

Quadrant II – Transcript and Related Materials

Programme: Bachelor of Arts

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Paper Title: History of Medieval India (9th to 18th Centuries)

Unit: II

Module Name: Foundation of Delhi Sultanate: Turks

Module No: 05

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Notes:

The Turks

- The period from 1000 to 1200 saw rapid changes both in West and Central Asia and in north India.
- It were these developments which led to the incursion of the Turks into northern India leading to their rule towards the end of the period.
- The mercenary character of the Turkish soldiers and their habit of ruthless plunder led to the destruction of the Samanid kingdom of Persia, on whose ashes the Islamized Turks built their own states.
- One such state by the Ilbari Tribe was established in Ghazni, where Mahmud came to power in 998 CE
- **Turkish incursion into India**
- The Islamized Turkish tribes were to emerge as the greatest defenders and crusaders of Islam and their love for plunder went side by side with defense of Islam.
- Mahmud of Ghazni is said to have raided India 17 times.
- In India the Hindushahi kingdom with their capital at Peshawar in the Punjab resisted him till 1015,when they finally collapsed.
- Mahmud's raids were aimed at plundering the rich temples and towns and return loaded with fabulous wealth, Somnath temple and town in Gujarat was one of his victim in 1225.

- **Battles of Tarrain**

- Mahmud of Ghur ascended the throne of Ghazni in 1173
- He fought two battles at Tarrain-1191 – 1192
- In the first he was defeated by Prithviraj Chauhan but in the second Rajputs lost as the king of Kanauj did not join them. Mahmud later defeated him at the battle of Chandawar in 1194.
- Thus the victories in the second Battle of Tarrain and the Battle of Chandawar and the conquest of Bihar and Bengal by Bakhtiyar Khalji, who destroyed the Nalanda university there
- helped the Ilbari Turks to plant their foothold in Northern India
- Leaving Qutb ud din Aibak in charge of these Indian territories extending from Punjab to Bengal, Mahmud of Ghur went back to Ghazni.

- **Qutb ud din Aibak 1206-1210**

Source: <<https://studyforhindi.blogspot.com/2018/10/Kutubuddin-aibak.html>>

- A slave of Mohammad of Ghuri, rose to the position of commander of his army.
- Left in charge of Indian territories by Ghuri.
- Declared himself independent king after the death of Ghuri.
- He played an important role in the expansion of the Delhi sultanate and was responsible for severing its links from Ghazni.
- This helped to prevent India being drawn into Central Asian politics
- Aibak died in 1210, while playing Polo. He was Called *Lakh Baksh* or giver of lakhs as he generously distributed his loot among Turks.
- He converted many Hindu temples into Mosques e.g two mosques at Delhi and Ajmer, which still show remnants of the temples.

- **Shams ud din Iltutmish (1211-1236)**

Source: <<http://myupscprelims.blogspot.com/2016/06/shamsuddin-iltutmish-1211-1236-ad-who.html>>

- Originally a slave of Ghuri, recommended to Aibak.
- Became sultan in 1211, overthrowing Aram Shah, son of Aibak.
- Great man of affairs and able administrator and conqueror.
- He reconquered Punjab, Sind, Multan, Bengal and Bihar and subdued the Rajputs. He tried to take Gujarat but was repulsed with losses.

- He plundered Ujjain and destroyed the famous Mahakal temple.
- Iltutmish is called the real founder of Delhi Sultanate as he consolidated and reconquered lost territories in the north.
- **Razia Sultan (1236-1240)**
Source: <https://astanatimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/shamsudin_iltumush.jpg>
- Daughter of Iltutmish
- Though nominated successor by her father Iltutmish, she had to contend against her brothers as well as powerful Turkish nobles and could rule for only three years
- **Main features of Raziya's reign**
- Her reign marked the beginning of a struggle for power between the monarchy and the Turkish chiefs, the Forty.
- She discarded the female attire and started holding court with her face unveiled.
- She led the army in war and even went hunting
- She successfully established law and order in her kingdom
- But her attempt to create a party of loyalist led to an opposition and a rebellion in Lahore. However a internal rebellion led to her demise .
- Minhaj us Siraj- "A great sovereign, sagacious, just, beneficent, patron of learned, a dispenser of Justice, cherisher of her subjects, and war like talent and endowed with all the admirable attributes and qualifications necessary for kings"
- But laments- alas of what use are all these qualifications for Her? She is only a woman !
- **Ghiyas ud din Balban (1265-1287)**
British Library: English Colonial Photograph of a Miniature of Sultan Ghayas ud din
Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sultan_Ghayas-ud-Din_Balban.jpg>
- A slave of Iltutmish, Manumitted and promoted by Raziah Sultan.
- He joined the Forty and betrayed her. Ghiyas ud din Balban ascended the throne by poisoning reigning the sultan (his son-in-law) and broke the power of the Forty
- His accession began an era of strong, centralized government and he constantly sought to increase the power and prestige of the monarchy
- Balban adopted a policy of blood and iron while dealing with rebels, they were hunted down and killed, their villages destroyed and men, women and children enslaved

- By these harsh methods he controlled the situation, he refused to laugh or joke in the court and did not cry openly even when informed of his son's death. He Introduced Persian court ceremonials like ***Sijda, Poibos, Nauroz.***
- They destroyed rich Hindu temples and towns and enslaved and converted forcefully men , women and children.
- However they largely remained occupied with the suppression of revolts and consolidation of their authority
- They made no administrative changes nor could they leave us any magnificent architectural buildings.