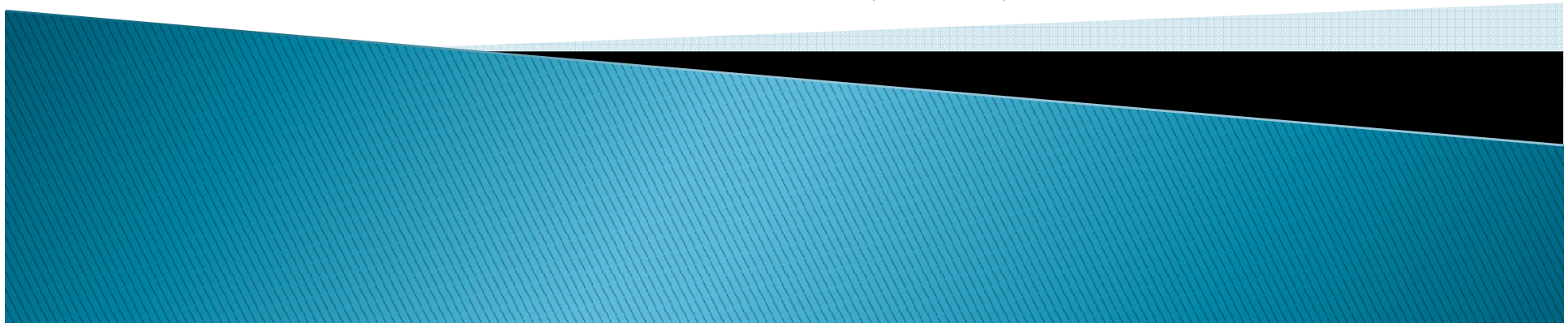


ZIYAUDDIN BARANI(PART-1)

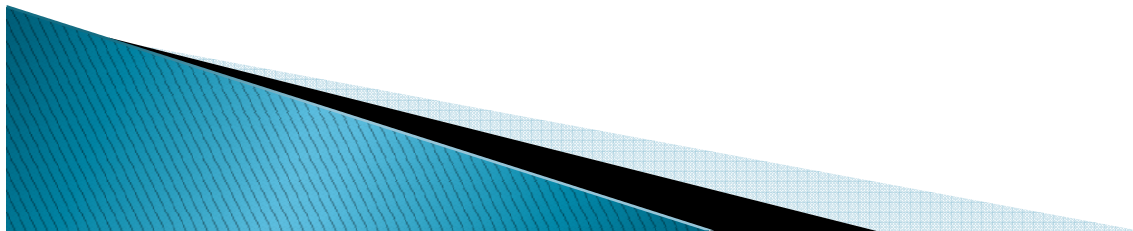
M.A.(HISTORY) SEM-3 CC:10

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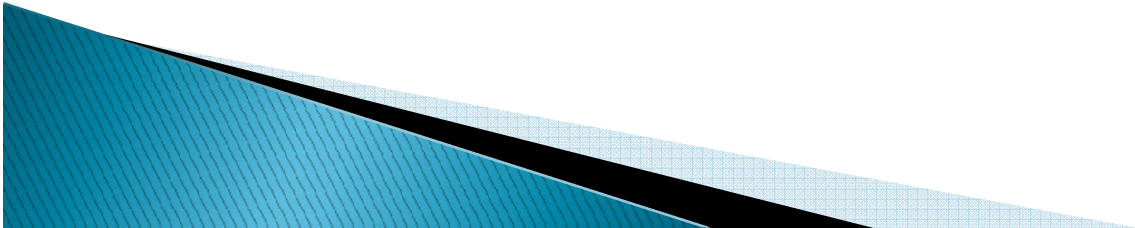
INTRODUCTION

Ziyauddin Barani was the greatest of all the contemporary historians of early medieval India. He belonged to an aristocratic family of the earliest Turkish immigrants to India. His writings are indispensable for the history of Delhi Sultanate. He was a great scholar who is credited with eight historical works most of which except a few cannot be traced at present. He dwells on the use of history, its method of writing and its place in the scheme of education. In spite of a number of defects in his account he is the most important historian of medieval India.



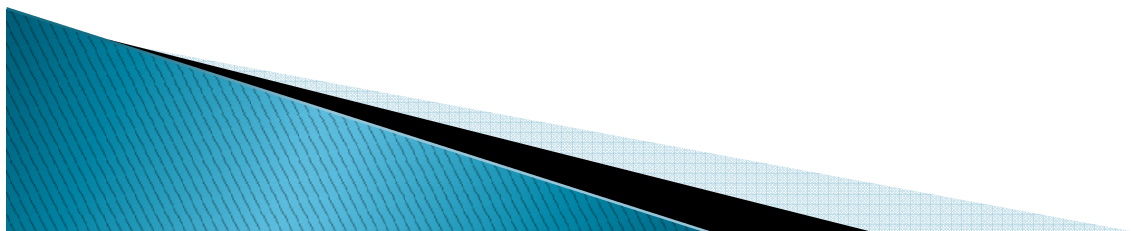
HIS LIFE

Ziyauddin Barani, born at Baran (modern Bulandshahar in U.P) In 684 A.H. / 1258 A.D, was the first Indo-Persian historian to be born and brought up in India. He completed his *Tarikh-I-Firuz Shahi* at the age of seventy-four. Since he completed his *Tarikh* in the year 758 A.H/1359 A.D, he must have been born in or about the year 684 A.H / 1285 A.D. in Ghiyasuddin's reign. After the conquest of Baran by Muhammad Ghori, it is probable that Barani's family along with others settled there. It is testified by *Mir Khurd* that Barani came of respectable ancestors. The father of his maternal grandmother *Sipah-salar Husamuddin* held an important post in the Court of Balban, and later on he was appointed Governor of Lakhnauti in Bengal.



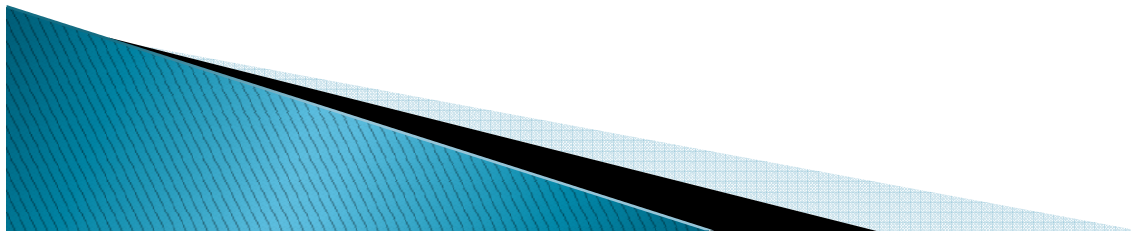
HIS LIFE

His mother was the daughter of *Sayyid Jalal Caithali*. His father *Muwayyadul Mulk* was a deputy governor and Khwajah of the province of Baran for 17 years. Barani himself held the post of royal nadim in the Court of Muhammad bin Tughluq who often consulted him on crucial matters. His uncle, *Alaul Mulk* who helped Alauddin in his assassination coup of Jalaluddin was made governor of Kara and Oudh by Alauddin Khalji, later Muwayyadul- Mulk was appointed the governor of Baran and Alaul Mulk was made a Kotwal of Delhi.



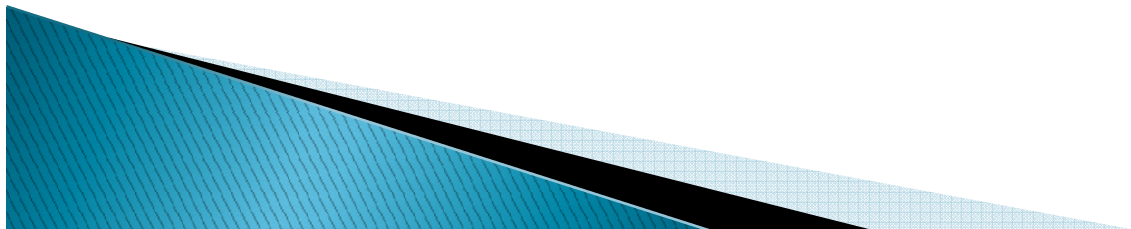
HIS LIFE

About Barani's early education no record is available. He gives the names of forty six renowned teachers of Alauddin's time whose learned discourses and associations elevated his mental dimensions. Being deeply influenced by the audience of *Sheikh Nizamuddin Auliya* he as a mark of devotion took up his abode at Ghyathpur where the Sheikh lived. He was on equally good terms with *Amir Khusrau* whom he calls the greatest of all ancient and modern poets. His youth passed in luxury and pleasure, a gorgeous life after the fashion of the great nobles of the time. He was faithful and favorite courtier of Muhammad bin Tughluq but at times was extremely critical



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of his policies. When Muhammad bin Tughluq died the hay-day of Barani's life also came to an end. His life lost, all glamour and prosperity. Period of gloom and misery betook him and he became almost pauper. The alignment of Barani with *Khwajah Jahan* after the death of Ghyasuddin Tughluq was enough to mar the relations between Barani and Firuz Shah Tughluq which was further aggravated by rival opponents in the court, Barani's frantic attempts to prove his loyalty to the Sultan proved futile. Though in abject poverty, for six years, he lived to see the glorious reign of Firuz Shah in course of which he wrote in book *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*.



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His wretched condition compelled him to break away all ties from Delhi and retire to an obscure village near Delhi. Such was his plight that he could not but lament his fate in his writing, frequently asking forgiveness from God for his sins and dreading his fate on the day of judgment of which frequent references are found in his book. He planned to write 101 chapters on Firuz Shah but the project was cut short by his untimely death after recording the events of six years of Firuz Shah's reign in whose name he dedicates his book. His unfinished task was taken up by *Shams Siraj Afif*. According to Mir Khurd, though Firuz Shah had fixed a small pension for, him, he died penniless, with no coins even to provide for his shroud and his corpse was shrouded in sack-cloth and



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buried near *Sheikh Nizamuddin Auliya's* shrine. The date of his death is not known but presumably he did not live long after completing his *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* .

Barani possessed remarkable intellect, superb wit, and versatile temper, and enlivened the parties, he attended during his hay-days, with his quick wit and humor. He left behind numerous works of which *Sinai-Muhammedi, Salavat-i-Kabir, Enayet-Namah-i-Ilahi, Maathir-i-Saadat, Hasrat Nameh, and Akhbar-i-Barmakiyan*, a history of the Barmekids have been prominently mentioned by contemporary and later authors. All the works have been lost in oblivion except *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi and Fatawa-i-Jahandari* which bear ample testimony of Barani's talent and



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scholarship. It is a pity that Barani is known and acknowledged only as a historian despite the fact that he was endowed with poetic gift of considerably high merit. He exercised his hand on almost all forms of versification but they did not stand the test of time. We find some of his poetic compositions in Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi.

(To be continued)

