

A CRITIQUE OF THE THEOCRATIC MODEL OF THE SULTANATE OF DELHI

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A number of historians have applied the term ‘theocracy’ for the political structure of the Delhi Sultanate. For them the Delhi Sultans were the Pope and Caesar combined in one. The sultans implemented Islamic *sharī‘ah* for all communities. The *ulama* exercised the strongest influence in political matters and the caliphs were considered to be the supreme sovereigns. The persecution of Hindus, their forceful conversions, destruction of temples and imposition of *jizyah* were all part of sultanate’s religious policy. This paper aims to rectify that these arguments are mainly generalizations based on few exceptions. The sultans had no religious authority nor was the *sharī‘ah* ever implemented. The sultans had only nominal allegiance to the caliphs and the majority of *ulama* worked for the sultans for their own vested interests. The conversions were also not forced although there were few exemptions but even they were politically motivated and same was the case with the destruction of temples.

Keywords: *Sultanate of Delhi, Religious Authority, Jizya, Theocracy.*

The political structure of the Sultanate of Delhi has been regarded as a theocracy by a number of historians like R.P. Tripathi, U.N. Day, R.C. Majumdar, Ishwari Prasad and Hans Raj among many others. Then there are others who did not use the term theocracy but their description of the Sultanate’s political system presents a similar picture. Historians like H.M. Elliott, V.A. Smith, Wolseley Haig, H.H. Dodwell, Stanley Wolpert, Stanley Lane-Poole, Peter Hardy, Romila Thapar, and

Sunil Kumar etc. are among those who subscribe to these views. The aim of this paper is to first highlight the arguments of these historians in favour of the theocratic model of the Delhi Sultanate and then an effort has been made to counter these arguments to prove despite presence of certain features existed yet the political structure of the Delhi Sultanate was not theocratic.

Before giving their views on this argument it is necessary that the term theocracy must be defined. Theocracy is derived from a Greek word *theokratia* which means government by God. A Greek historian named Josephus Flavius used this term for the very first time. Theocracy, for him, was a type of government in which the sovereignty was attributed to God.¹ According to the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, theocracy, is the “rule by God, and refers to a type of government in which God or gods are thought to have sovereignty”.² Theocracy is also defined as a form of government in which God or some deity is considered to be the real ruler, and His laws are considered to be the laws of the state, implemented by the priestly section of the society acting as His ministers.³ According to the Dictionary of Modern Politics, a theocracy is run by clerics and where religious ideas and institutions have profound influence.⁴ Henry Sidgwick in his work *The Development of European Polity* explains the development of theocracy, and asserts that a state organization initially declares itself to be divine and organizes itself professionally only for the religious cause, and then after sometime, it starts gathering means to acquire secular powers so much so that the government in that state starts reflecting a theocratic character. Subsequently this religious organization takes over the control of all the affairs of the state then we call that particular state a theocratic state.⁵ James Smylie summarizing the theory of theocracy, and maintains that theocracy is a form of government in which all the authority is considered to be rested with God, and the rulers and priests are appointed and are answerable to Him alone for they are His Divine incarnations.⁶ Thus theocracy is a state which shows the nexus of church and state and a merger of religious and political authorities. In other words theocracy is a form of government in which either God himself rules the kingdom or rules it through His deputies, whether they are kings or the priestly class. All of them are considered to be directly under God’s command.

A brief description is made here to take an overview of the theocratic model. The most common statement that one comes across about the sultans of Delhi while studying the historical works is, “the king was the Caesar and Pope combined in one”.⁷ It has been argued that

there was the concept of divine kingship in the Sultanate. In which a king himself becomes the deputy of God, and performs religious duties along with the temporal ones, which is also a kind of theocracy. For the ordinary citizen of the Sultanate of Delhi, their sultan was the shadow of God on earth. Thus they could hardly think of criticizing him or revolting against him. For revolting against the Sultan was considered to be a revolt against God.⁸ It was thought that the Sultanate was formed and consolidated for the promotion, promulgation and protection of Islam. All the resources of the government were utilized to serve the religion. And this was how the political leadership of the Sultans of Delhi took the form of both secular and religious head of the Sultanate.

The Sultans were termed as fanatics, bigots and extremists in their religious outlook. All the wars fought by the Muslim rulers were assumed to be *Jihad* against the infidels and there existed no other motives.⁹ The influence of *sharī'ah*¹⁰ was also considered very extensive in the matters of the state. The sultans were not considered to be above it nor could they go against it.¹¹ They were assumed to be supreme as long as they continued to adhere to the Divine laws. The foremost duty of the Sultans being the heads of the Islamic kingdom was to uphold tenets of Islam and *sharī'ah*. And if they failed to do so, they became unworthy of authority and thought to have become illegitimate. They had to follow *sharī'ah* as it was and they did not have the power to divorce religion from political matters.

On the other hand the *ulama*¹² exercised an undue influence in both religious and political matters.¹³ They supervised the laws of the state and determined whether these were according to the Islamic principles or not. They insisted on giving the state a religious touch by implementing religious laws. These *ulama* were quite fanatic and orthodox having considerable hold on the sultans.¹⁴ They were so powerful that even the strongest of the sultans could not counter or challenge them and forced to let them formulate the state policy. The sultans too were in the habit of taking advice from the *ulama* on all matters.¹⁵ The sultans were under strict check of them and almost all sultans patronized their contemporary *ulama*. The *qādīs* or jurists were also chosen from among them. They were also capable of countering the sultans by issuing *fatwās* against them, which could result in the terrible revolts of the masses. Even the strong sultans could not ignore their suggestions.

The entire Delhi Sultanate was ruled by a singular law which was the Islamic law and Islam was the state religion.¹⁶ All the departments of the state including judiciary were designed according to it. The Muslims

and Hindus alike were handled with the single recognized law. All the appointed judges were Muslims and not a single Hindu judge was ever employed by the state. Since the judicial system was not based on secular principles it was natural that it operated against the non-Muslims who were in great majority.¹⁷ The Hindus were treated severely for the same crime for which the Muslims were treated rather leniently since the faith of the accused in the case of Hindus differed from that of the judge.

It had been argued that the social, economic and religious conditions of the Hindus were pathetic in the Delhi Sultanate as a theocratic state always works against those who do not follow the faith of the state. They were regarded as *dhimmīs* or second grade citizens by the Muslim sultans who made them inferior beings in their own lands.¹⁸ They suffered from discriminatory laws and they lived at the mercy of the sultans. The policy of intolerance and persecution was adopted towards the Hindu subjects. Because of their religious persecution thousands of Hindus were killed since almost all the Muslim rulers were inspired from the zeal of *jihād* while fighting the infidels of India.

The Hindus for these historians were reduced to misery and poverty, and there were no opportunities of employment for them. All the respectable posts were reserved for the Muslims and the Hindus were not even considered for them.¹⁹ However, minor posts like those of clerks, water carriers and porters were given to the Hindus. As for the taxes when implemented they were levied solely on the Hindus or their heavy burden fell on them. Even the most liberal sultans suffered from these flaws. Then they had to pay a poll-tax called *jizyah*. In theory it was meant to be paid in order to have freedom of religion for the non-Muslims as well as protection from the state. The imposition of *jizyah* was in fact an instrument of humiliation for the Hindus and it was the proof that the ruling elite considered the locals inferior. Although it was collected in lieu of military service the fact was that they were never recruited in the army nor they were allowed to join and they had to pay sum for an obligation they were not allowed to choose.²⁰ They Ilbari, Khalji and Tughluq dynasties were very passionate about the collection of *jizyah*. They were passionate to collect religious taxes from the Hindus and all the Hindus were condemned to pay them. But even after paying *jizyah* they were not allowed religious freedom. The burden of *jizyah* was so heavy that Hindus in a large number embraced Islam to get rid of it.²¹

The goal of the Muslim sultans of Delhi was to propagate Islam

and convert all the non-Muslims and eliminate all the other religions of the region. For this purpose the conversion campaign was sponsored by the government and facilities were provided to the non-Muslims to get them converted. There were only two ways, the sultans either bribed the infidels to embrace Islam or forced them to get converted.²² For this purpose jobs were offered to the new converts as it was a trick to encourage more and more locals to get converted if they wanted economic prosperity. The resources of the state and royal treasury were used for the cause of conversion.

The other and most common way was the conversion by force. Because of sultans' religious zeal thousands of Hindus were slaughtered and forced to convert to Islam. All of the Delhi Sultans were involved in this process. For the purpose of eliminating Hinduism the sultans demolished Hindu temples and idols.²³ The Hindus were forbidden to build new ones or rebuild the demolished ones.

The above mentioned characteristics of the political system of the Delhi Sultanate are mostly exaggeration on the part of the historians who try to prove the existence of theocracy in the Delhi Sultanate. Here an attempt is made to counter the above mentioned arguments.

Relationship of Religion and Politics in the Delhi Sultanate

It is claimed that religion and politics complemented each other in state affairs in Delhi Sultanate. One of the reasons of this confusion arose from the early history of Islam that presented the same picture. Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) laid the foundation of the first Muslim state in Madinah in 622 A.D. The statement of "Pope and Caesar combined in one" can be applied to this era of Muslim history* since the Prophet was both the political as well as the religious head of that state.²⁴ After his demise the four Pious Caliphs (A.S) continued the practice policies of the holy prophet (ﷺ). However, with the rule of the Umayyad and later Abbasid Caliphs, the Caliphate changed into monarchy.²⁵ These caliphs used to deal only with the political matters of the state, and they used to nominate their heirs. They regarded the Caliph lands as their family possessions, which is the most subtle feature of the concept of monarchy, and they also turned the public exchequer into their personal treasury.

*Western Christian theocracy is actually a form of government in which a country is ruled by immediate divine guidance or by officials who are regarded as divinely guided. thus theocracy is entirely different from that Islamic polity - *Ed.*

As for the Sultanate of Delhi there was no merger of political and religious authorities. The Sultanate of Delhi was based on the hereditary monarchy, a concept adopted from the ancient Persian traditions, and not from Islam since the Prophet (ﷺ) did not nominate any heir, nor any of the four Pious Caliphs.²⁶ The royal treasury was generally considered to be the personal treasury of the sultan alone, and most of the time the whole of the booty and taxes used to go into it. For example, in 1259 Ulugh Khan (later Sultan Balban) brought the booty of thirty thousand *tankas* from Mewat, all of which went into the royal treasury.²⁷

The misconception about merger of religious and political authorities also had its origin in the use of the religious symbols by the sultans like the titles they adopted while ascending the throne, such as Sham al-Din, Ala al-Din and Ghiyath al-Din etc.²⁸ The reason for the adoption of such titles was to present themselves as representatives of faith to secure the support of the Muslim masses. These titles in fact had no practical purposes but only a symbolic appeal.²⁹ Malik Khusrau Khan after murdering Sultan Qutb al-Din Mubarak Khalji in 1320, adopted the title of Nasir al-Din. He was regarded a usurper by the nobility and the public. Thus he felt the need to adopt a religious title in order to keep the Muslims under his control.³⁰ There were other religious symbols used on the coins, for instance, by the sultans. Sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq, for example, used the inscriptions like “Whoever, obeys the Sultan, obeys God”, and “Obey God and His Prophet and those with authority amongst you” on his coins.³¹

Another reason of the misconception of religious and political powers had come from the concept of Divine Kingship.³² This theory is the legacy of the ancient Sassanid Persia and has no basis in Islam.³³ In fact, the political philosophy of the Delhi Sultanate was mainly influenced by ancient Persian as well as Turkish and local Hindu political traditions, operating largely in the framework of Muslim political traditions. The ideal rulers for the sultans were not the Prophet (ﷺ) or the Pious Caliphs (A.S.) but the ancient Persian and medieval Turkish rulers like Jamshed, Afrasiyab, Sanjar, Tughril and Khwarizm Shah etc.³⁴ Nizami quoted Saiyyid Sulaiman Nadvi who asserted that the Sultans of Delhi were not the representatives of Islam. They were mostly new converts and hardly aware of the staunch Islamic ideals.³⁵

The most significant representation of the Persianization was the introduction of the Persian customs, traditions, etiquettes and ceremonies in the royal courts. The Ilbari Sultans were credited with introducing the Persian outlook in the Delhi Sultanate. According to Barani, the courts

of the Delhi Sultans, like the ancient Sassanid emperors' courts were decorated with grandeur and magnificence throughout the rule of the *Ilbari* Sultans so that it could create awe in the hearts and minds of the people.³⁶ This practice continued during the rule of the later dynasties as well. In this regard, there were many non-Islamic court etiquettes, like the tradition of *pā'ibos* or toe kissing which continued during the reign of the successive dynasties.³⁷ The distinction between the low-born and highborn, which adhered to by some of the *Ilbari* Sultans was also a legacy of the Persians. According to Aziz Ahmad, the Persian Imperialism flourished and influenced the political theory so much so that the Islamic theory lost its face.³⁸

Many of the historians held the view that the Delhi Sultanate had religious basis. As discussed earlier, many Muslim scholars, however, believed that the Sultanate was, in fact, a monarchy having no legality in the Islamic traditions. The fact is that they simply had to make a public face of *sharī'ah* so that it could further enhance their prestige.³⁹ However, many sultans sincerely respected *sharī'ah*, which did influence their decisions. For instance, most of the taxes levied during the Sultanate were illegal and it was almost at the end of the fourteenth century that Sultan Firuz Tughluq abolished unlawful taxes but he was the only exception.⁴⁰ In most of the cases religious traditions were set aside for instance Barani has related that Sultan Balban believed that when it was a matter of the state, he would not care whether his steps were according to the laws of Islam or not.⁴¹ Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji believed that politics had nothing to do with the religion.⁴² Then there were many pleasure-seeking sultans who were very fond of singing and dancing, and also addicted to wine. The punishments inflicted on the offenders of the state, especially in the reigns of Sultans Balban, Ala al-Din Khalji and Muhammad ibn Tughluq were also un-Islamic in nature.

Another important feature of the medieval Muslim state was their relationship with the Caliphate. The Caliph was considered to be the head of the entire Muslim world. But the sultans of Delhi had only nominal allegiance with the Caliph of Baghdad, and were fully independent in their dealings. Even those historians who believed that Delhi Sultanate was a theocracy also believed that the Caliph had practically no role in running the affairs of the sultanate.⁴³ The sultans still viewed the allegiance to the caliphs in order to legitimize their rule. Whenever a Sultan received his investiture from the caliph, he in return showed his allegiance to him by inserting caliph's name on the coins and the *khutbah* of the Friday prayer was read in his name. Excluding the few exceptions like Qutb

al-Din Mubarak Khalji and Muhammad ibn Tughluq, all Sultans of Delhi recognized the supreme authority of the caliph but it was only in ceremonial. Therefore, many of the sultans did not receive investitures from the caliph, and still they ruled quite successfully. Sultans Balban and Ala al-Din Khalji for example, are considered to be two great Muslim rulers of India and both of them ruled without receiving recognition from their contemporary caliphs. Sultan Qutb al-Din Mubarak Khalji not only did away with the references to the caliph, but himself proclaimed to be a caliph.⁴⁴ Sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq, according to Bada'uni, also believed himself to be the rightful person to be called the caliph.⁴⁵

There used to be another benefit of the investiture which required obedience from the masses for the sultan. For instance, during the reign of Sultan Firuz Tughluq in the *manshur* that he received from the caliph, it was written that those who disobey the Sultan were actually sinners and will be punished on the Day of Judgment.⁴⁶ However, the allegiance to the caliph was only symbolic in nature. In fact, the Sultans cared little for the caliphate. It is evident from an incident, referred by Sirhindi that when two years after the sacking of Baghdad in 1258 at the hands of the Mongols, the Mongol ambassador arrived in the capital of Sultanate they were given a royal reception by the Delhi Sultan.⁴⁷

Then there is the question of whether the wars fought by Delhi Sultans were out of their religious zeal or some other purpose. The fact is that the Sultans were not religious warriors as portrayed by many historians basing their assumption on the medieval Persian historical works. The basic characteristic of *jihād* or holy war is the protection and promotion of the religion. Not a single example of this kind of war was found in the war history of the sultanate since the conquests of the sultans were either for expansion of their empire or for booty collection. Arnold declared it an allegation and opined that except for a few occasions the state never tried to protect or promote their religion in Delhi Sultanate.⁴⁸ Sultans Iltutmish himself mentioned the secular nature of the Sultanate and said that under the circumstances the royalty was facing it was not possible for him to be the defender of the faith.⁴⁹

Influence of *Ulama* in State and Politics

It is argued that in the Delhi Sultanate the *ulama* had a profound influence in all matters of religion and politics. The fact is that the *ulama* used to advise to the sultans in matters of religion, but their suggestions were not binding on the sultans. However, there were instances when

the sultan did or had to accept their recommendations, which has been discussed later in this work.

There existed a symbiotic relationship between the political and religious authorities. The relationship between the sultans and *ulama* was beneficial for both of them. The *ulama* got high state positions, titles, stipends and grants from the rulers, while the *ulama* associated with the state machinery generally worked as tools to strengthen the position of the sultans. The sultans needed the support of the *ulama* in order to get support and retain hold on the people.⁵⁰ The head of the religious authority was *Shaykh al-Islam* who often used to legitimize the acts and deeds of the Sultans.⁵¹ Some of the sultans used them in order to achieve their ends. According to Nizami, whenever there was trouble in any area created by the Muslim rebels the sultans used to send *ulama* there so that they could pacify the people of the region appealing to their religious sentiments.⁵² However, among the *ulama* there were those who sincerely contested the state policies which they perceived to be un-Islamic, while there were others as well who supported the oppressive policies of the state, and allied themselves with the sultans for getting favours for themselves.⁵³ Moreover, sometimes they used to fabricate traditions of the Prophet (ﷺ) which the sultans used for securing the obedience of the masses.⁵⁴ In this way the sultans of Delhi took advantage of their alliance with the *ulama* who on the other hand, were ready to cooperate with the rulers for their own benefits. Sunil Kumar adds that “when the Delhi Sultan did dispense his favour, it was very much with an eye to the fact that the individuals he favoured would be useful in consolidating his authority.”⁵⁵

The Sultans never encouraged the influence of the *ulama* in matters of the state. Although the *ulama* used to sit in the courts of the sultans and they joined them in their meals, their suggestions hardly influenced the political decisions of the sultans. Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji was known for his discouragement of the *ulama*'s interference in politics. Barani related that he used to say that the politics had nothing to do with religion.⁵⁶ Similarly Muhammad ibn Tughluq was more influenced by the philosophers than the religious scholars. During Sultan Firuz Tughluq's reign, the political matters were not in the hands of the *ulama*. But since he was weak, he had to let them influence the state matters to some extent. Even then, as Banerjee pointed out, he used them as 'safety valve' for political disturbances.⁵⁷

Then there were other kind of *ulama* and *mashā'ikh* present in Delhi Sultanate as well who used to challenge the Sultans and their

policies. For instance, according to Bada'uni and Sirhindi, during the reign of Sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq, a pious scholar named Shaykh Shihab al-Din Shaykh Ahmad Jam criticized the sultan and called him a tyrant. He had to lose his life when he refused to take his comment back.⁵⁸ The same sultan was criticized by a *faqīh* (an exeget) named Afif al-Din for the devastating consequences of the Sultan's economic reforms.⁵⁹ According to Ibn Battutah, there was another contemporary theologian of Sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq named Taj al-Din Arifin who refused to meet the sultan when he wished it.⁶⁰ These defiant theologians, however, generally did not belong to the court and thus were not supposed to support the state. On the other hand, the *ulama* related to the sultans' courts served as legitimizers for them and for their policies and in return they received special favours from the government.

Existence of Multiple Legal Systems

It is also said about the Delhi Sultanate that there existed a single law, the law of Islam. For some historians, with the arrival of the Muslims in India the legal system of Islam was applied on the whole of the Delhi Sultanate and all the other legal systems were abolished. The fact is that the conquest of the Muslims in India never directly affected the social structure of the Hindu society and the legal practices in the Hindu populated areas were hardly disturbed. There was little contact of the rural population with the Muslim authorities at the centre. The Hindus lived in villages and they had little contact with the Muslim laws' application which was mainly in districts and not in the rural areas.⁶¹ The Sultans of Delhi, on the other hand, could not interfere in the personal law of Muslims and Hindus.⁶² Similarly, the law of the government was though Islamic, but it was never applied on the non-Muslims. It is also incorrect to say that the Delhi Sultans abolished the Hindu law and imposed Islamic law on the Hindus. The fact was that in personal matters, Hindu law was applied, and only the criminal laws were administered by the government.⁶³ The village *panchāyats*, on the other hand, were left undisturbed to deal with the cases among the Hindus.⁶⁴ In the villages, along with the *panchāyats*, the headmen also used to administer justice and worked as magistrates. The cases between Hindus and Muslims were, however, decided by the ordinary courts and on the principles of justice. According to Qureshi, very few cases of Hindu petitioners came to the state courts throughout the Delhi Sultanate period.⁶⁵ Yet in offences that could be termed as penal, the Muslim and the Hindus were all treated equally and with same yardstick.

The argument about the existence of a single law system is based on assumptions for Habibullah claimed that the modern historians know little about the law application systems of the medieval India because of the scarcity of the relevant material.⁶⁶ Also there was an absence of a centralized government in the Delhi Sultanate and it can be safely concluded that since the hold of the government in the far flung areas was weak, there could not be the possibility of the existence of a strong single legal system in the whole of the Delhi Sultanate.

Treatment of Hindus in the Delhi Sultanate

It is assumed that the most deprived and pitiable section of the population in the Delhi Sultanate was that of the Hindus. The concept of *dhimmī* was criticized for it was believed to have a connotation of inferiority. As already mentioned, the meaning of this term has nothing to do with the social status of the non-Muslims under the Muslim rule; rather it is simply a technical expression of distinguishing subjects on the basis of religion. The allegation that there was no freedom of religion for the Hindus is also mistaken and exaggerated. The fact was that they had complete religious freedom, and they were allowed to perform their rituals openly.⁶⁷ The Hindus were generally not discriminated in India during the rule of the Delhi Sultans. Even in inns and other public spaces, there is no record of exclusion for the Hindu travelers. Instead the inns made special arrangements for the Hindu guests.

According to Nizami, the founding Sultans of Delhi were actually impressed by Khawaja Moin al-Din Chisti's concept of *Ṣulh-i-Kul* which meant peace with all.⁶⁸ During the Khalji Dynasty, the Hindus enjoyed equal status like that of the Muslims, and no evidence is found of Hindus being stopped by the rulers from practicing their religion.⁶⁹ The Tughluq Dynasty was also tolerant towards the Hindus. Sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq was free from religious and ethnic prejudices, and in his reign justice was for all. For instance, according to Ibn Battutah, a Hindu complained about him and the Sultan appeared before the *qāzi* for the trial.⁷⁰ The Hindus were never stopped from practicing their religion and they lived freely.⁷¹ Even the Hindu literature of that time mentioned that there were no restrictions on Hindus in the performance of their religious rites and rituals.⁷² Similarly, the Hindu culture, religion and art not only retained their vitality but they also flourished under the Muslim rule, and were free from the control of the government.⁷³

As for the imposition of *jizyah*, Moḥammad Habib had argued that it

was not for the purpose of degrading or humiliating the Hindus,⁷⁴ it was merely a tax by which the non-Muslims living under the Muslim ruler get the rights of protection by the state apparatus.⁷⁵ The fact was that there was no organized machinery to collect it. Tripathi had said that *jizyah* “was gradually failing into disuse. The ablest of the Delhi Sultans were taking more interest in the secular revenue and were inclined to ignore *jizya*”.⁷⁶ *Jizyah* was also not a burden, for it was not imposed on all and sundry. For example, the poor, old, women and children were exempted from it. Another important point is that the percentage of the payment of *jizyah* was different for different classes. Thus, the financially weak people had to pay only a minimum amount in the name of this tax.⁷⁷ In the context of implementation of *jizyah*, the most infamous figure is that of Sultan Firuz Tughluq. He is accused of imposing *jizyah* on the Brahmans as well those who were supposed to be exempted from it. What they failed to see was that though Sultan Firuz imposed it on all the Hindus, it was not out of his commitment to any religious obligation but it was imposed for financial purposes.⁷⁸ Moreover, during Sultan Firuz’s reign, *jizyah* was never collected thoroughly.⁷⁹

Another related argument as mentioned earlier, was that though *jizyah* was imposed in lieu of military service, and therefore, the Hindus were not allowed to join the armed forces at all. This perception seems mistaken, as we come across many examples of the presence of Hindu soldiers in the royal forces. Andre Wink maintained that from Sultan Qutb al-Din Aibek onward, the Hindus were recruited in the royal army.⁸⁰ Similarly, according to Habibullah, when Raziyya Sultana raided on the capital to regain her lost throne along with her husband, she had in her army many Hindu mercenaries from *Jat* and *Khokar* tribes.⁸¹ Isami related that when Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji was attacked by his nephew Ikit Khan, the sultan was defended and saved by his Hindu guards.⁸² When Ghazi Malik (later Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq) went to fight against the usurper Khusrau Khan, his troops were consisted of Hindus as well.⁸³ Therefore, the accusation was wrong as Hindus did have a share in the army recruitment.

Another allegation attributed towards the Delhi Sultans was that they demolished all the temples and idols they found in India because of their religious zeal and hatred for other religions. The fact is that only some of the temples were destroyed, not all. There were instances when the sultans and their armies refrained from hurting them even during the war times. For example, a big and rich Jain temple during the reigns of the early sultans was left untouched or “overlooked” by the Muslim

armies on Mount Abu.⁸⁴ Besides, as argued by Wolseley Haig, the temples and idols that were knocked down were not out of sultans' love for their religion.⁸⁵

The basic reasons for the demolition of these temples were not religious but political and economic. The temples were destroyed only during wars and those which had some connection with the legitimacy of the regional rulers. For Nizami the destruction of the temple signified the destruction of the legitimacy of the ruler.⁸⁶ Often a temple which was related to the ruler contained a deity which was supposed to protect the king and the kingdom. If the statue of deity was destroyed or humiliated, it symbolized the defeat and humiliation of the ruler. Therefore, the Delhi sultans used to take the deities from the destroyed temples and trampled them in the capital city. For Richard M. Eaton, this was done not out of religious fervor but the deities were the token of their victory.⁸⁷ For instance, Bada'uni related that, when Sultan Iltutmish attacked Ujjain, he brought images from the major temples of the area and trampled them in Delhi.⁸⁸ Similarly, Afif recounted that Sultan Firuz Tughluq invaded Orissa in 1359 and brought the major deity from the famous temple of Jagannath to Delhi to be trampled over.⁸⁹ It is important to note that the rulers who submitted to the Muslim attacks, their temples were not harmed. During Sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq's campaign in Nagarkot, he refrained from demolishing the temple there.⁹⁰ Even Sultan Firuz Tughluq, narrated Afif, did not demolish the idol of Jawalamukhi at Nagarkot after its ruler submitted.⁹¹ On rare occasions, the mosques were built in place of demolished temples but again the reason was to assert the political supremacy and authority. For instance, Sirhindi mentioned in his *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, that Ulugh Khan during the reign of Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji destroyed the famous temple of Somnath in Gujarat in 1299 and built a mosque instead.⁹² The temples that were either never associated with any rulers or were formerly used for their legitimization were considered to be politically useless and generally left untouched and unharmed. Like in the thirteenth-century India, twenty five temples at Khajuraho survived Muslim attack because they were already abandoned by the Hindus.⁹³

Another major reason of attacking the Hindu temples was to take hold of the treasures collected in those temples. At that time, the Mongol armies were threatening the very existence of the Sultanate. The treasures of these temples were used to organize campaigns against the invading Mongols. According to Jazjani, for example, Malik Ulugh Khan (later Sultan Balban) once said that the royal army should raid on the

Hindu lands to collect wealth from their temples to use it against the Mongol aggressors.⁹⁴

It is generally argued that during the Delhi Sultanate new temples were not constructed nor the demolished ones were allowed to be repaired. This argument is incorrect, for Sultan Firuz Tughluq himself mentioned in his memoirs, *Futūḥūt Firūz Shāhī*, that before his reign, new Hindu temples used to be built.⁹⁵ Qureshi asserted that Hindus were allowed to build new temples but with prior permission of the government.⁹⁶ On the basis of evidence from the Hindu texts, Jackson argued that during the Delhi Sultanate, in the capital city a new temple with the name of Sri Krishna Bhagwan was built.⁹⁷ Similarly, Habibullah quoted Cunningham who discovered a temple which might have been built nearly 1000 A.D. the temple also had pilgrimage records of the years 1241-90.⁹⁸ Nizami in his work *Salāṭīn-i Delhi Kay Madhhabī Rujhānāt* mentioned on the basis of a source titled *Dastusara*, the construction of at least fifty new temples during the reign of Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji.⁹⁹ The construction of new temples continued during the Tughluq dynasty as well. Similarly, Sultan Muḥammad ibn Tughluq declared that those who pay *jizyah* would be allowed to build temples.¹⁰⁰

In addition, there were many cases in which the sultans gave permission to the Hindus who wanted to repair their damaged temples. For example, during the reign of Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji, the governor of Gujarat, Alp Khan gave the Hindus permission for the reconstruction of a temple.¹⁰¹ A Sanskrit inscription suggested that Sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq ordered to repair a Siva temple in Kalyana.¹⁰² Sultan Firuz was mostly condemned for the demolition of the temples. The fact was that the Sultan had become angry because the majority of the temples were built without the permission of the government. Thus he gave orders for their demolition.¹⁰³

There is a view that mass conversion took place when the Sultan of Delhi forced the Hindus to embrace Islam or allured them by offering political patronage. Eaton has challenged this view, and asserted that if it were the case, the mass conversion would have taken place in and around the center of the Delhi Sultanate, but it did not happen. The mass conversions in fact took place at the peripheral regions of the Sultanate, particularly in Western Punjab and Eastern Bengal, where the state control and influence was lesser.¹⁰⁴ The conversion process in India was neither organized, nor was it sponsored by the state. S.M. Yusuf denied this allegation and asserted that the Muslim state in India never showed signs of passion for the conversion of the locals. Yusuf quoted in his

work the opinion of G. Sarton that the Muslims were tolerant towards other religions and their followers, since after centuries of Muslim rule, the Muslims were still in minority.¹⁰⁵ The local *ṣūfīs*, *qāḍīs* or the spiritual influence of a local shrine played a crucial role in conversion as well as developing the beliefs of the new converts.¹⁰⁶ The *ṣūfīs* of that time, especially the Chishtis and Suhrawardis, contributed to the promotion of Islam.¹⁰⁷ These *ṣūfīs* preached Islam all by themselves, and were not sponsored by the state. According to Habibullah, Sultan Firuz Tughluq stands almost alone in utilizing state machinery for the promulgation of Islam,¹⁰⁸ but Banerjee denied it, and argued that if the Sultan had encouraged conversion, there would have been instances of mass conversions.¹⁰⁹

Another allegation which was leveled against the Muslim rulers of the Delhi Sultanate was that the doors of high governmental jobs were closed for the Hindus. This allegation also is somewhat exaggerated since only during the rule of the *Ilbari* Sultans of Delhi, Hindus and even the local converts were not recruited as the sultans mistrusted them as it was the nascent phase of the Delhi Sultanate. Zafar Imam in his work, *The Musalmans of the Subcontinent*, agreed that the sultans of Delhi, in the thirteenth century, showed selectiveness in their appointments, and the Turks and the Tajiks mostly filled the civil positions in the administration.¹¹⁰ But it was not done on the basis of religion rather on the basis of ethnicity and racialism. The perceived lack of trust and loyalty among the non-Turks and non-Tajiks was largely responsible for it. The ruling Muslim elite mistrusted the Hindus for they kept on rebelling against them while for the Indian Hindus the Muslims were invaders and they had no trust in them which was natural on their part. In such a situation, lack of trust between the two parties resulted in the exclusion of Hindus and converts from the governmental jobs, and thus on all major official positions the sultan's family, friends and slaves dominated. Sultan Balban is the most infamous in this regard, but the fact was that he used to guard the interests of his own race.¹¹¹ However, during the times of the later *Ilbari* Sultans, we come to know of different people in government positions like Rajani, Hathiya and Birnathan, who were probably non-Muslims.¹¹² After the arrival of the Khaljis, the doors of governmental positions were opened for people on merit. The Hindus were also appointed on important positions. For instance, according to Barani, during the reign of the founder of the Khalji dynasty, Sultan Jalal al-Din Khalji, a Hindu was appointed *wakīl-i dar* (head of the royal household).¹¹³ Another Hindu was appointed during the reign of Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji as a

treasurer.¹¹⁴ Then during the reign of Sultan Qutb al-Din Mubarak Khalji, Samar Singh Jain was a high state official.¹¹⁵

During the reign of the Tughluqs, more Hindus were appointed in government positions. Dusaju, whose father Nain was an officer under Jalal al-Din Khalji, received great favors from Sultans Ghiyath al-Din and Muhammad ibn Tughluq.¹¹⁶ Sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq filled many important posts with the local people of India and even appointed Hindu governors of his states. During his reign there was a Hindu commander of Gulbarga fort named Bhiram Rai who was a special friend of the sultan.¹¹⁷ The sultan, according to Ibn Battutah, also appointed a Hindu named Rattan as the governor of Sindh/Sehwan. The second *wazir* of Daulatabad was a Hindu named Dhara Dhar.¹¹⁸ Afif recounted that even Sultan Firuz Tughluq had Hindu friends. A Rajput named Rai Bhiru was a bodyguard of Sultan Firuz.¹¹⁹ Moreover, according to Barani, he honored Hindu landlords because of their services to the royal army during the expedition to Bengal.¹²⁰

The sultans of Delhi could never have successfully ruled without the contributions of the local population. They were aware that they needed the cooperation of the locals in order to run the administration. That was why, in the rural areas the old Hindu officials, the *khuts*, *muqaddams*, and *patwarīs* continued to be responsible for the rural administration and revenue collection.¹²¹ Tara Chand maintained that:

When Qutb al-Din Aibek decided to stay in Hindustan, he had no other choice but to retain the Hindu staff which was familiar with the civil administration..... Brahman legists advised the king on the administration of the Hindu law and Brahman astronomers helped in the performances of their general function.¹²²

The sultans of Delhi ruled the tributary states through a number of Hindu rulers who remained quite independent in their own lands, if they owed allegiance to the Delhi sultan.¹²³ Often the rulers of the conquered areas were reinstated. In this regard, one of the strongest of the Delhi sultans, Ala al-Din Khalji contended himself to rule far-flung areas of the Deccan indirectly.¹²⁴ Then there were other services which the Hindus performed. For instance, the sultans utilized thousands of Hindu constructors for building magnificent buildings.¹²⁵ Moreover, the Brahmins helped in settling Hindu disputes.¹²⁶

The Delhi sultans were accused of adopting the policy of Hindu persecution. The fact was that the masses had nothing to fear from the

Muslim sultans if they remained peaceful. Nizami quoted from a Hindu writer, Sajan Rai Bhandari, that commoners of the Delhi Sultanate considered Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji an angel.¹²⁷ The praise might have been an exaggeration, but it is a fact that Sultan Ala al-Din Khalji's economic measures were not for the soldiers alone. The masses, both the Hindus and Muslims alike, and the commoners lived prosperously in his reign. Elphinstone maintained that though Sultan Ala al-Din was notorious because he had confiscated all the excessive property and wealth of the masses, the effected included both Hindus and Muslims and it was meant to stop the rich ones from causing upheavals.¹²⁸ On the other hand, he ordered that no taxes should be implemented on the poor Hindus. Sultan Muḥammad ibn Tughluq was also tolerant towards the Hindus. It was at the end of his reign because of the failure of his ambitious plans that he became harsh in punishments, and in this connection his wrath largely fell on the Muslims, including the *ṣūfīs* and theologians. Sultan Firuz Tughluq, as already mentioned, had good relations with his Hindu subjects, and they lived happily in his times.¹²⁹

The Sultans were also accused of implementing inhuman punishments on the Hindu rebels only. There is no denying the fact that the Hindu rebels were tortured to death by sultans but almost the same kind of punishments were meted out to the Muslim rebels as well. Tughril, the governor of Lakhnauti, for example, rebelled during the reign of Sultan Balban, who not only killed him but destroyed all his family including women and children as well as those who were suspected of having association with him.¹³⁰ In punishing the offenders, the sultans never even forgave their own kin. Sultan Ala al-din Khalji for instance, killed his own nephews and his own brother for the rebellion of his sons.¹³¹ Similarly Sultan Mohammad ibn Tughluq killed his own brother on the suspicion of revolt.¹³² During his reign the Muslims suffered as much as the Hindus.

Conclusion

The Sultanate of Delhi was thus not exactly a theocracy. There was no fusion of religious and political powers, nor did the *ulama* unduly influence the political matters of the state. The Hindus enjoyed protection under the Muslim rule and so did their religion and their legal systems. They were though killed and subdued by the rulers, it was not out of their hatred for their religion but for political, military, economic and strategic consideration. The striking feature of the Sultanate was tolerance towards

the Hindus and the followers of other religions. Thus it can be concluded that the Delhi Sultanate was not a religion based polity and nor an Islamic one because there were many things against the Islamic political theory.

Notes And References

1. Dewey D. Wallace, "Theocracy" in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 14th. Ed. Mircea Eliade, New York and London, Macmillian Publishing Company, 1987, p. 427.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol XI., London, Oxford University Press, 1933, p. 272.
4. David Robertson, *A Dictionary of Modern Politics*, 2nd edn., London, Europa Publications Ltd., 1993, p. 460.
5. Henry Sidwick, *The Development of European Polity*, London, Macmillian and Co., 1920, p. 219.
6. James H. Smylie, "Theocracy" in *The Encyclopedia Americana*, International Edition. vol. XXVI., Danbury, Grolier Incorporated, 1987, p. 627.
7. N.K. Sinha and Nisith R. Ray, *A History of India*, 2nd edn., Calcutta, Orient Longman Ltd., 1986, p. 278; R.C. Majumdar, H.C. Raychaudhuri and Kalikinkar Datta, *An Advanced History of India*, 2nd edn., London, Macmillian and Co., 1950, p. 391. Ishwari Prasad, *A Short History of Muslim Rule in India: From the Advent of Islam to the Death of Aurangzeb*. rev. edn. Allahabad, Indian Press Ltd., 1965, p. 229.
8. Muhammad Habib, "Central Government of the Sultanate" in *Political, Legal and Military History of India*, ed. H.S. Bhatia. vol. IV., New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publications, 1984, pp. 300-301.
9. K.L. Srivastave, *The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526)*, New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1980, p. 85.
10. *Shariah* is the Divine Law in Islam. It is a complete format of life that includes the rules for all the fields of human life both individual and governmental. To see the characteristics and principles of *shariah* see M.B.Hooker, "Shariah" in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edn. eds, H.A.R. Gibb. et. al., Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1967, pp. 321-328.
11. Hans Raj, *History of Medieval India*, Delhi, Surjeet Publications, 1986, p. 197.
12. The word 'ulama' (singular *alim*) is taken from the word *ilm*, meaning knowledge. Thus an 'alim means a knowledgeable person. In the Delhi Sultanate they were referred to as religious scholars.
13. Radhey Shyam Chaurasia, *History of Medieval India (From 1000 AD to 1707 AD)*, New Delhi, Atlantic Publishers, 2002, p. 138.
14. S.C. Raychoudhary, *History of Muslim India (From 1000 AD to 1526 AD)*, Delhi, Surjeet Publications, 1986, p. 224.
15. K.S. Lal, *History of the Khaljis (AD 1290-1320)*, New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House Ltd., 1950, p. 276.

16. U.N. Day, *The Government of the Sultanate*, 2nd edn., New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Ltd., 1993, p. 198.
17. Raychaudhary, *History of Muslim India*, pp. 242-243.
18. Mountstuart Elphinstone, *The History of India: The Hindu Mahometan Periods*, 5th edn., London, Murray, 1866, p. 380.
19. K.S. Lal, *Twilight of the Sultanate*, London, Asia Publishing House, 1965, p. 288.
20. Prasad, *A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, p. 231.
21. Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 114.
22. Peter Hardy, "Growth of Authority Over a Conquered Political Elite: Early Delhi Sultanate as a Possible Case Study" in *Kingship and Authority in South Asia*. Ed. J.F. Richards., Delhi, Oxford University Press, p. 217.
23. Raj, *History of Medieval India*, p. 188.
24. Tavir Anjum, "Nature and Dynamics of Political Authority in the Sultanate of Delhi", in *Quarterly Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*. vol. I. LIV (July-September 2006), p. 30.
25. K.A. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, Delhi, Nadwat al-Musannifin, 1958, p. 34.
26. M.H. Syed, *History of Delhi Sultanate*, vol. II., New Delhi, Anmol Publications Ltd., 2004, p. 376.
27. Nizami, *Salatin-i-Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 32. The only exception was that of Sultan Nasir al-Din Mahmud who earned his own living by making and selling the copies of Holy Quran and considered the treasury to be the right of the masses. Al-Badaoni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I. Eng trans. Geroge S.A. Ranking, Karachi, Karimsons, 1976, pp. 127-128.
28. For a list of the titles of the Sultans of Delhi, see appendix. Anjum, "Nature and Dynamics", pp. 58-59.
29. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 23.
30. Although after his accession he became a Hindu again and even in the royal palace Hindu activities had started. Zia al-Din Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*. Urdu trans. Syed Moin al-Haq, Lahore, Urdu Science Board, 1969, p. 589.
31. Edward Thomas, *The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi*, Lahore, Qausain, 1975, pp. 211-216 and 249-250.
32. According to this theory the king is the representative of God and thus he is superior to all the other humans. Muhammad Aziz Ahmad, *Political History and Institutions of the Early Turkish Empire of Delhi (1206-1290)*, Lahore, research Society of Pakistan, 1987, p. 328.
33. Kunwar Mohammad Ashraf, "Political Conditions Under the Sultanate" in *Political, Legal and Military History of India*, p. 77.
34. Tanvir Anjum, "Chishti Silsilah and the Delhi Sultanate: A Study of Their Relationship during 13th and 14th Centuries", Unpublished PhD diss., Department of History, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, 2005, p. 171.
35. Saiyyid Sulaiman Nadvi, *Arab O Hind k Taaluqat*, 115, as cited by Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 15-16.
36. Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 80-81.
37. Anjum, "Nature and Dynamics", p. 39.

38. Ahmad, *Political History and Institutions*, p. 327.
39. Kunwar Muhammad Ashraf, "Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan (1200-1500 AD)-Mainly Based on Islamic Sources", in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Letters, vol. I., Karachi, Indus Publications, 1978, p. 135.
40. Shams Siraj Afif, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, 3rd edn. Urdu trans. Muḥammad Fida Ali Talib, Karachi, Nafees Academy, 1965, p. 257.
41. Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 104.
42. He was the same sultans who according to Barani was planning to introduce a new religion., *Ibid.*, pp. 390-391.
43. R.P. Tripathi. *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, Allahabad, Indian Press, 1936, p. 59.
44. I.H. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*. 2nd rev. edn., Lahore, Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1944, p. 32.
45. Bada'uni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, p. 311.
46. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 24.
47. Yahya ibn Ahmad ibn Abd Allah Sirhindi, *The Tariikh-i Mubarak Shahi*. Eng trans. K.K. Basu, Karachi, Karimsons, 1977, p. 36.
48. Thomas W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam*, London, Constable, 1913, p. 280.
49. S.M. Ikram, *History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan: A Political and Cultural History*, 9th edn., Lahore, Institute of Islamic Culture, 2000, p. 164.
50. Anjum, "Nature and Dynamics", p. 74.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
52. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 58.
53. **Asraf**, *Political Conditions Under the Sultanate*, p. 127.
54. For instance the tradition that said that "The sultan is the shadow of god on earth" which was actually derived from the ancient Persian traditions. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
55. Sunil Kumar, *The Emergence of the Delhi Sultanate*, Ranikhet, Permanent Black, 2007, p. 220. If the sultans kept on fulfilling the demand of the *ulama*, they were his best of the companions. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 20.
56. Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 424.
57. Jamini Mohan Banerjee, *History of Firuz Shah Tughluq*, Lahore, Progressive Books, 1976, p. 69.
58. Sirhindi, *The Tariikh-i Firuz Shahi*, 119; and Bada'uni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, p. 318.
59. Ibn Battutah, *Ajaib al-Asfar*. Urdu trans. Maulvi Muhammad Husain, Islamabad, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1983, p. 150.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 154.
61. A.B.M. Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India: A History of the Establishment and Progress of the Turkish Sultanate of Delhi: 1206-1290 AD*. 2nd edn., Allahabad, Central Book Depot, 1961, pp. 250, 272.
62. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, p. 49.
63. Bakhshish Singh, "Legal Systems Under the Sultans" in *Political, Legal and Military History of India*, pp. 159-160.
64. Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule*, p. 271.
65. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, p. 162.

66. Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule*, p. 271.
67. The Delhi Sultanate gave the Hindus a status resembling al-hi Kitab. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 67.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
69. M.D. Arshad, *An Advanced History of Muslim Rule in Indo-Pakistan*, Decca, Ideal Publications, 1967, p. 86.
70. Ibn Battutah, *Ajaib al-Afsar*, p. 137.
71. John Keay, *India: A History*, New Delhi, Harper Collins Publisher, 2001, p. 242. Afif, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 131. The reason that he banned women to go to temples was that he wanted to stop them and others falling into immoralities, he also banned the Muslim women to visit shrines. Zafar al-Islam Islahi, *Salatin-i Delhi or Shariat-i Islamia*, Aligarh, Rehan Islam, 2002, pp. 14-15.
72. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 72.
73. Syed, *History of Delhi Sultanate*, p. 28. The provincial courts kept the vernacular language of India alive and there was free contact of the Hindus and Muslims even through matrimonial means. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, pp. 225-227.
74. Muḥammad Habib, *Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanate: Including a Translation of Ziauddin Barani's Fatawa-i Jahandari, circa, 1358-9 AD.*, Allahabad, Kitab Mahal, 1961, p. 69.
75. Moinul Haq, "The Spread of Islam in South Asia" in *Islam in South Asia*, eds. Waheed-uz-Zaman and M. Saleem Akhtar, Islamabad, NIHCR, 1993, p. 57. The pay *jizyah* to acquire the right to have freedom of rituals, free existence of their social code and enforcement of their religious laws. Syed, *History of Delhi Sultanate*, p. 381.
76. Tripathi, *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, pp. 290-291.
77. Habib has talked altogether differently when he said that there never existed anything like a poll tax. There was *kharaj*, a tax on the land and all the other taxes were called *jizyah* and they were taken from all the inhabitants and not on the basis of the religion of the payer. Habib, *Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanate*, pp. 381.
78. Banerjee, *History of Firuz Tughluq*, p. 124. After his accession to the throne the Sultan ordered to abolish all non-sharia taxes in his realm because of which the royal income suffered a severe blow of about three million *tankas*. And that was the reason that he imposed it on the Brahmans as well to meet his financial needs. Nizami, *Royalty in Medieval India*, p. 32.
79. Keay, *India: A History*, p. 242. Sultan actually felt pity for the Brahmans when they protested in front of his palace and he brought the rate of *jizyah* on a real low ground. Agha Mehdi Hussain, *Tughluq Dynasty*, Calcutta, Thacker Pink and Co, Pvt; Ltd., 1963, p. 426. Another interesting point is that except for the Brahman protest against *jizyah* we never came across any example of Hindu resentment against the imposition of it. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 72.
80. Andre Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*. vol. II, *The Slave Kings and the Islamic Conquest 11th-13th Centuries*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 81.

81. Habibullah, *Foundation of Muslim Rule*, p. 265.
82. Abdul Malik Isami, *Futuh al-Salatin*. Eng trans. Agha Mahdi Hussain, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1976, pp. 454.
83. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 306.
84. Keay, *India: A History*, p. 241.
85. Wolsely Haig, *The Cambridge History of India*. vol. III, *Turks and Afghans*, Delhi, S. Chand and Co., 1958, pp. 88-89.
86. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 91.
87. Richard M. Eaton, "Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States" in *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia*. Ed. David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence, Gainesville, University Press of Florida, 2000, p. 259.
88. Badaoni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, p. 95.
89. Afif, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 124.
90. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 346.
91. Afif, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 135-137; and Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History.*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 289.
92. Sirhindi, *The Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, p. 75.
93. Wink, *Al Hind*, p. 2:324. The importance of the demolition of temples for political purposes has its history even in the pre-Muslim rule in India. Long before the arrival of the Muslim Turks the temples used to represent kingly authority. The Hindu rulers of different regions also used to demolish these sorts of temples in order to get upper hand in the conflict. For instance in the tenth century Indra III, ruler of the Rashtrakuta destroyed the temple of Kalapriya which was patronized by his enemies. Eaton, "Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States", p. 256.
94. Minhaj al-Siraj Juzjani, *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*. vol. II. Eng trans. H.G. Raverty, Lahore, Amir Publications, 1977, p. 816. Again it was not only the Muslim Sultans who plundered the temples but the Hindu chiefs also used to pillage the region of another Hindu chief. For instance Paramare king Subhataverman, the ruler of Malwah destroyed and plundered a number of Jain temples in Gujarat in 1193-1210. Another king Harsha looted many Hindu temples in order to enrich his treasury. Habibullah, *Foundation of Muslim Rule*, p. 321.
95. Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 288.
96. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, p. 220.
97. Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 288.
98. Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule*, p. 324.
99. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, p. 77.
100. Eaton, "Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States", p. 261.
101. Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 287.
102. Eaton, "Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States", p. 261. This temple was destroyed during the course of suppressing the revolt of Baha al-Din Garshasp in Kalyani. Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 287.
103. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, p. 221. The destruction of the temples could not be associated with the religious passion of the sultan

- for he was the same sultan who brought Asoka Pillars from Khizrabad district to Firuzabad in 1356 as well as thirteen hundred Sanskrit books to be translated into Persian. Banerjee, *History of Firuz Shah Tughluq*, p. 186.
104. Richard M. Eaton, "Approaches to the Study of Conversion to Islam in India" in *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*, ed. Richard C. Martin, Tucson, The University of Arizona Press, 1985, pp. 107-109.
 105. S.M. Yusuf, *Some Aspects of Islamic Culture*, Lahore, Institution of Islamic Culture, 1961, p. 30.
 106. The shrines of Farid al-Din Masud (Baba Farid) and Baha al-Haqq Zakariyya in Pakpattan and Multan respectively became the center of devotion for the Jats. For them devotion to Islam was devotion to these shrines. Eaton, "Approaches to the Study of Conversion", pp. 119-120.
 107. Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, Oxford, Clarendon Printers, 1964, p. 83.
 108. Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule*, p. 327. A point to be noted at this spot is that he was a mild natured sultan and his quality of appeasing the rivals and his forgiveness for the enemies melted many hearts. Because of these acts of his mass conversion of Mongols took place. Keay, *India: A History*, p. 249
 109. Banerjee, *History of Firuz Shah Tughluq*, p. 170.
 110. Zafar Imam, *The Musalmans of the Subcontinent*, Lahore, Vanguard, 1980, p. 7. It was not done on the basis of religion but on the basis of ethnicity and racialism. A.D. Murtaz, "Non-Muslims Under the Sultans of Delhi (1206-1324)" in *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan* (University of Punjab, Lahore) vol. XV, no. 4 (October 1978), p. 46.
 111. Even the distinction he and his predecessor Sultan Iltutmish made between the low-born and high-born were only on the basis of ethnicity, see footnote no. 1, Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 8.
 112. Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule*, p. 329.
 113. Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 195.
 114. Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 279.
 115. Agha Mehdi Hussain, *The Rise and Fall of Muhammad Bin Tughluq*, London, Luzac and Co., 1938, p. 316.
 116. Agha Mehdi Hussain, *Tughluq Dynasty*, Calcutta, Thacker Pink and Co, Pvt, Ltd., 1963, p. 315.
 117. A.L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, Allahabad, Chugh Publications, 1975, p. 145.
 118. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 347. Gardiner Brown asserted "So far from oppressing is Hindu subjects he showed himself the forerunner of Akbar both in his restriction of Sati and his employment of Hindu princes in his military posts and competent Hindus on high civil posts. He appears also to have been willing to allow other classes of Hindus to prosper without interference." See Hussain, *Rise and Fall of Muhammad Bin Tughluq*, p. 12.
 119. Afif, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 82.
 120. Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 819.
 121. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, p. 222. Hussain said that the Hindu chief was the link between the local men and the provincial governors. Hussain, *Tughluq Dynasty*, p. 12.

122. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on the Indian Culture*, 2nd ed., Allahabad, Indian Press, 1963, p. 137.
123. The majority Hindu tributary states kept their old religions and traditions alive and were completely free if they pay regular tributes to the center. Syed, *History of Delhi Sultanate*, p. 387.
124. K.S. Lal, *History of the Khaljis (A.D. 1290-1320)*, New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House Pvt, Ltd., 1950, pp. 233-242. He also used to receive tribute and word of allegiance from the ruler of Warangal. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, p. 195.
125. Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 279. The governor of Bijapur in 1320 granted a whole estate to a Hindu constructor of a mosque for his good work.
126. Nizami, *Salatin-i Delhi Kay Madhhabi Rujhanat*, p. 26.
127. *Ibid.*, p. 267.
128. Elphinstone, *The History of India*, p. 399.
129. Banerjee, *History of Firuz Shah Tughluq*, p. 171. The only persecuted Hindu was the Brahman who went against the law and converted a Muslim woman.
130. *Ibid.*, pp. 64-66.
131. Isami declared that he killed his closest brother and intimate friend, Almas Beg on the suspicion of revolt. *Futuh al-Salatin*, p. 457.
132. Ibn Battutah, *Ajaib al-Asfar*, pp. 144-145.