or logic, metaphysics or religion, mathematics or Astronomy. In calligraphy he surpassed the most accomplished scribes.

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34 S. Moinul Haq, op. cit., pp. 52-3.
35 M.A. Siddiqui, History of Muslims (Delhi, 1997), p. 86.
He had really ideas to serve a score over kings. But he led a simple life and was modest and generous in most of his undertakings most of which had sound reasons behind them but none of them succeeded. The reason might be that inspite of his vast theoretical knowledge of things he lacked in practical sense. When so many of his brilliant schemes failed he became somewhat unbalanced. Gradually his temper grew very uncertain and his punishments cruel. In his later years he was convinced that everybody was against him.\(^37\)

The first reform, which goes to his credit, was the reassessment of taxes in the Doab he advanced loans to the cultivators, dug wells for them and took the barren land under State management.\(^38\) The Mongols with a vast force at their back invaded India once again during his reign. But unlike earlier the Emperor was unable to meet them in battle and had to buy them off by offering enormous presents. The Mongols not content with these gifts, plundered Sindh and Gujarat and left with a huge mass of treasures.\(^39\) With the Mongols always knocking at the door of his large Empire, the Sultan decided to shift the capital to a central place. He selected Daulatabad the Old Devagiri (Deogiri) as the new site. He constructed beautiful buildings a large number of houses, a broad road from Delhi to Daulatabad and then asked his people to move to the new town. He gave large grants to people to settle in the new place. He tried to be very understanding but the

\(^{37}\) J.L. Mehta, op. cit., p.195.
\(^{38}\) K. Ali, op cit., p.92.
\(^{39}\) K. B. Ahsanullah, op. cit., p.445.
scheme was a failure. After some time the capital had to be moved back. This caused enormous expenditure, dissatisfaction and misery. It was an extravagant measure as it emptied the treasury.\(^40\)

Muhammad Tughluq died in 1351 and the nobles urged his cousin Firoz to ascend the throne. Firoz Tughluq was however an able administrator and he restored some sanity to the government of the land.

He refused to disturb the Bahmani Kingdom of the Deccan as also its vassal, the principality of Warangal. The ruler of Bengal Haji Ilyas who had grown bold by the disturbances of the sultanate began to raid the central lands Firoz Tughluq therefore took the field against him and defeated him near Pandua but did not pursue his victory.\(^41\)

Firoz shah was staunch follower of Islam who governed the country according to the laws of Shariat, He inflicted punishments on the Brahmins for their misconduct and the imposition of Jizya on them was a state policy. Sultan paid regard to the holymen repaired the tombs of the sufi saints, created endowment funds for the maintenance of Khanqahs and to look after the comforts of the Faqirs or meansless devotees and all those devoted to religious pursuits.\(^42\)

Firoz built many towns, Mosques, tanks, canals and bridges he also built hospitals and many schools. He patronized learning and was a great patron of scholars and

\(^{41}\) M.A. Siddiqui, op. cit., p.102; see Saeed Akbarabadi, op. cit., pp. 235-7.
writers. The maulvis and the ulama received liberal subsistence allowances from the state. The works of Ziyauddin Barani and Shams-i-Shiraj Afif were written under his patronage. On the conquest of Nagarkot some Sanskrit works fell into his hand and these were translated into Persian under his care. He had an able minister Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul. Firoz was successful in getting the Sindhi’s acknowledge his authority. When Firoz Tughluq died in 1388 A.D., the Sultanate was in a fairly strong position, though his successors were too weak to uphold the dignity and power of the centre for long. It was during the reign of last Tughluq Sultan Mahmud that the mighty Timur burst into India. Timur glorified in conquest, which was accompanied by devastation. He left behind Khizr Khan Sayyid as governor of Multan and Lahore. Meanwhile in India the provincial governors took advantage of this opportunity to shake off their nominal dependence upon Delhi. Bengal and the Bahmani Kingdom had already become free before and now other provinces followed suit. Mahmud died in 1412 and nobles raised a man named Daulat Khan Lodhi to the throne. But after a brief reign of one year Daulat Khan was made prisoner by Timur’s governor Khizr Khan.

(vii) The Sayyid Dynasty (1414-1451):

Khizr Khan claimed to be a descendent of the Prophet so this dynasty is called the Sayyid Dynasty. Khizr Khan did not assume the royal title but professed to govern as

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43 J.L. Mehta, op. cit., p. 232; S. Moinul Haq, op. cit., p. 64.
the viceroy of Timur's son and successor Shahrukh and occasionally sent him tributes. Khizr Khan was a brave and resourceful man. He never hesitated to undertake distant and difficult campaigns when occasion arose. He was able to revive the Sultanate in the Punjab, Rohil Khand and the Doab. He not only revived the lost prestige of the Sultanate but also contributed to the increase of its life span. Khizr Khan died in 1421 and was succeeded by his son Mubarak Shah who in his turn reigned for thirteen years. He had an uneventful reign and is remembered chiefly for the Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi, which was written during his reign by Yahya Ibn Ahmad Sirhindi. Mubarak Shah fell a victim to the conspiracy hatched by his own disaffected nobles and was beheaded in 1434 A.D. Mubarak was succeeded by his son Muhammad Shah but intrigues made his rule ineffective while the real power came to rest in the hands of Bahlol Lodhi the governor of Lahore and Sindh. Finally in 1451 circumstances forced Bahlol to assume power.

(viii) The Lodhi Dynasty (1450-1526 A.D.)

Bahlol Lodhi was the first Afghan to rule in Delhi all the previous Sultans having been Turks. Bahlol Lodhi who ascended the throne in 1451 was a very pious, wise, generous and capable king. He soon made his power felt in the Doab and gradually won back all the central provinces. The conquest of Jaunpur was the chief event of his reign. His son Barbak Shah was appointed governor of Jaunpur. Bahlol also suppressed the rebellious chief in Mewat and the Doab. He died after a long reign of thirty-eight years.

47 M.A. Siddiqui, op. cit., p.137.
He loved the society of the learned, spent very little upon his personal expenditure and kept the royal treasury always open for the relief of the poor.\textsuperscript{48}

He was succeeded by his son Nizam Khan in 1489 who assumed the title of Sikandar Lodhi. He was the ablest of the three rulers of this dynasty and extended his dominion as far as Bengal. His brother Barbak Shah governor of Jaunpur who defied the central authority was forced to submit to him. He changed his capital from Delhi to Agra in 1504. Sikandar Lodhi died in 1517 after a successful reign of 28 years.

Sikandar Lodhi was the ablest and greatest King of the Lodhi Dynasty he extended the dominion of his father. He appointed Dariya Khan as governor of Bihar and then forced the rajas of Dholpur and Chanderi to submit to him.

Gradually the states of Etawah, Aligarh, Gwalior were all brought again under the sway of the Delhi Sultanate. His administration was efficient and consequently peace and plenty were the features of his reign. He was an orthodox Muslim and held rather strict views. He introduced Islamic law as a matter of state policy. He was also a patron of learning and made Sanskrit works on medicine to be translated into Persian.\textsuperscript{49}

\textbf{Ibrahim Lodhi:} - He was succeeded by his son Ibrahim Lodhi but a faction of the nobility advocated a partition of the Kingdom and placed Jalal Khan, younger brother of

\textsuperscript{48} K.B. Ahsanullah, \textit{op. cit.}, p.451.
\textsuperscript{49} K. Ali, \textit{op. cit.}, p.107
Ibrahim, on the throne. But the attempts of the nobles was frustrated by the Sultan.\textsuperscript{50}

Ibrahim was a good military commander but lacked political sense. Moreover he was very autocratic. He tried to check the growing power of his Afghan nobles who had been the very backbone of the State. They began to defy his authority and this made the Sultan more furious and perhaps universally his suppressive manners. This action provoked revolts all over the country. Dariya Khan threw off the yoke of Bihar and Daulat Khan Lodhi and Alam Khan Lodhi, the Sultan's own relatives, invited Babur to come over from Kabul. Babur came in 1526 and by defeating Ibrahim Lodhi at the first battle of Panipat founded the Mughal Dynasty in India.\textsuperscript{51}

(ix) Mughal Empire (1526-1858)

The situation in Northern India was comparatively stable during the last years of Lodhi's reign but after a number of inroads into the Subcontinent Babur became the ruler of the northwestern part of Hindustan. Babur, a descendant of Timur had begun his career as warrior and politician as a mere boy by fighting against his relatives in Afghanistan and Farghana.\textsuperscript{52}

Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur the founder of the Mughal rule in India was the eldest of the three sons of Umar Shaykh Mirza. He was the ruler of Farghana at the age of eleven. He lost his father and was called upon to succeed him to his kingdom. Babur soon found himself

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid, p.108
surrounded by enemies. His stepbrothers, uncles and maternal uncles wanted to seize his territories. Babur faced great difficulties trying to defend his throne and Kingdom. From the very time of his accession to the throne of Farghana, he struggled restlessly for the throne of Samarqand and the establishment of an Empire in Central Asia. He succeeded in the course of five years in capturing Samarqand enjoying mastery of the historic capital of his great ancestors. But soon he came into collision with Shaibani Khan who defeated him in the battle of Archains and drove him from Samarqand and Farghana. In 1504 he succeeded in conquering Kabul, which was also a Timurid State. In January 1505 he made his first attempt on India, the condition of India being favourable for Babur, he conquered Multan and returned to Kabul after a campaign of four months. In 1507 he led another expedition into India but there was disagreement among his nobles so Babur thought it unwise to move further especially as his army commanders were quarrelling and he withdrew.

After few years he set about achieving his ambition of conquering Hindustan. He invaded the North West Frontier (of present west Pakistan) in 1519 and conquered Bajaur. In order to strengthen alliances with the Yusuf Zai who lived in that region he married the daughter of one of their chief. He then crossed the Indus and annexed Behra (now in Rawalpindi district of West Pakistan). At the very time that Babar's invasion was getting underway Ibrahim Lodhi the Sultan of Delhi was experiencing difficulties with his

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53 M.A. Siddiqui, op. cit., p. 198.
nobles. The Afghan noble had become too powerful and the Sultan was taking rather strong measures to suppress them, which provoked them to rebel. One of these rebels, his own uncle Alam Khan, fled to Kabul and begged Babur to help him in getting the throne of Delhi. Daulat Khan the powerful governor of Lahore also belonged to Alam Khan’s party and he too sent messages to Babur. Rana Sanga the ruler of Mewar and a brave Rajput prince had also sent messages as they thought that they would benefit from Ibrahim Lodi’s removal. So when in 1523 Ibrahim Lodi sent his army against Babur along with his Indian allies, Babur not only defeated it near Lahore but also went on to conqueror Dibulpur. He also annexed Lahore to his Kingdom. This surprised and shocked Daulat Khan and his party and when Babur offered him Jalandhar and Sultanpur as their share they rejected the offer.\(^{54}\)

When the Uzbeks retreated Babur felt himself free at last to undertake the biggest expedition of his life. He collected his entire army and came down the fateful Khyberpass. Again his son, prince Humayun with troops from Badakshan joined him in the Punjab. The whole army then moved towards Delhi and eventually encountered the Afghan ruler near Panipat in Eastern Punjab here. On the 21\(^{st}\) April 1526, the first battle of Panipat was fought. Babur had the advantage of artillery, which was almost unknown in India, but he was outnumbered by Ibrahim’s troops. Babur however was a veteran campaigner an experienced general. The battle was contested fiercely but Babur won.

\(^{54}\) S. Moinul Haq, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79.
Ibrahim fell on the field of battle and Babur moved down quickly to Delhi and occupied it and Agra too.

After the battle of Panipat Babur had to face several difficulties in India. The Afghan nobles and Rajputs were entertaining in the hope of political supremacy in the Subcontinent and sooner and later conflicts with the Mughals was inevitable. The three battles of Painpat and those at Kanwa and Ghogra established Babur's Empire over the extensive territories from the Punjab to the border of Bengal.

Babar was deeply religious. His firm faith in God is reflected in all his actions and speeches. Babur was also something of a mystic. When he secured a large booty, he had no attachment for it. He distributed it retaining nothing for himself. He was an accomplished scholar and writer also. He had remarkable mastery over Turkish, Persian and Arabic languages. His Diwan and collection of Turkish poems is regarded as a work of considerable merit. His autobiography, which is known as Tuzak-i-Baburi, is the best of its kind.

Babur's successor was his eldest son Muhammad Humayun surnamed Nasiruddin Muhammad who ascended the throne on Dec 30, 1530 A.D. The political conditions of Indian Subcontinent at his accession were grave. The Afghans in the East and the Bahadur Shah in the West were trying to overthrow the Mughal supremacy. His own brothers created no less trouble. The Muslim rulers of

56 M.A. Siddiqui, op. cit., p.214
57 Ibid., p. 217.
Bengal and Gujarat were amongst the external enemies of Humayun. Bahadur Shah of Gujarat was a powerful and capable ruler. His persistent policy of aggression i.e. the conquest of Malwa, Rajputana, Ranthambor, Chitor etc. threatened the Mughal kingdom, he gave shelter to the enemies of Humayun and extended liberal patronage to the fugitive Afghan nobles. At first Humayun followed a conciliatory policy but when his request was not complied with, he was compelled to declare war against Bahadur Shah. Bahadur Shah was defeated but the victory of Humayun was short lived.\textsuperscript{58}

Humayun had to fight not only his brothers but more importantly the pathan leader Sher Khan Suri who had fled from babur to the eastern provinces studied in Jaunpur but then gained victory over the Sultan of Bengal. Thus Humayun's first ten years as a ruler were overshadowed by constant war with this highly intelligent warrior who showed grit and wisdom both. Sher Khan Suri defeated his army in 1539 and then declared himself the king and ruler of India assuming the title of Sher Shah Suri.

Sher Shah was one of the greatest rulers of Muslim India but his achievements are more often than not overlooked so that he figures merely as an enemy of the Mughals.\textsuperscript{59} His justice and talent for organization were unique. He was the architect of a brilliant administrative system. Sher Shah was a pious Muslim but not a bigot he was the first Muslim ruler who realized that the position of the Hindus must be consolidated by a policy of justice and

\textsuperscript{58} K. Ali, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 162-163.
\textsuperscript{59} Annemarie Schimmel, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 75-6.
toleration. His reign of five years was too short to pay attention to the many affairs. On the death of Sher Shah, his son Jalal Khan ascended the throne in 1545 under the title of Islam Shah.  

Humayun had been forced to leave Hindustan so he left for Persia in 1541 to secure the help and support of Tahmasp, the Shah of Persia. It is said that Tahmasp placed the Taj with the badge of Shiites on Humayun's head. With the Persian troops he attacked the Afghan kingdom of his brother Kamran, Kabul and Qandhar were occupied in 1545. By the end of the year he occupied major part of Afghanistan after defeating his brothers. They however continued to give him trouble until they were finally liquidated. The main army of invasion was put under the charge of Akbar, then a young lad to thirteen. Humayun reached Peshawar in 1554. Lahore was occupied without a fight in 1555. The Afghan armies suffered a defeat in the battle of Machhiwara. The credit for this victory was given to Akbar who was appointed governor of the Punjab. Humayun entered Delhi in 1555 A.D. and became the Emperor of India once again after an interval of fifteen years. He died after six months in 1556 at the age of 51 years.  

Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar, the son of Humayun was destined to be the most celebrated monarch of India he was born at Amarkot in Sindh on 1542. Akbar was only in his fourteenth year when he ascended the throne but he had a capable guardian in the Turkoman Bairam Khan who

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commanded the Mughal army and acted as prime minister.\(^{62}\) Akbar soon took the reign of power into his own hand. For many years his career was a long record of conquest and annexation. Delhi and Agra were his possessions right from the victory of Panipat. Gwalior was subdued in 1558 AD Jaunpur and Ranthambor in 1559 A.D. In 1561 A.D. Malwa was overrun and Burhanpur in Khandesh fell in 1562. In 1567 Chittor the stronghold of the Rajputs was besieged and stormed and Rajputana for a while submitted to the Mughals. Gujarat nominally a province of the Empire rebelled but was brought into subjection in 1572. Akbar entered its capital Ahmadabad and reduced Surat, Cambay and Baroda.

Bengal was another province, which held on an illusory tenure. It was still ruled by the Pathans with nominal dependence upon the Empire but when Dawud of the family of Sher Shah succeeded to the viceroyalty he rose in arms. A policy of conciliation proved unavailing and Dawud was overthrown in a battle near Jalasur in 1575 and finally killed in 1577. Akbar's authority was thus established in Bengal, though other provinces were disturbed from time to time by temporary insurrections, Kashmir was annexed in 1587 and Qandhar six years later.\(^{63}\)

He was not only a great conqueror but also a constructive and administrative genius he introduced the Mansabdari system in the Empire. The word 'Mansab'

\(^{62}\) Stanley Lane Poole, *op. cit.*, p.4.
means rank, dignity, or office and the mansabdari means one who holds the rank.\textsuperscript{64}

Akbar’s attention was not confined to a particular branch but it touched every department of the government. He was a great reformer. He introduced a number of reforms both administrative and social. He abolished the practice of enslaving prisoners of war and issued an order in 1562 A.D. banning enslavement of the wives and children and other relatives of the captured people and also that no soldier of the victorious army should in anyway molest the wives and children of the defeated soldiers. He discontinued the Tax on Hindu pilgrims and in 1564 the Emperor abolished Jizia throughout the dominion and introduced a rational system of Taxation. He reformed the coinage system and issued a large number of gold, silver and copper coins. Akbar abolished the custom of Sati, prohibited infanticide and child-marriage and legalized widow re-marriage.\textsuperscript{65}

The sixteenth century was century of religious revival in the history of the world. India experienced this revival and found in Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya, who taught the cult of Love and one great truth, the brotherhood of man, which had a deep impression on the mind of Akbar. The two movements \textit{Bhakti} and \textit{Mahdavi} might have had tremendous influence on the minds of Akbar. He wanted to make a religion that might suit his political needs too and be acceptable to his subjects professing various creeds. He wanted for this to adopt ritual eclecticism. Akbar did not

\textsuperscript{64} K. Ali, \textit{op. cit.}, p.201.
discriminate between his subjects on the basis of religion. He wanted to become an impartial ruler of all the peoples Hindus as well as Muslims and had adopted secularism as his state policy. Thus national integration was the ultimate goal of the Akbar's thought and action, which found expression in the form of Din-i-Ilahi. Akbar was opposed and criticized by the orthodox ulama for having violated the age-old tradition of the Islamic polity. About the same time he came under the influence of Shaykh Mubarak and his son Abul Fadl. The power of the theologians was badly curtailed when in 1579 Shaykh Mubarak manoeuvered them into signing a fatwa wrongly called an "infallibility decree" wherein they invested the Emperor with the power to legislate in accordance with the Shariah on any question in case there was a dispute or a difference of opinion among the theologians. Under the influence of Shaykh Mubarak and his sons he was gradually drawn from the world of politics into the domain of spiritualism he expressed eagerness to understand the fundamentals of his own religion i.e. Islam as he wanted it to be. In order to achieve this objective he ordered in 1575 A.D. the construction of Ibadat Khana or "house of worship" for the discussion of philosophical and religious problems by means of diverse opinions and finally in 1581 founded his own heretical messianic sect "the Din-i-Ilahi." He sanctioned something approaching sun worship and introduced the solar reckoning of time and the Persian months. He abolished the Kalima or Mohammadan profession of faith on the coins

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68 S. Moinul Haq, op. cit., p.105.
and on state documents. Substituted it with the simple formula Allahu Akbar "God is most great" with the response Jalla Jalalahu "Glorified be his glory" In short he set up an eclectic pantheism in place of Islam and selected from various creeds what he thought worthy of admiration just as he selected his wives from different nations and creeds.

The Din-i-Ilahi, the religion invented by Akbar has always been a subject of great controversy among scholars.

Ishtiaq H. Qureshi says, "Some mostly depending upon Badauni have reached the conclusion that Akbar abjured Islam completely and invented a new religion of his own". 69

Others have held that Akbar remained Muslim and that his deviation from the faith of his forefathers was not serious. They also pointed out that Akbar did not ask his followers to abjure Islam as had been wrongly asserted by some writers but he did ask them to abjure the orthodox form of it. Sheikh Muhammad Ikram and S.A. Rashid write that "Akbar did not claim to be a Prophet or establish a new religion. Islam however lost its position of privilege and many of Akbar's practices and regulations differed widely from the normal Muslim practices". 70

Badauni accuses Akbar of restricting the killing of animals out of considerations for Hindus. Abul Fazl ascribes Akbar's abstinence from eating meat on certain days to sufi practices.

69 S. Athar Abbas Rizvi, Religion and Intellectual History of Akbar Reign with Special Reference to Abul Fadl (1556-1605), (New Delhi, 1975), pp. 374-376.
70 Loc. cit.,
On reading Akbar Nama and Ain-i-Akbari one realizes immediately that Akbar wished to assert his very strong belief in God but his concept of the method of worship was independent of either orthodox Islam or Hinduism. He believed, as did the sufis, that God is to be grasped and worshipped by different men according to the limitations of their knowledge. God was formless (be-surat) and could not be grasped in any form except by the greatest efforts of mind.

To Abul Fazl Akbar's sun worship was designed only to satisfy the externalists who regarded some form of formal worship as indispensable for a religious life but to Akbar himself it was a way of exhibiting gratitude to the sun which he believed to regulate his affairs as a ruler. It seems also that his intimate friend Birbal had convinced him that the sun was a perfect form of divine manifestation. 71 Whatever good or harm Din or Tauhid-i - Adyan i.e. "Unity of faiths" may have done the practical side of it as shown in the abolition of all taxes upon religious non conformity was a strong influence towards consolidating the Empire by making all subjects equal in the sight of the tax gatherers. 72

The Din-i-Ilahi was condemned by some authors following Badauni as apostasy from Islam. Others regard it rather as a heresy within Islam. Akbar himself denied any claim to prophet-hood or divinity, even though the religious formula Allahu Akbar might have confused people since it

72 Stanley Lane Poole, op cit., p. 15-16.
could be interpreted, as 'Akbar is God'. With the exception of eighteen persons including one Hindu named Raja Birbal none came under its fold. The Din-i-Ilahi failed as people could not understand the mind of Akbar and hence they failed to appreciate his new faith over and above the divine faith. It did not receive the active support from the imperial authority. Akbar never asked his followers to accept it nor made any attempt to force his religion on others in the Empire and it disappeared with his death.

Akbar was not only a conqueror and an administrator he was also a great patron of arts and literature. Among the great historical works of this age are Akbar-Nama and Ain-i-Akbari of Abul Fazl and Tabkat-i-Akbari of Nizamuddin Ahmad and the Muntakhab-ut-tawarikh of Badauni. Tulsidas the author of Hindi Ramayana and the greatest of the Hindu poet flourished in this period.

The last years of Akbar's long and successful rule were overshadowed by the rebellion of his favourite son Salim and especially by this son's being responsible for the assassination in 1602 of Akbar's faithful friend Abul Fazl while on his way to his post in the Deccan. Akbar never forgave his son. But when he died in 1605, Salim succeeded him as Jahangir.

Salim ascended the throne in the fort of Agra on Nov 3 1605 with the title Nuruddin Muhammad Jahangir padshah Ghazi. Born of a Rajput mother the princess of

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73 Annemarie Schimmel, op. cit., pp.82-83.
74 Aziz Ahmad, op.cit., pp. 209
75 Ibid, pp. 210-213.
76 Annemarie Schimmel, op. cit., p. 88.
Jaipur, Salim was the eldest son of Akbar. He was the only surviving son at the time of his father's death. The other two sons' Murad and Daniyal having died few years earlier. His father named him Salim and called him Shaikhu Baba. He had more than once broken into open insurrection against his father. He was also suspected of having instigated the murder of Abul Fazl who was Akbar's trusted friend and minister. A man of loose morals he wasted a major part of his time in eating, drinking and making merry in the company of the spoilt children of the Mughal aristocracy and flatterers. He was possessed by a violent and arbitrary temper. He was notorious and a habitual drunkard. 

Jahangir's accession marked a spirit of reaction in favour of orthodox Islam in protest against the heterodoxy of Akbar's reign. Though he was not a brilliant person like his father, he was intelligent enough to respond to the spirits and demands of the Muslim society and also to maintain the liberal and beneficial aspects of the policy of his predecessor. As regards religious beliefs Jahangir seems to have been indifferent, he was neither an atheist nor an eclectic. He was a sincere believer in God and the saints, living or dead, Hindus or Muslims. He was tolerant to all religions and followed the "Sulhi Kul" policy or friendliness to all of his father in the Empire.

He inaugurated his reign by promulgating twelve edicts for the benefits of the people and setting up the

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77 Stanley Poole, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
famous chain of justice to enable the wronged to approach him for redressal.\textsuperscript{80} He repealed a number of cesses like tamgha or mir bahri\textsuperscript{81} and announced measures for the development of trade and commerce. He ordered the government officials not to open the merchant's bales without their knowledge or permission nor resort to any sort of harassment to the people. They were not to take possession of the property of the citizens. Jahangir forbade the manufacture and sale of wine and intoxicating drugs throughout the Empire. He also banned the slaughter of animals on many a day in the year including two days in every week Sundays and Thursdays. The public welfare activities were stepped up with greater vigour and zeal and sarai’s masjids and wells for drinking water were constructed along the highways and civil hospitals were established in big towns and public charities were extended. Jahangir ordered the abolition of inhuman corporal punishment like the cutting off of nose and ears of the culprits. The government officials were instructed not to confiscate the property of the deceased if his heirs and successors could be traced out otherwise his property should be acquired and utilized for the construction of public buildings.\textsuperscript{82}

During the reign of Jahangir a good number of foreigners came to India and tried to cultivate the friendship of the Emperor in order to secure commercial

\textsuperscript{80} M.A. Siddiqui, \textit{op. cit.}, p.279
\textsuperscript{81} Tamgha: It is the urdu name of a medal used to be called so in the Medieval times.
Mir Bahri: The admiral of the navy called so in the medieval times.
\textsuperscript{82} J.L. Metha vol II \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 277-278.
privileges and concessions.\textsuperscript{83} Jahangir's marriage with Nurjahan is one of the most romantic and important events in the history of the Subcontinent. For fifteen years Nurjahan stood forth as a strong and the most striking personality in the Empire. He was no doubt influenced towards a healthier mode of life by his wife Nur Mahal, afterwards called Nurjahan. Her original name was Mehr-un-Nisa. She exercised deep influence on the personal life of Jahangir and played a significant role in shaping the events of his reign. All the fundamentals of a secular and liberal state policy evolved by Akbar were properly appreciated and left unchanged by Nurjahan.\textsuperscript{84}

Nurjahan's influence on Jahangir and her emergence as a power behind the throne proved beneficial on the whole for the Mughal Empire although, in the long run, it produced some bad results too. Nurjahan was a generous and kindhearted lady. She took keen interest in the distribution of royal charities and she ordered the construction of Masjids, Sarais and charity houses. She created religious endowments and granted liberal stipends and allowances to outstanding scholars, artists and saints. She gave money for the marriage of orphan Muslim girls and protected the weak and the oppressed. She was an asylum for all sufferers and helpless girls. Nurjahan was the beloved wife of the Emperor who put her name on the coins. She acquired unbounded influence over her husband. She became in all but in name the undisputed sovereign of the Empire and the king himself became a tool

\textsuperscript{83} K. Ali, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 227.
\textsuperscript{84} Stanley Lane Poole, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 25.
in her hands.\textsuperscript{85} Taking advantage of her husband’s weakness, she fully made use of her power. Jahangir died in 1627 and he was buried in Lahore and near him lies his renowned Empress Nurjahan.

Jahangir was a patron of art and Literature. For his love of paintings Jahangir is called the prince of artists. His \textit{Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri} is a brilliant proof of his literary attainments. The last years of his reign had been clouded by intrigues for the succession and his death was a signal of usurpation.

Jahangir had five sons: Khusru, Parvez, Khurram, Shahryar and Jahangir. Khurram, the third son of Salim was born of a Rajput princess. Jahangir gave him later the title of Shah Jahan in 1622. He succeeded Jahangir to the throne as the most magnificent monarch, whose reign has been described as the golden Age of the Mughal period.\textsuperscript{86}

Shah Jahan was a pious Muslim and was a disciple of the great reformer Mujaddid-i-Alf Thani. He looked upon himself as the defender and champion of the orthodox faith. His reign marks a reaction against the liberal policy of Jahangir. He aimed at regulating the court and directing the state policy in accordance with the teachings of his great preceptor and the traditions of Islam. Shah Jahan began the reform by creating a true Muslim atmosphere at the court. He removed many un-Islamic practices of his predecessors. He abolished the custom of prostration before the Emperor, a practice that prevailed in the time of

\textsuperscript{85} H.G. Keene, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 64.

\textsuperscript{86} J.L. Mehta, vol. II \textit{op. cit.}, p. 130.
Akbar. Its place was taken by Chahar Taslim, which involved bowing and touching one's forehead, eyes and arms four times. The ulama were exempted from this and they offered ordinary Muslim salutation.

Shah Jahan wanted to defend the faith against the encroachment of other religious and of heretical ideas. He made apostasy from Islam a crime. He stopped the Hindus of the Punjab and Kashmir from marrying Muslim girls and converting them to Hinduism. Shah Jahan disapproved the heretical Raushaniya sect of the Afghan tribes and induced its leaders to give up their ideas. By his regulations and actions Shah Jahan aimed at promoting the cause of Sunni Islam and creating a Muslim. But he was tolerant towards the non-Muslims. There was no instance of their forcible conversion to Islam. They freely performed their religious rites and ceremonies. As a matter of fact Shah Jahan wanted to maintain uniformity and solidarity in the Muslim community without in anyway injuring the interest of the Hindus either in matters of their religious rights or of their position in government service.

In the conquest of Deccan Shah Jahan was prompted by political and religious need and advantages. He could not tolerate the existence of the independent Kingdoms on the border of his Empire and felt it his duty at the same time to exterminate the Shia heretics in the Deccan. In this object circumstances favoured him and he gained more success than his predecessors.

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87 M.A. Siddiqui, op cit., p.292.
88 Ibid, p.293.
The campaigns of Shah Jahan against Qandahar cost the Mughal Empire heavy losses of men and money. Its failure not only affected the prestige of Mughal Empire but also stirred the ambition of the Persians whose fear of attack on India would henceforth haunt the minds of the Indian rulers throughout the 17th Century.90

Shah Jahan inherited a vast but well consolidated Empire from his predecessor. The uniform system of administration evolved by Akbar for the country had attained maturity and the functioning of the state machinery had become almost automatic.91

The reign of Shah Jahan marks an epoch in the history of the Mughal Empire with the exception of one or two rebellions. His period enjoyed uninterrupted peace and order and the Mughal Empire attained the zenith of prosperity and affluence.92 The fabulous wealth of India attracted a stream of foreign visitors from across the seas who were dazzled by their magnificence and the grandeur of the Emperor. Shah Jahan stands unrivalled in Arts and Architecture. The Taj Mahal which he erected over the grave of his beloved wife Mumtaz on the banks of Jamuna is one of the finest structures in the world. Other were *Diwan-i-Am* the *Diwan-i-Khas* in the fort of Delhi. The Jam-i-Masjid in Delhi and the Moti Masjid at Agra were famous throughout the world for their artistic excellence and beauty. In literature and the art of painting Shah Jahan made a marked progress. He was a liberal patron of letters

and learning. Many distinguished scholars enjoyed the patronage of the Emperor like the celebrated historians and poets Abdul Hamid Lahori, author of the *Padshanama*, Amin Qazwini author of another *Padshanama*, Inayat Khan, author of *Shah Jahan-Nama* etc and also some Sanskrit works were translated into Persian. Inspite of the remarkable display of grandeur and greatness we find in his reign the germs of decay, which eventually led to the disintegration of the Empire.  

Shah Jahan did a great disservice to the Mughal Empire when he gave opportunities to the ambitious Maratha chiefs to acquire territories and become strong at the cost of these rapidly declining states. In the later years of his reign Shah Jahan made a blunder in leaving the reigns of his government in the hands of Dara Shikoh. He would have saved the Empire from civil war if he had asserted himself as Emperor after his recovery from illness.  

Shah Jahan had four sons and two daughters, Dara Shikoh, Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad Bakhsh. Dara Shikoh was the governor of Punjab, Shuja of Bengal, Aurangzeb of the Deccan and Murad Bakhsh of Gujarat. In 1657 Shah Jahan fell ill and he nominated his favourite eldest son Dara Shikoh as his successor. To consolidate his position Dara took some unwise steps. He broke all communications with his brothers. These activities of Dara precipitated a civil war among the brothers who had to fight for the throne rather in their self-defence. There was no fixed rule of...
hereditary succession among the Mughals as every brother considered the other as a rival claimant. Aurangzeb thus achieved victory and succeeded to the throne.\textsuperscript{95} "It was believed that if Dara who was incorrigibly inclined towards Vendantism and adoption of Hindu culture would come to power, Islam would have either suffered a temporary setback or its fate would have been sealed for ever in the Subcontinent".\textsuperscript{96}

Muhyuddin Muhammad Aurangzeb styled, Alamgir was the last of the great Mughals of India. He was the third son of Shah Jahan from his wife Mumtaz Mahal. Aurangzeb showed keen interest in literary education and acquired proficiency in Persian, Arabic as well as Chaghatai Turki. At a very young age he mastered the Holy Quran and Hadith.\textsuperscript{97}

He ascended the throne in 1659 under the title Abul Muzaffar Mohyuddin Muhammad Aurangzeb Alamgir Padshah Ghazi. Like many rulers he started his reign by taking some measures to heal the wounds caused by the civil wars. He abolished many illegal taxes in order to alleviate the sufferings of the people, restored the Muslim Lunar Calendar and discontinued the innovative era of Akbar to satisfy the Sunni Muslims.\textsuperscript{98}

Aurangzeb was an orthodox Sunni and lived a pious and virtuous life strictly according to the Sunni principles. He was no hypocrite for he observed the commands and

\textsuperscript{95} S. Moinul Haq, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 118.
\textsuperscript{96} K. Ali, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 241.
\textsuperscript{97} J.L. Mehta, \textit{op.cit.}, vol. II p. 347.
\textsuperscript{98} K. Ali, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 253.
prohibitions of the sacred law of Islam throughout his long reign. The religious history of his house is well known. Akbar had abjured Islam and invented a religion of his own; his son Jahangir remained nominally a Muslim but habitually transgressed the law of Islam and inherited so much of his father’s taste as to encourage discussion and to dabble at times in Christianity and Hinduism.\(^9\) Shah Jahan was more orthodox than either his father or his grandfather. He abolished Akbar’s most offensive institution of Sijda or prostration before the Emperor, as he believed that prostration was due to God alone.\(^10\) He refrained from stamping the symbol of Islam and the names of the orthodox caliphs on his coins. He discontinued the celebration of the Pagan festival of Naurus as he believed that it was an innovation to the orthodox practice of Islam. Aurangzeb re-imposed Jizya on the non-Muslims in 1679. In an Islamic state military duty was compulsory on all Muslims and the non-Muslims were exempted from military service Akbar abolished this tax. Aurangzeb thought it contrary to Islam to abolish Jizya, as he could not enforce military service on the non-Muslims.\(^11\) The Muslims paid the Zakat, the non-Muslims paid the Jizya. Those non-Muslims who were poor or were invalid were exempt from Jizya. Besides, the minors, women and old people as well as government servants and soldiers were also exempt.\(^12\)

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\(^10\) Ibid p. 328.
\(^11\) S.M. Edwardees, HLO Garrett, op. cit.
\(^12\) S. Moinul Haq, op. cit., p.125.
On accession to the throne he introduced a number of reforms to raise the standard of morality. He knew the Quran by heart and was well versed in theology, logic, and Muslim philosophy. He wanted to govern the state according to the Islamic law. He took nothing from the government exchequer for his personal expenses.\textsuperscript{103}

Aurangzeb was tolerant to other faiths too but not so much as Akbar and Dara who in order to achieve their ulterior political aims concealed their religious identities and even subscribed to the religion of the ruled. Since the days of Akbar the tie of Islam had been slackened to a large extent due to their liberal policies. Aurangzeb was a strict Muslim who for his simplicity and piety was regarded as "Zinda Peer" by the Muslims in India. He wanted to bring back the waning glory of Islam without disturbing the fundamental rights of others and hence he was opposed for obvious reasons by many to whom he appeared as the persecutor of Hinduism.\textsuperscript{104}

This Hindu feeling soon manifested itself in the reign of Aurangzeb. The Jats of Mathura rebelled in 1669 and the Satnamis a religious sect of Hindus revolted in Narnol in 1672. Their rebellion was suppressed. A few years after, the Rajput also rose in arms against Muslim rule 1673. The Maratha leader Shivaji who started life as brigand took advantage of the weakness of the Sultanates of the Deccan started wars in the Mughal territories. Moreover the Sikhs had also begun to defy the Muslim authority since the time of Jahangir. They were organized

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid, pp. 134-135.
\textsuperscript{104} K. Ali, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 261.
into a military community by Guru Har Govind. In the reign of Aurangzeb the ninth Guru Tegh Bahadur raised the standard of revolt against the imperial authority. He was executed but his son Govind Singh created serious troubles for the Emperor. The Sikhs had received generous treatments from the Mughal Emperors. Inspite of this they were seized with the ambition, to establish a sovereign state of their own.¹⁰⁵

Alamgir foresaw the danger to the Muslim Empire. He felt that the Hindu support was unreliable. He fully realized that the Muslim Empire must derive its source of strength mainly from the Muslim community, so he took steps to bring solidarity among the Muslims. Alamgir's re-imposition of jizya was not dictated by a desire to persecute the Hindus as some historians have tried to argue.¹⁰⁶ He continued to appoint Hindus in large numbers in the service of the state. This clearly proves that Aurangzeb treated the Hindus with fairness and consideration. Long before its re-imposition, the Hindus, such as the Jats, Satnamis the Marathas and the Rajputs and also the Sikhs had begun hostilities against the Muslim rule.¹⁰⁷ They had thus proved that inspite of all the favours of the Mughal Emperors they disliked the Muslim rule. Aurangzeb failed to crush the Maratha war of independence inspite of his best efforts. In 1706 he at last gave up the struggle and ordered the return of the imperial camp to North India.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p.310
¹⁰⁷ Ibid, pp. 311.
With the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 Mughal rule in India may be said to have ceased to exist as an effective force. None of his successors proved men of any ability. The throne was occupied by a chain of weak rulers under whose feeble rule the disintegration of the Empire rapidly proceeded.\(^{108}\)

Aurangzeb was undoubtedly one of the greatest rulers of Indian Subcontinent. He was gifted with courage keen intellect and physical power. Himself an eminent educationist he was a liberal patron of education and established many educational institutions. He had also good knowledge in Arabic and Persian literature. The *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri* was compiled under his direction. He regarded the public Treasury as a sacred trust and did not spend it for his own use. He met his personal expenses by writing the Quran and making caps. He was never a slave to his passion and completely abstained from indulging in prohibited foods drinks and dresses. As such he was simple and unassuming in private life.\(^{109}\)

Aurangzeb’s death was followed by a bloody civil war for succession between his three surviving sons, the worst example of which had been set by Aurangzeb himself. His eldest son Muazzam walked over the dead bodies of his young brothers, Azam and Kam Bakhsh and many others of the Royal blood to claim the throne at the age of sixty four styled as Bahadur Shah.\(^{110}\) He adopted a kind and conciliatory policy towards the Marathas and the Rajputs. A

ruler of average ability he maintained the integrity of the Empire during his short reign. During the reigns of Jahandar Shah (1712-13), Farrukhsiyar (1713-19), Rafi-ud-Darjat (1719), Rafiud-Dawla (1719), and Muhammad Shah (1719-48), there were intrigues and conspiracies of the nobles for power at the court. Consequently, the Empire disintegrated due of the ambitions of the leading nobles. Some of them accepted the help of the Marathas in re-establishing their power. They did not reap any advantage from such treachery, but only created confusion in the Empire. The great Persian general Nadir Shah also took this opportunity of striking a blow at the Empire and seized Kabul and the Punjab 1739.\textsuperscript{111}

There is no doubt that the Europeans entered India basically with commercial motives in mind. The Mughal rulers welcomed them as they felt that commercial relationship would be advantageous. However, they settled down in India and found the political conditions a chaotic.\textsuperscript{112}

It was a time when the Mughal Empire was disintegrating and subahdars had established independent rules in the provinces. With the exception of a few all the later Mughals were weak, inefficient and corrupt. Their weakness and inefficiency gave rise to different factions like, Iranians and Turanians,\textsuperscript{113} and the Mughal crown became the football of a risky game between the Hindustani and Turani teams at the Mughal court and the

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\textsuperscript{111} MA. Siddiqui, op.cit., pp. 317-8.
\textsuperscript{112} Mujeeb Ashraf, Muslim Attitude Towards British Rule and Western Culture in India, (Delhi, 1982) p.18.
\textsuperscript{113} K. Ali , op. cit., p. 284.
Emperor remained a helpless spectator. They sidelined the imperial interests in pursuit of their own gains. They scrambled for power when the enemies, the Marathas, Sikhs and others were creating confusion within the Empire. To weaken their own rivals these factions even made large concessions to the enemies. The subahdars setup dynastic rule in the provinces like Oudh, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Hyderabad and Rohilkhand, which became independent under Saadat Ali Khan, Ali Vardi Khan, Nizamul Mulk and Ali Muhammad Khan who owed nominal allegiance to the Emperor. The weakness of the imperial authority invited attacks from different Quarters. The Marathas took the opportunity of reviving their power and creating confusion throughout the Subcontinent. Under the leadership of Peshwa Baji Rao they advanced up to Delhi. Nadir Shah the Persian king invaded and sacked Delhi and after him Ahmad Shah Abdali made his appearance on the stage and dealt a deathblow to the declining Mughal Empire. This political decadence and disorder incited the French and English merchants to conceive political ambition.

The Battle of Plassey was decisive in the history of India. It made the English supreme in Bengal and paved the way for the permanent establishment of their power in the Subcontinent. The British by defeating Siraj-ud Dawla in the battle of Plassey in 1757 A.D. became the master of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Afterwards they defeated the Mughals and captured Delhi. Thus after 331 years the

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Empire of Babur met its end in the hands of the British\textsuperscript{116} and the supreme control over the administration passed into the hands of the English while the Nawab became a figurehead. Appointment of Europeans to the higher military posts became a common practice of the successor states of the Mughal Empire. After establishing their political hegemony the English began to destroy the economy of Muslims the various measures adopted by the company from the permanent settlement of 1793 under Cornwallis the resumption of the Land Act badly hit the economy of the Muslim Aristocracy. The English deprived the Muslim jagirdars of their power to collect government revenue on the pretext of corruption and appointment their own men as collectors in their place.\textsuperscript{117} All sort of employments big and small are being gradually snatched away from the Muslims and bestowed on men of other faith races, particularly the Hindus. In short the Muslims have now sunk so low that even when qualified for government employ they were studiously kept out of it by government notifications.\textsuperscript{118}

Christian missionaries arrived in India following East India Company's drive to convert Indians to Christianity. In the beginning, as long as the company refrained from interfering in the religious affairs of the Indians, the missionaries were not allowed to preach. However later on, when the company stabilized as a political power, it allowed the missionaries to come and preach openly.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{116} Mohammad Qasem, op. cit., p.374
\textsuperscript{117} Annemarie Schimmel, op. cit., p.178.
\textsuperscript{118} W.W. Hunter, \textit{The Indian Musalman} (Delhi, 1969), p. 167.
The Muslim rulers had not only tolerated the Christians but also allowed them to flourish and disseminate their religious teachings and culture. In contrast the Christians rulers sought to uproot their Muslim patrons. They were not satisfied merely with establishing their political mastery over India by disguising themselves as vassals of the Mughals. They wished to establish their religion and their civilization as superior to Islam and Islamic civilization. In the beginning the British continued the Mughals Judicial system in its original form. In course of time certain changes were introduced in the system and gradually the Shariah law yielded place to common law with consequent reduction in terms of numbers and powers of Mughal functionaries in the new judicial system. Thus with every change whether in the land tax collection system or in the judicial system opportunities of employment for Muslims went on decreasing. It was under these circumstances that Shah Abdul Aziz the illustrious son of Shah Waliullah gave a Fatwa in 1803 A.D. declaring India a Dar-ui-Harb. The Fatwa that was being quoted extensively started a movement, which further embittered relations between the Muslim and the British. So they began to even more crush and demoralize the Muslims in every aspect of life-social, political, economical, educational as well as religious.

They, on the one hand, curtailed or cut down the awqaf (endowments), of Madaris-i-Islamiya and, on the

other hand, encouraged and provided support to the missionaries. On 7th March 1835 William Bentinck, the governor general, passed a resolution in favour of the English language and western education. By this resolution all the funds for education would be appropriated for English alone.\textsuperscript{122} The Muslims could not accept the English system of education as it was considered un-Islamic. The Hindus whole-heartedly accepted this education and learnt English. During the Muslim rule, Persian was the state language but the Britishers soon replaced it by English and as the Muslims did not accept it they were deprived of state services.\textsuperscript{123}

The defeat of the secular and political powers at the hands of the British colonialists left a vacuum of leadership in India, which was filled by the ulama who undertook the task of preserving the identity of the Muslim community in the Indian Subcontinent. Their first response was to reform and purify Islam from un-Islamic practices. The reformist ulama began their struggle first against the local Indian customs, which in their opinion had for long polluted Islam.

The Faraizi movement in East Bengal is an example of such reformist movements. It was founded by Haji Shariatullah who preached among the illiterate peasants and asked them to adhere to the obligatory duties of Islam. The second was a militant movement led by Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, which started from Northern India and ended in the North West Frontier province fighting against the Sikhs and

\textsuperscript{123} K. Ali, \textit{op.cit.}, p.182.
Pathans. A similar movement was started in the West Bengal by Titu Mir a disciple of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, who won the support of the Muslim peasants exploited by Hindu landlords to create in them a separate sense of identity. He also followed the same methods, which were used by Haji Shariatullah.\textsuperscript{124}

The British who had become a powerful political force in India in the eighteenth century, had posed new cultural and educational challenges for Indians. Their hostile attitude got further accentuated after the Mutiny of 1857. They believed that in the Mutiny Muslims played vital role so it has turned the Muslims as the main accused in the eyes of the British.

As a result in the post 1857 period Muslims exclusively were persecuted. They were imprisoned, tortured, hanged and their properties were confiscated without any consideration of them being rebel or loyal, young or old. Not only this they showed kind attitude towards the Hindus who replaced the Muslims in Government and administrative services.\textsuperscript{125}

The catastrophic events of 1857 led to the termination of Mughal rule and the establishment of the British rule in India. The Muslims of North India were the worst sufferers and they for the first time realized the need of the time of taking up the new challenges more seriously. Two responses were therefore offered by them in the form of Deoband and Aligarh. Deoband stood for the continuance

\textsuperscript{124} Mubarak Ali, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 74-75.
\textsuperscript{125} S. Abid Husain, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 40.
of the traditional educational set up during the Muslim rule—whereas Aligarh expoused the cause of the new education system introduced by the British. In 1858 when the British government had put down the revolt and the reign of terror was established over the country these ulama came together and reviewed the situation. They decided to change the field of their activity and to transfer their mission from the battlefield to the school. Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi established a religious seminary at Deoband to be used as a centre for propagating their religious and political ideas drawing their inspiration from Shah Waliullah's reformist ideas.

(II) The Ulama and the Rulers

The word 'ulama' is the plural of 'alim' which itself is derived from the Arabic word 'ilm' (Knowledge). The word ulama is synonymous with the experts of religious knowledge. The ulama hold an important position in Muslim society. Their influence has varied from time to time in accordance with the prevailing social and political conditions.

During the Sultanate period rulers integrated the ulama in the state structure and appointed them to the highest post of Sadr al-Sudur (head of religious affairs) Qazi al-Quzzat (Chief of Judges) and Shaykh al-Islam.

In 1248 the post of the Sadr-i-jahan was established whose duties were to look after the morals of people,
maintain justice, persuade Muslims to say their regular prayers and supervise religious endowments. All teachers at Mosques were also appointed by the state. Madrasas were, also founded to accommodate the ulama. The result was that the ulama cooperated with the state and served the interests of the rulers.

The Sultans outwardly maintained good relations with the ulama respected them publicly attended their sermons, invited them to the court, took part in religious discussions and awarded them with precious gifts from time to time. However, they never allowed them to interfere in state affairs, for example, when a delegation of the ulama asked Ilutmish to treat Hindus as unbelievers and not as Zimmis and further demanded that in case of their refusal they should be massacred, the Sultan diplomatically handled the problem and told them that as the state did not have enough swords to kill all the Hindus he would keep them in a state of humiliation. Although Balban behaved with the ulama respectfully. The ulama kept silent on all his un-Islamic state of policies and praised him as the patron of religious scholars.\(^\text{129}\) Alauddin Khilji pleaded ignorance of religious law and pursued his policies in the light of the exigencies of the state and the welfare of the people. He reduced the influence of ulama who had become a power in politics in the earlier regimes.\(^\text{130}\) Muhammad bin Tughlaq was himself a religious scholar, therefore he tried to use the ulama for the fulfilment of his schemes. Those who supported his policies were rewarded.

\(^\text{130}\) K.A. Nizami, op. cit., p. 105.
opposed him were either executed or imprisoned. To weaken the influence of such ulama he exiled them to far off places on the pretext of preaching Islam.

However generally the ulama fully supported the state and in return demanded from the rulers the suppression all religious minorities against the Sunni orthodoxy. They also made attempts to counter the influence of the sufis and curb their activities. They openly criticized the sufis for violating the Shariah and indulging in acts which were in their opinion un-Islamic e.g. Nizam-al-din Auliya the famous Chishti saint was asked to appear before a panel of ulama at the court and explain the 'Sama' (religious music) which was regarded by them as being against the Shariah.

Akbar was a religious man at the time of his accession. He sometimes spent the whole night in the praise of God. He observed the dogmas of his faith and never deviated from the path of the Shariat. He paid due respects to the ulama for their piety and religious knowledge. He believed in Pirs and Fakirs and visited their shrines several times. He visited also the tomb of Moinuddin Chishti. In 1574 Akbar laid the foundations of the Ibadat Khana (house of worship) in order to know more about religion. In the beginning only selected ulama were invited to the Ibadat Khana later on jurisprudential differences engaged the ulama in bitter quarrels and religious discussions, which developed Akbar's interest more and more, and he started to spend most of his time in

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132 Shiekh Muhammad Ikram, *op. cit.*, p 87
the Ibadat Khana. The two great religious scholars at the court Makhudun al Mulk and Abdun Nabi accused each other of being heretics. This divided the ulama into two groups and each group tried to humiliate the other. Akbar was disgusted by these acts of the ulama he therefore lost all respect for them.

Akbar’s Hindu wives and his courtiers all criticized the ulama that they crossed the limit of their authority so Akbar realized that in order to assert his authority he had to curb the power of the ulama. He had also reached the conclusion that the ulama were a great hindrance to his policy of religious tolerance. Akbar decided to root out the ulama’s influence from the affairs of state. He adopted three methods. First he ordered the arrest of those ulama who issued Fatwas and urged people to rebel against him. Some of these ulama were secretly killed under his orders. Second, the ulama of the Punjab who opposed him were exiled and scattered throughout India in order to uproot them and break their influence. Third, Akbar called all the well-known ulama to the court and personally interviewed them. Those who assured him of their support and declared their loyalty were granted Madad-i-Ma’ash lands in exchange he allowed them to retain their religious views as they liked but did not allow them to interfere in matters of the state and oppose his policies.

The significant impact of Akbar’s policy was that he uprooted the power and influence of the ulama and completely ousted them from the state structure. The result was that Mughal rule was consolidated on the basis of
secularism, tolerance, and pluralism. Akbar completely controlled the ulama, successfully curbed their powers and authority and reduced them to being mere employees of the state. His policy was followed by his two successors Jahangir and Shah Jahan who retained the power of the king and kept the ulama away from politics. The situation changed when Aurangzeb came to power after fighting a bloody civil war. He needed legitimacy of rule and wanted to eliminate his rivals he therefore, sought the help of the ulama and to please them incorporated them again into the state structure.¹³³