

Delhi Sultanate

The **Delhi Sultanate** (Persian: دہلی سلطنت, Urdu: دہلی سلیٹیٹ) was a Muslim sultanate based mostly in Delhi that stretched over large parts of the Indian subcontinent for 320 years (1206–1526).^{[5][6]} Five dynasties ruled over the Delhi Sultanate sequentially: the Mamluk dynasty (1206–90), the Khalji dynasty (1290–1320), the Tughlaq dynasty (1320–1414),^[7] the Sayyid dynasty (1414–51), and the Lodi dynasty (1451–1526). The sultanate is noted for being one of the few states to repel an attack by the Mongol Empire,^[8] and enthroned one of the few female rulers in Islamic history Razia Sultana, who reigned from 1236 to 1240.^[9]

Qutb al-Din Aibak, a former Turkic Mamluk slave of Muhammad Ghori, was the first sultan of Delhi, and his Mamluk dynasty conquered large areas of northern India. Afterwards, the Khalji dynasty was also able to conquer most of central India, but both failed to conquer the whole of the Indian subcontinent. The sultanate reached the peak of its geographical reach during the Tughlaq dynasty, occupying most of the Indian subcontinent.^[10] This was followed by decline due to Hindu reconquests, states such as the Vijayanagara Empire asserting independence, and new Muslim sultanates such as the Bengal Sultanate breaking off.^{[11][12]}

During and in the Delhi Sultanate, there was a synthesis of Indian civilization with that of Islamic civilization, and the further integration of the Indian subcontinent with a growing world system and wider international networks spanning large parts of Afro-Eurasia, which had a significant impact on Indian culture and society, as well as the wider world.^[13] The time of their rule included the earliest forms of Indo-Islamic architecture,^{[14][15]} increased growth rates in India's population and economy,^[16] and the emergence of the Hindi-Urdu language.^[17] The Delhi Sultanate was also responsible for repelling the Mongol Empire's potentially devastating invasions of India in the 13th and 14th centuries.^[18] However, the Delhi Sultanate also caused large scale destruction and desecration of temples in the Indian subcontinent.^[19] In 1526, the Sultanate was conquered and succeeded by the Mughal Empire

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Delhi Sultanate	
پادشاہی دہلی	
1206–1526	
 Map of the Delhi Sultanate at its greatest extent, under the Tughlaq dynasty (1321–1398 AD). The map shows the Sultanate covering most of the Indian subcontinent, from the Arabian Sea in the west to the Bay of Bengal in the east, and from the Himalayas in the north to the Deccan in the south. Key cities marked include Delhi, Daulatabad, Agra, and Calicut. A legend indicates the Tughlaq dynasty's extent from 1321 to 1398 AD.	
 Delhi Sultanate reached its zenith under the Turko-Indian Tughlaq dynasty.^[1]	
Capital	Lahore (1206–1210) Badayun (1210–1214) Delhi (1214–1327) Daulatabad (1327–1334) Delhi (1334–1506) Agra (1506–1526)
Languages	Persian (official), ^[2] Hindavi (1451–1526) ^[3]
Religion	Sunni Islam
Government	Sultanate
Sultan	1206–1210 Qutb al-Din Aibak (first)

 Culture Military Temple desecration See also References Bibliography External links	
 • 1517–1526 Ibrahim Lodi (last)	
 Historical era • Independence^[4] • Battle of Amroha • Battle of Panipat	 Middle Ages 12 June 1206 20 December 1305 21 April 1526
 Preceded by Ghurid dynasty Gahadavala Chandela dynasty Paramara dynasty Deva dynasty Seuna (Yadava) dynasty Kakatiya dynasty Musunuri Nayaks Vaghela dynasty Yajvapala dynasty	 Succeeded by Mughal Empire Bengal Sultanate Gujarat Sultanate
 Today part of Afghanistan Bangladesh India Nepal Pakistan	

Sultans of Delhi Sultanate

Sultans (Kings/Rulers)	King in	Death	Note
<u>Qutb-ud-din Aibak</u>	1206	1210	First Sultan
<u>Aram Shah</u>	1210	1211	
<u>Iltutmish</u>	1211	1236	
<u>Rukn-ud-din Firuz</u>	1236	1236	
<u>Razia Sultan</u>	1236	1240	Lady Ruler
<u>Muiz ud din Bahram</u>	1240	1243	
<u>Ala ud din Masud</u>	1243	1249	
<u>Nasir ud din Mahmud</u>	1249	1266	
<u>Ghiyas ud din Balban</u>	1266	1287	
<u>Muiz ud din Qaiqabad</u>	1287	1290	
<u>Jalaluddin Khilji</u>	1290	1296	
<u>Alauddin Khilji</u>	1296	1316	
<u>Shihabuddin Omar</u>	1316	1316	
<u>Qutb-ud-din Mubarak</u>	1316	1320	
<u>Khusrau Khan</u>	1320	1321	

Dynasties

Mamluk / Slave

Qutb al-Din Aibak, a former slave of Mu'izz ad-Din Muhammad Ghorī (known more commonly as Muhammad of Ghor), was the first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate. Aibak was of Cuman-Kipchak (Turkic) origin, and due to his lineage, his dynasty is known as the Mamluk (Slave) dynasty (not to be confused with the Mamluk dynasty of Iraq or the Mamluk dynasty of Egypt).^[31] Aibak reigned as the Sultan of Delhi for four years, from 1206 to 1210.

After Aibak died, Aram Shah assumed power in 1210, but he was assassinated in 1211 by Shams ud-Din Iltutmish.^[32] Iltutmish's power was precarious, and a number of Muslim amirs (nobles) challenged his authority as they had been supporters of Qutb al-Din Aibak. After a series of conquests and brutal executions of opposition, Iltutmish consolidated his power.^[33] His rule was challenged a number of times, such as by Qubacha, and this led to a series of wars.^[34] Iltutmish conquered Multan and Bengal from contesting Muslim rulers, as well as Ranthambore and Siwalik from the Hindu rulers. He also attacked, defeated, and executed Taj al-Din Yildiz, who asserted his rights as heir to Mu'izz ad-Din Muhammad Ghorī.^[35] Iltutmish's rule lasted till 1236. Following his death, the Delhi Sultanate saw a succession of weak rulers, disputing Muslim nobility, assassinations, and short-lived tenures. Power shifted from Rukn ud-Din Firuz to Razia Sultana and others, until Ghiyas ud-Din Balban came to power and ruled from 1266 to 1287.^{[34][35]} He was succeeded by 17-year-old Muiz ud-Din Qaiqabad who appointed Jalal ud-Din Firuz Khalji as the commander of the army. Khalji assassinated Qaiqabad and assumed power, thus ending the Mamluk dynasty and starting the Khalji dynasty.

Qutb al-Din Aibak initiated the construction of the Qutub Minar.^[36] and the Quwwat-ul-Islam (Might of Islam) Mosque, now a UNESCO world heritage site.^[37] It was built from the remains of twenty seven demolished Hindu and Jain temples. The Qutub Minar Complex or Qutb Complex was expanded by Iltutmish, and later by Ala ud-Din Khalji (the second ruler of the Khalji dynasty) in the early 14th century.^{[37][38]} During the Mamluk dynasty, many nobles from Afghanistan and Persia migrated and settled in India, as West Asia came under Mongol siege.^[39]

Khalji

The Khalji dynasty was of Turko-Afghan heritage.^{[40][41][42][43]} They trace their roots to Central Asia and were originally of Turkic origin.^[44] They had long been settled in present-day Afghanistan before proceeding to Delhi in India. The name "Khalji" refers to an Afghan village or town known as Qalat-e Khalji (Fort of Ghilji).^[45] Sometimes they were treated by others as ethnic Afghans due to their adoption of Afghan habits and customs.^{[46][47]} As a result of this, the dynasty is sometimes referred to as Turko-Afghan.^{[41][42][43]} The dynasty later also had Indian ancestry, through Jhatyapali (daughter of Ramachandra of Devagiri), wife of Alauddin Khalji and mother of Shihabuddin Omar.^[48]

The first ruler of the Khalji dynasty was Jalal ud-Din Firuz Khalji. He came to power in 1290 after killing the last ruler of the Mamluk dynasty, Muiz ud-Din Qaiqabad, at the behest of Turkic, Afghan and Persian nobles. He was around 70 years old at the time of his ascension, and was known as a mild-mannered, humble and kind monarch to the general public.^{[49][50]} Jalal ud-Din Firuz was of Turko Afghan origin,^{[51][52][53]} and ruled for 6 years before he was murdered in 1296 by his nephew and son-in-law Juna Muhammad Khalji^[54] who later came to be known as Ala ud-Din Khalji.

Ala ud-Din began his military career as governor of Kara province, from where he led two raids on Malwa (1292) and Devagiri (1294) for plunder and loot. His military campaigning returned to these lands as well other south Indian kingdoms after he assumed power. He conquered Gujarat, Ranthambore, Chittor, and Malwa.^[55] However, these victories were cut short because of Mongol attacks and plunder raids from the northwest. The Mongols withdrew after plundering and stopped raiding northwest parts of the Delhi Sultanate.^[56]

After the Mongols withdrew Ala ud-Din Khalji continued expanding the Delhi Sultanate into southern India with the help of generals such as Malik Kafur and Khusro Khan. They collected lots of war booty (anwatan) from those they defeated.^[57] His commanders collected war spoils and paid ghanima (Arabic: الْغَنِيْمَة, a tax on spoils of war), which helped strengthen the Khalji rule. Among the spoils was the Warangal loot that included the famous Koh-i-noor diamond.^[58]

Ala ud-Din Khalji changed tax policies, raising agriculture taxes from 20% to 50% (payable in grain and agricultural produce), eliminating payments and commissions on taxes collected by local chiefs, banned socialization among his officials as well as inter-marriage between noble families to help prevent any opposition forming against him, and he cut salaries of officials, poets, and scholars.^[54] These tax policies and spending controls strengthened his treasury to pay the keep of his growing army; he also introduced price controls on all agriculture produce and goods in the kingdom, as well as controls on where, how, and by whom these goods could be sold. Markets called "shahana-i-mandi" were created.^[59] Muslim merchants were granted exclusive permits and monopoly in these "mandis" to buy and resell at official prices. No one other than these merchants could buy from farmers or sell in cities. Those found violating these "mandi" rules were severely punished, often by mutilation. Taxes collected in the form of grain were stored in the kingdom's storage. During famines that followed, these granaries ensured sufficient food for the army.^[54]

Historians note Ala ud-Din Khalji as being a tyrant. Anyone Ala ud-Din suspected of being a threat to this power was killed along with the women and children of that family. In 1298, between 15,000 and 30,000 people near Delhi, who had recently converted to Islam, were slaughtered in a single day, due to fears of an uprising.^[60] He is also known for his cruelty against kingdoms he defeated in battle.

After Ala ud-Din's death in 1316, his eunuch general Malik Kafur, who was born in a Hindu family in India and had converted to Islam, tried to assume power. He lacked the support of Persian and Turkic nobility and was subsequently killed.^[54] The last Khalji ruler was Ala ud-Din Khalji's 18-year-old son Qutb ud-Din Mubarak Shah Khalji, who ruled for four years before he was killed by



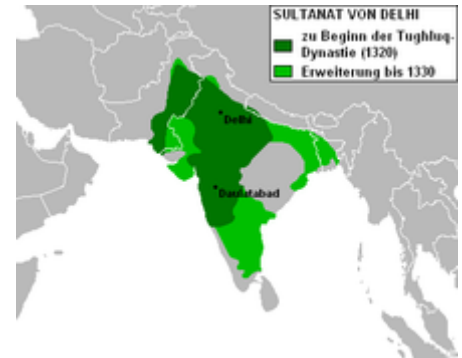
Alai Gate and Qutub Minar were built during the Mamluk and Khalji dynasties of the Delhi Sultanate.^[37]

Khusro Khan, another of Ala ud-Din's generals. Khusro Khan's reign lasted only a few months, when Ghazi Malik, later to be called Ghiyath al-Din Tughlaq, killed him and assumed power in 1320, thus ending the Khalji dynasty and starting the Tughlaq dynasty.^{[39][60]}

Tughlaq

The Tughlaq dynasty lasted from 1320 to nearly the end of the 14th century. The first ruler Ghazi Malik rechristened himself as Ghiyath al-Din Tughlaq and is also referred to in scholarly works as Tughlak Shah. He was of Turko-Indian origins; his father was a Turkic slave and his mother was a Hindu.^[4] Ghiyath al-Din ruled for five years and built a town near Delhi named Tughlaqabad. According to some historians such as Vincent Smith,^[61] he was killed by his son Juna Khan, who then assumed power in 1325. Juna Khan rechristened himself as Muhammad bin Tughlaq and ruled for 26 years.^[62] During his rule, Delhi Sultanate reached its peak in terms of geographical reach, covering most of the Indian subcontinent.^[10]

Muhammad bin Tughlaq was an intellectual, with extensive knowledge of the Quran, Fiqh, poetry and other fields. He was also deeply suspicious of his kinsmen and wazirs (ministers), extremely severe with his opponents, and took decisions that caused economic upheaval. For example, he ordered minting of coins from base metals with face value of silver coins - a decision that failed because ordinary people minted counterfeit coins from base metal they had in their houses and used them to pay taxes anjizya.^{[10][61]}



Delhi Sultanate from 1321-1330 AD under the Tughlaq dynasty. After 1330, various regions rebelled against the Sultanate and the kingdom shrank.



Muhammad bin Tughlaq moved his capital to the Deccan Plateau and build a new capital called Daulatabad (shown). He later reversed his decision because Daulatabad lacked the fresh water supply that Delhi had.^[61]



A base metal coin of Muhammad bin Tughlaq that led to an economic collapse.

On another occasion, after becoming upset by some accounts, or to run the Sultanate from the center of India by other accounts, Muhammad bin Tughlaq ordered the transfer of his capital from Delhi to Devagiri in modern-day Maharashtra (renaming it to Daulatabad), by forcing the mass migration of Delhi's population. Those who refused were killed. One blind person who failed to move to Daulatabad was dragged for the entire journey of 40 days - the man died, his body fell apart, and only his tied leg reached Daulatabad.^[61] The capital move failed because Daulatabad was arid and did not have enough drinking water to support the new capital. The capital then returned to Delhi. Nevertheless, Muhammad bin Tughlaq's orders affected history as a large number of Delhi Muslims who came to the Deccan area did not return to Delhi to live near Muhammad bin Tughlaq. This influx of the then-Delhi residents into the Deccan region led to a growth of Muslim population in central and southern India.^[10] Muhammad bin Tughlaq's adventures in the Deccan region also marked campaigns of destruction and desecration of Hindu and Jain temples, for example the Swayambhu Shiva Temple and the Thousand Pillar Temple.^[63]

Revolts against Muhammad bin Tughlaq began in 1327, continued over his reign, and over time the geographical reach of the Sultanate shrunk. The Vijayanagara Empire originated in southern India as a direct response to attacks from the Delhi Sultanate,^[64] and liberated south India from the Delhi Sultanate's rule.^[65] In 1337, Muhammad bin Tughlaq ordered an attack on China, sending part of his forces over the Himalayas. Few survived the journey, and they were executed upon their return for failing.^[61] During his reign, state revenues collapsed from his policies such as the base metal coins from 1329-1332. To cover state expenses, he sharply raised taxes. Those who failed to pay taxes were hunted and executed. Famines,

widespread poverty, and rebellion grew across the kingdom. In 1338 his own nephew rebelled in Malwa, whom he attacked, caught, and flayed alive. By 1339, the eastern regions under local Muslim governors and southern parts led by Hindu kings had revolted and

declared independence from the Delhi Sultanate. Muhammad bin Tughlaq did not have the resources or support to respond to the shrinking kingdom.^[66] The historian Walford chronicled Delhi and most of India faced severe famines during Muhammad bin Tughlaq's rule in the years after the base metal coin experiment.^{[67][68]} By 1347, the Bahmani Sultanate had become an independent and competing Muslim kingdom in Deccan region of South Asia.^[21]

Muhammad bin Tughlaq died in 1351 while trying to chase and punish people in Gujarat who were rebelling against the Delhi Sultanate.^[66] He was succeeded by Firuz Shah Tughlaq (1351–1388), who tried to regain the old kingdom boundary by waging a war with Bengal for 11 months in 1359. However, Bengal did not fall. Firuz Shah ruled for 37 years. His reign attempted to stabilize the food supply and reduce famines by commissioning an irrigation canal from the Yamuna river. An educated sultan, Firuz Shah left a memoir.^[72] In it he wrote that he banned the practice of torture, such as amputations, tearing out of eyes, sawing people alive, crushing people's bones as punishment, pouring molten lead into throats, setting people on fire, driving nails into hands and feet, among others.^[73] He also wrote that

he did not tolerate attempts by Rafawiz Shia

Muslim and Mahdi sects from proselytizing people into their faith, nor did he tolerate Hindus who tried to rebuild temples that his armies had destroyed.^[74] As punishment for proselytizing, Firuz Shah put many Shias, Mahdi, and Hindus to death (siyasat). Firuz Shah Tughlaq also lists his accomplishments to include converting Hindus to Sunni Islam by announcing an exemption from taxes and jizya for those who convert, and by lavishing new converts with presents and honours. Simultaneously, he raised taxes and jizya, assessing it at three levels, and stopping the practice of his predecessors who had historically exempted all Hindu Brahmins from the jizya.^{[73][75]} He also vastly expanded the number of slaves in his service and those of Muslim nobles. The reign of Firuz Shah Tughlaq was marked by reduction in extreme forms of torture, eliminating favours to select parts of society, but also increased intolerance and persecution of targeted groups.^[73]

The death of Firuz Shah Tughlaq created anarchy and disintegration of the kingdom. The last rulers of this dynasty both called themselves Sultan from 1394 to 1397: Nasir ud-Din Mahmud Shah Tughlaq, the grandson of Firuz Shah Tughlaq who ruled from Delhi, and Nasir ud-Din Nusrat Shah Tughlaq, another relative of Firuz Shah Tughlaq who ruled from Firozabad, which was a few miles from Delhi.^[76] The battle between the two relatives continued till Timur's invasion in 1398. Timur, also known as Tamerlane in Western scholarly literature, was the Turkic ruler of the Timurid Empire. He became aware of the weakness and quarreling of the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate, so he marched with his army to Delhi, plundering and killing all the way.^{[77][78]} Estimates for the massacre by Timur in Dehli range from 100,000 to 200,000 people.^{[79][80]} Timur had no intention of staying in or ruling India. He looted the lands he crossed, then plundered and burnt Delhi. Over five days, Timur and his army raged a massacre. Then he collected and carried the wealth, captured women and slaves (particularly skilled artisans), and returned to Samarkand. The people and lands within the Delhi Sultanate were left in a state of anarchy, chaos, and pestilence.^[76] Nasir ud-Din Mahmud Shah Tughlaq, who had fled to Gujarat during Timur's invasion, returned and nominally ruled as the last ruler of Tughlaq dynasty, as a puppet of various factions at the court.^[81]



The Tughlaq dynasty is remembered for its architectural patronage, particularly for ancient ats (pillars, left image),^[69] dated to be from the 3rd century BC, and of Buddhist and Hindu origins. The Sultanate initially wanted to use the pillars to make mosque minarets. Firuz Shah Tughlaq decided otherwise and had them installed near mosques. The meaning of Brahmi script on the pillar at right was unknown in Firuz Shah's time.^[70] The inscription was deciphered by James Prinsep in 1837; the pillar script of Emperor Ashoka asked people of his and future generations to seek adharmic (virtuous) life, use persuasion in religion, grant freedom from religious persecution, stop all killing, and be compassionate to all living beings.^[71]

Sayyid

The Sayyid dynasty was a Turkic dynasty^[82] that ruled the Delhi Sultanate from 1415 to 1451.^[21] The Timurid invasion and plunder had left the Delhi Sultanate in shambles, and little is known about the rule by the Sayyid dynasty. Annemarie Schimmel notes the first ruler of the dynasty as Khizr Khan, who assumed power by claiming to represent Timur. His authority was questioned even by those near Delhi. His successor was Mubarak Khan, who rechristened himself as Mubarak Shah and tried to regain lost territories in Punjab, unsuccessfully.^[81]

With the power of the Sayyid dynasty faltering, Islam's history on the Indian subcontinent underwent a profound change, according to Schimmel.^[81] The previously dominant Sunni sect of Islam became diluted, alternate Muslim sects such as Shia rose, and new competing centers of Islamic culture took roots beyond Delhi.

The Sayyid dynasty was displaced by the Lodi dynasty in 1451.

Lodi

The Lodi dynasty belonged to the Pashtun^[83] (Afghan) Lodi tribe.^[82] Bahlul Khan Lodi started the Lodi dynasty and was the first Pashtun, to rule the Delhi Sultanate.^[84] Bahlul Lodi began his reign by attacking the Muslim Jaunpur Sultanate to expand the influence of the Delhi Sultanate, and was partially successful through a treaty. Thereafter, the region from Delhi to Varanasi (then at the border of Bengal province), was back under influence of Delhi Sultanate.

After Bahlul Lodi died, his son Nizam Khan assumed power, rechristened himself as Sikandar Lodi and ruled from 1489 to 1517.^[85] One of the better known rulers of the dynasty, Sikandar Lodi expelled his brother Barbak Shah from Jaunpur, installed his son Jalal Khan as the ruler, then proceeded east to make claims on Bihar. The Muslim governors of Bihar agreed to pay tribute and taxes, but operated independent of the Delhi Sultanate. Sikandar Lodi led a campaign of destruction of temples, particularly around Mathura. He also moved his capital and court from Delhi to Agra,^[86] an ancient Hindu city that had been destroyed during the plunder and attacks of the early Delhi Sultanate period. Sikandar thus erected buildings with Indo-Islamic architecture in Agra during his rule, and the growth of Agra continued during the Mughal Empire, after the end of Delhi Sultanate.^{[84][87]}



Delhi Sultanate during Babur's invasion.

Sikandar Lodi died a natural death in 1517, and his second son Ibrahim Lodi assumed power. Ibrahim did not enjoy the support of Afghan and Persian nobles or regional chiefs.^[88] Ibrahim attacked and killed his elder brother Jalal Khan, who was installed as the governor of Jaunpur by his father and had the support of the amirs and chiefs.^[84] Ibrahim Lodi was unable to consolidate his power, and after Jalal Khan's death, the governor of Punjab, Daulat Khan Lodi, reached out to the Mughal Babur and invited him to attack Delhi Sultanate.^[86] Babur defeated and killed Ibrahim Lodi in the Battle of Panipat in 1526. The death of Ibrahim Lodi ended the Delhi Sultanate, and the Mughal Empire replaced it.

Economy

Before and during the Delhi Sultanate, Islamic civilization was the most cosmopolitan civilization of the Middle Ages. It had a multicultural and pluralistic society, and wide-ranging international networks, including social and economic networks, spanning large parts of Afro-Eurasia, leading to escalating circulation of goods, peoples, technologies and ideas. While initially disruptive due to the passing of power from native Indian elites to Turkic Muslim elites, the Delhi Sultanate was responsible for integrating the Indian subcontinent into a growing world system, drawing India into a wider international network, which led to cultural and social enrichment in the Indian subcontinent.^[13]

Economist Angus Maddison has estimated that, during the Medieval Delhi Sultanate era, between 1000 and 1500, India's GDP grew nearly 80% up to \$60.5 billion in 1500.^[16]

The worm gear roller cotton gin was invented in the Indian subcontinent during the early Delhi Sultanate era of the 13th–14th centuries,^[89] and is still used in India through to the present day.^[90] Another innovation, the incorporation of the crank handle in the cotton gin, first appeared in the Indian subcontinent some time during the late Delhi Sultanate or the early Mughal Empire.^[91] The production of cotton, which may have largely been spun in the villages and then taken to towns in the form of yarn to be woven into cloth textiles, was advanced by the diffusion of the spinning wheel across India during the Delhi Sultanate era, lowering the costs of yarn and helping to increase demand for cotton. The diffusion of the spinning wheel, and the incorporation of the worm gear and crank handle into the roller cotton gin, led to greatly expanded Indian cotton textile production.^[92]

Demographics

The Indian population had largely been stagnant at 75 million during the Middle Kingdoms era from 1 AD to 1000 AD. During the Medieval Delhi Sultanate era from 1000 to 1500, India experienced lasting population growth for the first time in a thousand years, with its population increasing nearly 50% to 10 million by 1500 AD.^{[93][94]}

Culture

While the Indian subcontinent has had invaders from Central Asia since ancient times, what made the Muslim invasions different is that unlike the preceding invaders who assimilated into the prevalent social system, the successful Muslim conquerors retained their Islamic identity and created new legal and administrative systems that challenged and usually in many cases superseded the existing systems of social conduct and ethics, even influencing the non-Muslim rivals and common masses to a large extent, though the non-Muslim population was left to their own laws and customs.^{[95][96]} They also introduced new cultural codes that in some ways were very different from the existing cultural codes. This led to the rise of a new Indian culture which was mixed in nature, different from ancient Indian culture. The overwhelming majority of Muslims in India were Indian natives converted to Islam. This factor also played an important role in the synthesis of cultures.^[97]

The Hindustani language (Hindi-Urdu) began to emerge in the Delhi Sultanate period, developed from the Middle Indo-Aryan *apabhramsha* vernaculars of North India. Amir Khusro, who lived in the 13th century CE during the Delhi Sultanate period in North India, used a form of Hindustani, which was the *lingua franca* of the period, in his writings and referred to it as *Hindavi*.^[17]

Military

The bulk of Delhi Sultanate's army consisted of nomadic Turkic Mamluk military slaves, who were skilled in nomadic cavalry warfare. A major military contribution of the Delhi Sultanate was their successful campaigns in repelling the Mongol Empire's invasions of India, which could have been devastating for the Indian subcontinent, like the Mongol invasions of China, Persia and Europe. The Delhi Sultanate's Mamluk army were skilled in the same style of nomadic cavalry warfare used by the Mongols, making them successful in repelling the Mongol invasions, as was the case for the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt. Were it not for the Delhi Sultanate, it is possible that the Mongol Empire may have been successful in invading India.^[18] The strength of the armies changes according to time. According to *firishta* during the battle of *kili* Alauddin led an army of 300,000 cavalry and 2,700 elephants. During the *tughlaq* period Muhammad bin tughlaq wrote an army of 3 million. The soldiers use weapons such as sword, spears, shields etc. Armour such as steel helmet and chainmail is commonly used.

Temple desecration

Historian Richard Eaton has tabulated a campaign of destruction of idols and temples by Delhi Sultans, intermixed with instances of years where the temples were protected from desecration.^{[19][99][100]} In his paper, he has listed 37 instances of Hindu temples being desecrated or destroyed in India during the Delhi Sultanate, from 1234 to 1518, for which reasonable evidences are available.^{[101][102][103]} He also noted there were also many instances of Delhi sultans, who often had Hindu ministers, ordering the protection, maintenance and repairing of temples, according to both Muslim and Hindu sources. For example, a Sanskrit inscription notes that Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq repaired a Siva temple in Bidar after his Deccan conquest. There was often a pattern of Delhi sultans plundering or damaging temples during conquest, and then patronizing or repairing temples after conquest. This pattern

came to an end with the Mughal Empire, where Akbar the Great's chief minister Abu'l-Fazl criticized the excesses of earlier sultans such as Mahmud of Ghazni.^[104]

In many cases, the demolished remains, rocks and broken statue pieces of temples destroyed by Delhi sultans were reused to build mosques and other buildings. For example, the Qutb complex in Delhi was built from stones of 27 demolished Hindu and Jain temples by some accounts.^[105] Similarly, the Muslim mosque in Khanapur, Maharashtra was built from the looted parts and demolished remains of Hindu temples.^[39] Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji destroyed Buddhist and Hindu libraries and their manuscripts at Nalanda and Odantapuri Universities in 1193 AD at the beginning of the Delhi Sultanate.^{[63][106]}

The first historical record of a campaign of destruction of temples and defacement of faces or heads of Hindu idols lasted from 1193 through the early 13th century in Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh under the command of Ghori. Under the Khaljis, the campaign of temple desecration expanded to Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra, and continued through the late 13th century.^[19] The campaign extended to Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu under Malik Kafur and Ulugh Khan in the 14th century, and by the Bahmanis in 15th century.^[63] Orissa temples were destroyed in the 14th century under the Tughlaqs.

Beyond destruction and desecration, the sultans of the Delhi Sultanate in some cases had forbidden reconstruction of damaged Hindu Jain and Buddhist temples, and they prohibited repairs of old temples or construction of any new temples.^{[107][108]} In certain cases, the Sultanate would grant a permit for repairs and construction of temples if the patron or religious community paid jizya (fee, tax). For example, a proposal by the Chinese to repair Himalayan Buddhist temples destroyed by the Sultanate army was refused, on the grounds that such temple repairs were only allowed if the Chinese agreed to pay jizya tax to the treasury of the Sultanate.^{[109][110]} In his memoirs, Firoz Shah Tughlaq describes how he destroyed temples and built mosques instead and killed those who dared build new temples.^[111] Other historical records from *wazirs*, *amirs* and the court historians of various Sultans of the Delhi Sultanate describe the grandeur of idols and temples they witnessed in their campaigns and how these were destroyed and desecrated.^[112]

Temple desecration during Delhi Sultanate period, a list prepared by Richard Eaton in *Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States*^{[19][113]}

Sultan / Agent	Dynasty	Years	Temple Sites Destroyed	States
Muhammad Ghori, Qutb al-Din Aibak	Mamluk	1193-1290	<u>Ajmer</u> , <u>Samana</u> , <u>Kuhram</u> , <u>Delhi</u> , <u>Kol</u> , <u>Varanasi</u>	Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh
Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji Shams ud-Din Iltumish, Jalal ud-Din Firuz Khalji, Ala ud-Din Khalji, Malik Kafur	Mamluk and Khalji	1290-1320	<u>Nalanda</u> , <u>Odantapuri</u> , <u>Vikramashila</u> , <u>Bhilsa</u> , <u>Ujjain</u> , <u>Jhain</u> , <u>Vijapur</u> , <u>Devagiri</u> , <u>Somnath</u> , <u>Chidambaram</u> , <u>Madurai</u>	Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu
<u>Ulugh Khan</u> , Firuz Shah Tughlaq, Nahar, Muzaffar Khan	Khalji and Tughlaq	1320-1395 ^[114]	<u>Somnath</u> , <u>Warangal</u> , <u>Bodhan</u> , <u>Pillalamarri</u> , <u>Puri</u> , <u>Sainthali</u> , <u>Idar</u> , <u>Somnath</u> ^[115]	Gujarat, Telangana, Orissa, Haryana
Sikandar, Muzaffar Shah, Ahmad Shah, Mahmud	Sayyid	1400-1442	<u>Paraspur</u> , <u>Bijbehara</u> , <u>Tripuresvara</u> , <u>Idar</u> , <u>Diu</u> , <u>Manvi</u> , <u>Sidhpur</u> , <u>Delwara</u> , <u>Kumbhalmer</u>	Gujarat, Rajasthan
Suhrab, Begdha, Bahmani, Khalil Shah, Khawwas Khan, Sikandar Lodi, Ibrahim Lodi	Lodi	1457-1518	<u>Mandalgarh</u> , <u>Malan</u> , <u>Dwarka</u> , <u>Kondapalle</u> , <u>Kanchi</u> , <u>Amod</u> , <u>Nagarkot</u> , <u>Utgir</u> , <u>Narwar</u> , <u>Gwalior</u>	Rajasthan, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh



The Somnath Temple in Gujarat was repeatedly destroyed by Islamic armies and rebuilt by Hindus. It was destroyed by Delhi Sultanate's army in 1299 AD.^[98]

See also

- Delhi Sultanate literature
- Iconoclasm
- Ibrahim Lodhi's Tomb
- Persianate states
- Tomb of Bahlul Lodi
- Turkish slaves in the Delhi Sultanate

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113. Richard Eaton, *Temple desecration and Indo-Muslim states*, *Frontline* (January 5, 2001), pp 72-73
114. Ulugh Khan also known as Almas Beg was brother of Ala-al Din Khalji; his destruction campaign overlapped the two dynasties
115. Somnath temple went through cycles of destruction by Sultans and rebuilding by Hindus

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