

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MONGOL PERIOD IN IRAN

Javed Siddiqui

Research Scholar, Department of Persian, Vasant Rao Naik Government Institute of Arts and Social Sciences, Nagpur

Dr. M. A. Siddiqui

Supervisor, Ex Professor and Head, Department of Persian, Vasant Rao Naik Government Institute of Arts and Social Sciences, Nagpur

Paper Received On: 25 JULY 2022

Peer Reviewed On: 31 AUGUST 2022

Published On: 01 SEPTEMBER 2022

Abstract

The Mongol period in Iran is divided into two phases. The first phase of invasion began in 1219 under the leadership of Chagatai Khan from Otrar, a town under the dominion of Khwarezm Empire which fell in 1220 after a siege of five months. Thereafter, Samarkand, the capital of Khwarezm Shahi Empire in 1220, Bukhara, Khorasan, Herat, Nishapur and Marv etc. all one by one went in the hands of Mongols. Thus, by 1221, the Chagatai Khan's campaign against Khwarezm Shah completed. The second phase of Mongol invasions of Iran, began under the leadership of Hulagu Khan from 1256, with military campaign against Assassins and ended with the sack of Baghdad in 1258. Both phases of the invasions of Mongol were brutal and highly destructive in nature. In these invasions innocent peoples were killed, towns and cities were ruined and plundered, scholars were killed and libraries were destroyed. However, in the second phase, after establishment of Ilkhanate in 1256 by Hulagu Khan, Iranian officials and scholars were involved in the administration and thus, for the first time Mongols and Iranians came into close contacts which helped in rebuilding Iran and in rehabilitating Iranian people. Hulagu Khan was appointed the first Il-khan who run the daily administration of Ilkhanate under the supervision of Great Khan. After Hulagu died in 1265 his successors ruled over Ilkhanate till 1335. Among the Il-khans of Iran Hulagu Khan, Abaqa Khan and Ghazan Khan are most famous for their works to keep the Ilkhanate intact and for bringing peace and prosperity in the country.

Keywords: Chagatai Khan, Hulagu Khan, Iran, Mongol, Period.

Introduction

In the true sense, the Mongol period in Iran is divided into two phases. The first phase started in 1219 with the invasion of Chagatai Khan on Otrar, a town under Khwarezm Shahi dynasty ruled by Alaaddin Mohammad-II Khwarezm Shah, (1200-1220) which continued till

1221. During first phase, all the major cities like Bukhara, Samarqand, Khorasan, Nishapur, Herat and Marve fell in the hands of Mongols. The first phase of invasion was more destructive and brutal than the second. In the first, the entire Kharzam Shahi territories were over run by the army of Chaghezi Khan and almost the maximum villages, towns and cities were destroyed and plundered in which Balkh, Bokhara, Herat, Nishapur and Samarqand are notable. Innocent men, women and children were mercilessly killed. They even did not spare scholars. Not only houses but libraries with rare books were also destroyed and the irrigation system was damaged.

The second phase of Mongol invasion started under the leadership of Halaku from 1256 and came to the end with the sack of Baghdad in 1258. In the second phase Halaku had destroyed the forts of Assassins and captured their leader Ruknuddin Khur Shah which brought laurel for Halaku Khan but the sack of Baghdad, its plunder, destruction, killing of innocent people and Caliph Al-Mustasim were considered acts of barbarism. However, in 1256 after establishment of Ilkhanate in Iran by Halaku Khan, the situation started changing. Iranian people were kept as high rank officials to run the administration and scholars were promoted. Thus, with the mingling of Mongols and Iranians, a fresh chapter of construction and rehabilitation started in Iran till 1235, with the fall and disintegration of Ilkhanate. Persian language and literature also flourished and especially, Persian historiography witnessed a tremendous rise. Persian language and literature expanded beyond Iran in India and Turkey and Persian language adopted Mongol words which became part of Persian language and literature.

Review of Literature

Review of literature on the period concerned suggests that a lot of literature is available on Mongol and Iran in the shape of articles and books. During Mongol period in Iran, due to encouragement of rulers, historiography witnessed a tremendous rise and also later historians have left their works on the period. There are a lot of articles also available on Mongol and Iran and Mongol rule on Iran however, not a single article is found on this particular topic hence, this topic is new on the subject and therefore chosen for this research article.

Importance of the Topic

The importance of the topic lies in the fact that, though a lot of literature is available on Mongol and Iran in the shape of articles and books, there is not a single article on this topic. During Mongol period in Iran due to encouragement of rulers, historiography witnessed a tremendous rise which resulted in the production of many important books on history and also later historians have left their works on the Mongol and Iran. There are also a lot of articles

available on Mongol period in Iran and Mongol rule on Iran however, there is not a single article on this particular topic hence, this topic is new on the subject and here lies the importance of this topic.

Origin of Mongols

The history of the origin of Mongol in Iran begins with Changez Khan. He was born in 1162 A.D. His original name was Temujin. His father Yesugei Bagatur died when he was a little boy. Actually, the Mongols originated from the steppes of Central Asia, a vast and harsh region that shaped their nomadic lifestyle. The Mongol tribes were known for their horsemanship, archery skills, and tribal organization however, despite their prowess, the tribes were fragmented and often engaged in internal wars. Temujin unified these tribes and by 1186, achieved a major milestone by being declared 'Changez Khan', meaning 'universal ruler,' by a council of Mongol chiefs. Once the Mongol tribes were unified, Changez Khan turned his attention against the Western Xia and Jin dynasties in northern China. After victories in east, step by step Changez Khan advanced till at last, the great Mongol Assembly called the Qurrelatai and after meeting, elected him the Great Khan or Emperor. ¹ Changez Khan's entry in Iran was due to a diplomatic failure on the part of Alauddin Mohammad-II Kharzam Shah, who ruled over a vast Kharzam Shahi empire of Iran.

Immediate cause of Mongol invasion

After victories in China, Changez Khan had no desire to invade Iran. He wanted friendly relation with the Shah or king of Kharzam, Alauddin Mohammad-II (1200-1220), the ruler of Kharzam Shahi dynasty (1077-1231). But, Kharzam Shah was bent upon bringing about his own destruction and he did everything possible things to accomplish this. The immediate cause, which provoked Mongol invasion over Iran is said to be related with an incident. It is told that Changez Khan (1206-1227) sent to Otrar, (an important frontier town of Kharzam) a company of merchants in around 1218 laden with the wares of his country. Assuming that, they were Mongol spies, they were barbarously murdered at the instance of the Governor of Otrar. ²

When the news of murder of the merchants reached to Changez Khan, he dispatched an embassy consisting of two Mongols and a Muslim, formerly in the services of Sultan Tekish to the court of Kharzam Shah to protest the killing of merchants and demand surrender of the governor of Otrar. Instead of thinking over the demands put forth by the embassy, all the three were killed. When this news reached to the court, Changez Khan called an urgent meeting of the Qurrelatai, and took decision of invasion, over the kingdom of Kharzam Shah. ³

Mongol merchants were massacred by the governor of the town of Otrar. Even then Changez Khan wanted peace and sent ambassadors asking that the governor be punished. But Alauddin Kharzam Shah only to show his importance and superiority insulted ambassadors and put them to death. This was more than Changez could stand: but he was not to be hurried. He made careful preparations and then marched towards Iran. ⁴

The Mongol Invasions of Iran

The Mongol invasions on Iran were marked by a series of significant battles and campaigns, each contributing to the empire's consolidation of power in the region. In the beginning of thirteenth century most of the parts of Iran was ruled by Alauddin Mohammad-II Kharzam Shah (1195-1220), the ruler of Kharzam Shahi dynasty (1077-1221). His kingdom extended from Ural Mountains to Persian Gulf, and from Indus, almost, to the Euphrates and included nearly, the whole of Persia except, provinces of Fars and Khujistan. ⁵

In the autumn of 1219 Mongol invasion began with the attack on Transoxiana by Changez Khan, and Otrar town being the first target. Otrar fell in 1220 after a siege of five or six months. After Otrar, Uzkand and two or three other small towns were sacked, Jand was reduced after a short siege and in 1220 Bokhara was also captured to which they plundered and burnt, massacring a great number of inhabitants, and outraging modesty of their wives, sisters, and daughters. After plundering Bokhara and massacring its inhabitants, Mongols turned towards Samarqand. Only, after the siege of four five days Samarqand was also surrendered to the Mongols. In 1220 and thus, the conquest of Transoxiana virtually completed. After surrendered of the city followed plundering and massacring of its inhabitants and those escaped were made slaves. ⁶

Unable to face the Mongol, Alauddin Mohammad-II, Kharzam Shah continued to retreat, and believing that the Mongols would not dare to cross the Oxus, halted at Nishapur but three weeks later, hearing upon that Mongols were already in Khorasan, fled to Qazvin and from there he turned back to Gilan and Mazindran. By this time, he was deserted by most of his followers and was attacked by pleurisy. His entire family and wealth fell in the possession of Mongols and even he himself died a miserable and hunted fugitive on an Island in the Caspian, in 618A.H./1220 nominating his son Jalaluddin as his successor. ⁷

After Khorasan, Mongols turned towards Kharzam where they were offered stubborn resistance, which irritated them and after the surrender of the city Mongols put nearly all inhabitants to the swords, except artisans and crafts-men, who were transported to Mongolia. According to the author of the *Jame-ut-Tawarikh*, the besieging army numbered 50,000 and

each man of them had twenty-four prisoners to kill. The blood thirsty ferocity of Mongols seemed to have increased in proportion to their successes. At Balkh, Nusrat-Koh, Nasa, Nishapur, Marv and elsewhere, the same practice of brutality followed at the time of capture or surrender of the towns. Ibn-ul Asir says that those slain at-Marv alone were computed at 7,00,000. ⁸

At Nishapur the heads of the slain were cut-off and built into pyramids. Bamyan where a Mongol prince was slain in the attacks was destroyed, not even spoils of war being taken, so that for a hundred years it remained a desert void of inhabitants. The same attitude was applied towards the treasure of art and literature, preserved in these ancient cities.

With the fall of Samarqand (1220), the capital of Kharzam Shah, the first phase of campaign over Iran which began with the invasion of Chingiz Khan in 1219 came to an end. After the fall of Kharzam Shahi Empire, Chingiz Khan left Iran in 1222 putting the conquered Iranian territories under the charge of Chormaqan, a famous Mongol general, to look after the administrative affairs of the conquered territory.

Jalaluddin Mohammad who succeeded his father Alaaddin Mohammad-II kept fighting with Mongols to regain the lost territory but he was defeated again and again. While retreating he crossed the Sind River and entered to the territory of Raja Judi and got victory over him. He also sent ultimatum to the governor of Sindh and Sultan Iltutmish of Delhi. Meanwhile he got the news of retreat of the Mongol army and therefore, went back to Iran and got victory over all his adversaries. In short period Jalaluddin Kharzam Shah succeeded in recapturing Kirman, Faras, Ray and Isfahan and defeating caliph's army, reached to the boundary of Baghdad. Thereafter, he recaptured Gurjistan and Tiflis and reorganized the lost glory of the Kharzam Shahi dynasty.

After the fall of Samarqand, in 1222, Chingiz Khan returned to the East when almost all of the Kharzam Shahi territory had been overrun, and died in China on 18 August 1227. After two years of the death of Chingiz Khan, i.e. around 1229, his son Ogtai Khan ascended the throne and in 1335 made Qaraqum his capital and from there he ruled till his death in 1241. The council which appointed Ogtai successor of Chingiz Khan learnt about the activities of Jalaluddin Kharzam Shah and unanimously decided to send an army against the remnants of the Kharzam power, and General Chormaqan was appointed for this task. Jalaluddin Kharzam Shah's advancing army was checked by general Chormaqan and Jalaluddin was defeated. It is said that he suddenly died on 15 August 1231 or he was killed by someone could not be confirmed.

After the death of Sultan Jalaluddin, the military operations of Chormaqan were conducted in the Caucasus, Upper Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor, and henceforth he was to exercise only an indirect influence on the course of events in Persia. In his absence Chin-Temur, Dayir. Nosal and Uighur Korguz, respectively were assigned the responsibility of the daily affairs of the Iran till the arrival of Arghun Aqa in 1243.⁹

Arghun Aqa succeed Korguz in 1243 as the viceroy of the conquered territories in the West, i. e. of a region embracing Iran, the southern Caucasus, Upper Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor, the seat of power of Saljuk Sultanate of Rum, a major power in Iran, ruled by Sultan Kaykhusraw-II, was defeated at Kose Dag (1243) by Baiju, Kublai Khan's general. However, in 1253 Halaku Khan was made viceroy of Iran and on his arrival in November 1255. Arghun gave him the charge of viceroy of Iran and accompanied him as far as Shuburqan before once again continuing his journey to Mongolia to triumph over his accusers.¹⁰

Halaku Khan

Halaku's brother Mangu had been installed as Great Khan in 1251. He assigned the work to Halaku with leading a massive Mongol army to conquer or destroy the remaining Muslim states in southwestern Asia. Halaku was assigned the task of subjugation of Lurs of southern Iran, the destruction of the Nizari Ismaili state (the Assassins), the submission or destruction of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad, the submission or destruction of Ayyubid states in Syria based in Damascus and finally, the submission or destruction of the Bahri Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt.

By the order of Mungu Khan, two tenths of the empires fighting men were gathered for Halaku's army in 1252. Thus, the second phase of Mongol invasion over Iran began under the leadership of Halaku Khan. Halaku Khan marched from Qaraqoram in July 1252. He arrived in Transoxiana and reached Samarqand in September 1255. From Kish he dispatched messengers to the various Persian rulers to render assistance against assassins or suffer the consequences of their refusal or inactivity. Sa'd, the heir and successor (1226-60) of the Atabeg Muzaffaruddin of Fars, sultans of Rum, Izzuddin and Ruknuddin joined the battle against Assassins.

In 1256 Halaku Khan carried out a mission against the Assassins, razing their fortresses and destroying their power. the Assassins surrendered their impregnable fortress of Alamut without a fight, accepting a deal that spared the lives of their people. Ruknuddin, the leader of the Assassin was taken to Qaraqoram where he was put to death by the order of Mangu Khan.

In early 1256 Halaku chose Azerbaijan as his power base and withdrew to Maragha in northwest Iran, and there the Mongols settled permanently in Iran.

The Establishment of the Ilkhanate

It was in Maragha in the year 1256 that Halaku Khan established Ilkhanate to run the administration of Iran. Formation of the Ilkhanate was a strategic move by Halaku Khan to consolidate control over the newly conquered territories and integrate them into the broader empire. The formal establishment of the Ilkhanate was marked by the appointment of Halaku Khan as the Il-khan, a title that signified his role as the Mongol ruler of Iran and surrounding regions. The term 'Il-khan' means 'subordinate Khan' and reflected the administrative hierarchy within the Mongol Empire, with the Ilkhanate being a semi-autonomous region under the authority of the Great Khan. The Ilkhanate's administrative structure was centralized, with the Il-khan serving as the supreme ruler. The central government was responsible for overseeing all aspects of governance. Halaku Khan took the title of Il-khan or subordinate Khan, the title, which passed on to his successors and gave to the dynasty the name Il-khans of Iran.

Sack of Baghdad

Halaku's army set out for Baghdad in November 1257.¹¹ Halaku left Qazvin for Hamadan and was joined by Baiju, the successor of Chormaqan in the west. Halaku sent messages to Caliph Al-Mustasim to surrender Baghdad.¹² In September 1257 Halaku sent a final summon from Hamadam to the Caliph Al-Mustasim Billah (1242-1258) to surrender himself and Baghdad to the Mongols. But Caliph Mustasim Billah did not follow Halaku's order hence, in November 1257, on the pretext of noncompliance of the order, Halaku marched towards Baghdad and siege of Baghdad began on 13th February 1258, which lasted for a week. After capturing Baghdad Halaku left on 20 February for the village of Waqf, where on the same day Mustasim was killed by Halaku. Sadi's eulogy on the sack of Baghdad has become a classic in Persian literature. His couplets give an idea of the destruction, plundering, killing, and terror, which followed the sack and to which Sadi himself was a witness.

The invasion of Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid Caliphate, was one of the most consequential events of the Mongol campaign in Iran. The fall of Baghdad marked the end of the Abbasid Caliphate and had a profound impact on the Islamic world. According to J. Nehru 'Halaku captured Baghdad and put an end to that famous centre of art and learning, where for over 500 years treasures from all parts of the world had come and accumulated. Crowds of

scholars with their books fled from Baghdad to Cairo and Spain and a renaissance of art and learning took place there.’¹³

Death of Halaku

After completing the task assigned to him by his brother and establishing Ilkhanate to govern the conquered territory, Halaku died in the year 1265. He was succeeded by his son Abaqa Khan and thus, the successors of Halaku Khan ruled over Iran till 1335. After coming into contact with Iranian people and culture Mongols gradually transformed themselves and were no more barbaric and uncivilized as they exhibited in the beginning.

Abaqa Khan (1265-1282)

Abaqa Khan, the son of Halaku Khan, succeeded his father as Il-khan in 1265. After accession ceremony the new Il-Khan proceeded to appoint his commanders and officials. Shamsuddin Juwaini who was chosen as wazir by his father, was retained in that office, while his brother, the historian, Ala ul Mulk Ata Mali Juwaini, whom Halaku had made governor of Baghdad, now became lieutenant to the Noyan Suqunchaq, the viceroy of Iraq-e Arab and Fars. For his capital Abaqa chose Tabriz in preference to Maragha, favoured by his father. His summer residences were fixed at Ala-Tagh and Siyah-Kuh and winter residences in Baghdad, Arran and Jaghatu.

During Abaqa's reign in 1271, the Ismaili castle of Gird-Kuh finally surrendered. It had withstood a continuous siege of eighteen years, having been first sieged by Ket-Buqa in May 1253. Against Shamsuddin's brother Alaaddin, the historian and governor of Baghdad, the intrigues of Majdul Mulk were more successful: he was twice arrested and was being taken to Hamadan for trial at the time of Abaqa's death.¹⁵ Abaqa's reign is noted for the development of Ilkhanate and for diplomacy. He was a true successor of Halaku in many senses.

Teguder (6 May 1282-10 August 1284)

Teguder, a brother of Abaqa succeeded on the throne of Ilkhanate in 1282, but he was murdered in 1284. During his reign the Nestorian Christians, long entrenched in Northwestern Iran and Iraq, were especially favoured, and their bishop rebuilt the church at Maragha.

Arghun Khan (11 August 1284-12 March 1291)

Arghun Khan, the son of Abaqa Khan, ascended to the throne on 11 August 1284 after the death of Teguder. He continued his father's policies and sought to strengthen the Il-khanate's position. His reign saw efforts to improve the administration, enhance trade, and maintain stability within the empire. Arghun Khan also pursued diplomatic initiatives to establish alliances with other states. It was on the advice of Arghun that Juwaini started writing his

history book *Tarikh-e Jahan Gusha* while he was in Mongolia with Arghun Khan on a visit to Great Khan.

Gaykhatu (23 July 1291-21 March 1295)

Gaykhatu ruled over Ilkhanate of Iran from 1291 to 1295. He was the son of Abaqa Khan. His first order upon taking throne was to punish several amirs including Taghachar and Tuqal. He stopped the advancing army of Afrasiyab and campaigned in Anatolia to check the advance of enemy. Gaykhatu is particularly noted for his attempts to implement paper money in the Ilkhanate, inspired by the Chinese Yuan dynasty's use of paper currency. This experiment, however, was highly unpopular and led to significant economic disruption, contributing to his eventual downfall. Gaykhatu's reign was marked by the political instability, with various factions within the Ilkhanate vying for power. His rule came to an abrupt end when he was overthrown and executed by his cousin, Baydu, in 1295.

Baydu (24 March 1295-4 October 1295)

Baydu ascended to the throne on 24 March 1295. He was the son of Taraqai. Baydu ruled over Ilkhanate of Iran for a very short period. Baydu's reign, however, was extremely short-lived, lasting only a few months. His rule was characterized by instability, though he struggled to consolidate his power. The situation in the Ilkhanate remained volatile, with various factions within the Mongol elite competing for dominance. Baydu was considered easy going and controllable and under him the Il-khanate was divided among the co-conspirators.

Ghazan Khan (4 October 1295-11 May 1304)

Ghazan Khan's accession to the throne in 1295, ushered a new era in Iran. He was a great-grandson of Halaku Khan. His accession to the throne was not as viceroy of Ilkhanate of Iran but as an independent Muslim ruler therefore his reign ushered in a new golden age, which was to be continued during the reign of his successors. Ghazan Khan became a convert to Islam, and the spirit of religious intolerance, which had marked the Il-Khanate period began to wane. The court at Tabriz, the capital city, was entirely Moslem and Persian in character. Good government and general prosperity were the serious concerns of the ruler. Ten thousand men guarded the main roads along, which numerous caravans passed in safety. Both Genoa and Venice had commercial envoys and colonies of merchant's resident in Tabriz.

Ghazan Khan's reign is marked by various constructions which shows his interest in constructional activities. For example, in 1297 Ghazan Khan ordered the construction work, which had begun in a suburb of Tabriz and in a few years his twelve-sided tomb structure, crowned by a great dome, was the center of a group of buildings set within gardens. The

buildings included monastery, hospital, religious schools, an observatory, library, palace or administrative building, and an academy of philosophy.

Ghazan Khan's reign is also marked for his great wazir, Rashiduddin, who is a figure of equal interest. Rashid was a native of Iran who was first a practicing physician in the reign of Abaqa and later court historian and principal administrator under Ghazan Khan and Oljaytu. He wrote *Jame-ut-Tawarikh*, divided into two parts. The first part of it gives a detailed account of the Mongols and the establishment of their kingdoms. This book was completed in 1310. Rashiduddin also introduced Abdullah bin Wassaf to the court who wrote *Tarikh-e wassaf* which deals the reign of Ghazan Khan.¹⁶

Outside Tabriz Rashiduddin established a suburb named 'Quarter of Rashid.' It was devoted to the arts and sciences, theologians, jurists, traditionalist, reciters of the Qoran, students, and Craftsmen of every trade. Ghazan Khan, one of the most notable rulers of the Ilkhanate, is remembered for his significant reforms and efforts to integrate with Persian culture. Ghazan Khan and his successors, converted to Islam and began to support Persian culture, literature, and art. This period saw a significant cultural and intellectual exchange between the Mongols and the Persians. Ghazan Khan died in 1304 and was buried in the mausoleum constructed by him.

Mohammad Khodabanda(Oljaytu 1304-1316)

Oljaytu also known as Oljeitu or Mohammad Khodabanda was a prominent ruler of the Ilkhanate. His reign is particularly notable for his efforts to consolidate and stabilize the Ilkhanate, as well as for his significant cultural and religious policies. Oljaytu ascended to the throne in 1304. As a child Oljaytu had been baptized a Christian, but later in 1305 he embraced Islam and took the name Mohammad Khodabanda. He was much interested in the several Moslem sects and was successively a Hanefi, a Shi'a, and a Sunni. He was initially known for his turbulent and often unstable rule. However, his reign marked a period of significant change.

His reign saw the flourishing of Persian art and culture. He commissioned several architectural projects, including the construction of the Jame Mosque in Sultaniya, which remains an important historical site. In 1306 Oljaytu ordered the construction work on the city of Sultaniya, located on a wide plain near Qazvin, which was to replace Tabriz as the capital of Il-Khanate of Iran. Aljaytu died in 1316 at the age of thirty-six. He is lying buried in a beautiful tomb at Sultaniya, constructed by him.

Abu Saeed (1316 to1335)

Abu Saeed also known as Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan was the last Il-khan ruler of Iran, whose reign marked the end of the Ilkhanate. Abu Saeed ascended to the throne following the death of his father, Oljaytu, and was initially a promising ruler. His reign began with a degree of stability and consolidation. His rule lasted from 1316 to 1335, and his reign is notable for the decline and eventual dissolution of the Ilkhanate.

Abu Saeed's death marked the end of Mongol rule in Iran and paved the way for the rise of local dynasties. Among them four major ruling dynasties being Aal-e Muzaffar who ruled over Faras, Iraq-e Ajam and Kirman, Jalayer (Il-khani who ruled over Baghdad and Azerbaijan, Sarabdar or Sarb-e daal who were the king of Sabzwar and Karat whose headquarter was Herat. These were the small dynasties however, there were competition among them to go ahead from each other in the field of literary activities and in giving stipend to the poet and writers to encourage and promote them for their creativity.

Abu Saeed's reign shall continue to be remembered for the rise of historiography and in general for the progress of literary activities. In his reign two important books on history were written. One by Hamdullah Mustaufi being *Tarikh-e Guzida* and second by Fakhruddin Benakati named *Tarikh-e Benakati*. Apart from these, Hamdullah left one masnavi named *Zafar Nama* and one book in prose named *Nuzhatul Qlub* being first detailed book on geography in Persian.¹⁷

Impact of Mongol Invasion on Iran

Mongol invasion on Iran is a land mark event in the history of world. This invasion was not restricted to a region or city. After one another Mongol army destroyed and plundered all the cities, which came in their way and which tried to resist them. In 1258 even Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid Caliphate was surrendered to the Mongol army which was a shock for the Islamic world. During Mongol invasion men, women and children in large number were killed. Cities were destroyed and plundered. Libraries were destroyed in which thousands of rare books perished forever. The destruction and plunder of the cities resulted in hunger and poverty which also compelled the people to either die or search new source of livelihood whether it was legal or illegal, which gave rise to the various illegal practices in the society. Accession of Ghazan Khan marked a significant shift in the religious and cultural policies of the Ilkhanate. Persian scholars and artisans played a key role in shaping the cultural environment of the Ilkhanate. Mongol rulers and officials supported the production of literary and scholarly works.¹⁸ The period saw the translation of Persian literary and philosophical

texts into Mongolian and other languages and Persian language went out of Iran like India and Turkey where a good number of great poets and writers were produced.

Conclusion

To conclude it may not be wrong to say that, the Mongol period in Iran began with the invasion of Chaghezi Khan in 1219 on Otrar, a town under Kharzam Shahi dominion. Gradually, all towns and cities of Kharzam Empire like Samarqand, Bukhara, Khorasan, Nishapur, Herat and Marve etc. fell into the hands of Mongols. In fact, this was the first phase of invasion which was more destructive and brutal than the second one led under Halaku Khan from 1256 onwards. In the first phase of invasion destruction of villages, towns and cities were made at larger scale to infuse fear in the minds of people so that they should not oppose the Mongols. They even did not spare library and rare manuscripts. Women and children were also not spared. In the second phase of Mongol invasion, destruction of the forts of assassins by Halaku Khan was appreciated by orthodox Muslims but the sack of Baghdad and assassination of Caliph Al-Mustasim Billah was thought to be an act of Barbarism. However, the establishment of Ilkhanate marked the beginning of a new era in Iran's history. Iranians got opportunity to serve on high-ranking posts which brought Mongols closure to the Iranian culture. The Iranian scholars were invited to the Mongol court and patronized. Historiography in Persian language witnessed a tremendous encouragement from the Mongol rulers right from Halaku Khan till Abu Saeed, the last ruler of this line and Persian language and literature expanded and flourished out of Iran especially in India and Turkey.

References

- Nehru, Jawaharlal. *Glimpses of World History*. New Delhi-1988. P. 216
Ibid.
 Naseri, Mehdi Husain. *Sanadid-e Ajam*. Allahabad-1342 Hijri.P.168
Ibid.
 Naseri. *Op. Cit.* P.168
Ibid.
 Shafaq, Raza Zade. *Tarikh-e Adabiyat-e Iran*. Urdu Tr. S. M. Rafat. Delhi-1993. P. 323
 Nehru, Jawaharlal. *The Discovery of India*. Delhi-1988. P. 230
The Cambridge History of Iran. Volume 5. The Saljuq and Mongol Periods.
 Edited by J. A. Boyle. PP.337-38
Ibid. PP.339-340
 Wilber Donald. *Iran: Past and Present*. New Jersey. 1955. PP.54-55
The Cambridge History of Iran. Op. Cit. P. 346
 Nehru. *Op. Cit.* P.230
 Hali, Khwaja Altaf Husain. *Hayat-e Sadi*. Delhi-1992. PP. 355-56
Ibid. PP.362-363
 Naseri. *Op. Cit.* P.178
Ibid. PP.179-80
Ibid. PP.168-80