



'ALĀ'-AL-DĪN ḲALJĪ

'ALĀ'-AL-DĪN MOḤAMMAD SHAH ḲALJĪ, sultan of Delhi (r. 695-715/1296-1316). Before gaining the throne, he had been governor of Kara under his uncle and father-in-law, king Jalāl-al-dīn Firūz Shah Ḳaljī. In 695/1295 he led a victorious campaign against the kingdom of Deogir (Deccan) and returned laden with plunder; King Jalāl-al-dīn went to Kara to meet him, but 'Alā'-al-dīn slew him treacherously on 17 Ramażān 695/29 July 1296 (T. W. Beale, *An Oriental Biographical Dictionary*, London, 1894, p. 51; Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad, *Tārīḳ-eMobārakšāhī*, Calcutta, 1931, p. 70; Ž. Barnī, *Tārīḳ-eFirūzšāhī*, Calcutta, 1862, p. 223). 'Alā'-al-dīn advanced on the capital, where the nobles had raised Rokn-al-dīn b. Jalāl-al-dīn to the throne. In the vicinity of the city he showered silver and gold coins on the people with catapults; having defeated Rokn-al-dīn easily, he declared his kingship on 22 Du'l-ḥejja 695/21 December 1296 (Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad, p. 71; Barnī, p. 243). He gave the title Oloḡ Khan to his brother Almās Beg and appointed him commander of his army; on a number of occasions he was to defeat the invading Čaġatay Mongols (Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad, p. 73; *EI*² II, pp. 268-69). A series of successful campaigns against neighboring kingdoms followed. 'Alā'-al-dīn even intended to send his armies across the Himalayas to conquer China and he talked of introducing a new religion, but desisted on the advice of his *qāżī*. Continual victories added to 'Alā'-al-dīn's vanity; he grew haughty and cruel towards his nobles, clergy, and even his wife, whom he had thrown down from the citadel wall, and he imprisoned the heir-apparent, Kezr Khan, in Gwalior (Barnī, *op. cit.*, p. 368). Finally, high fever ended 'Alā'-al-dīn's life on 6 Šawwāl 715/3 January 1316, although both Amir Ḳosrow in his fourth *dīvān*, *Naqīya-ye baqīya*, and Barnī assert that Malek



Nā’eb killed him, and as a result the people began to shout that Jalāl-al-dīn’s murderer had been paid in his own coin.

Despite his atrocities and cruel extortions from the wealthy, ‘Alā’-al-dīn was a good administrator. Commerce, industry, and agriculture flourished; mosques, mausoleums, baths, and universities rose in rapid sequence; and a galaxy of savants made Delhi a great center of learning. Among the famous poets who contributed to its splendor were Amir Kōsrow and Ḥasan. The former dedicated a number of works to the events of his reign (Storey, I, pp. 502-03). ‘Alā’-al-dīn began construction of a tower to supersede the magnificence of Qoṭb Menār, but it was not completed because of his death (Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* II, London, 1910, p. 216; Sayyed Aḥmad Khan, *Āṭār al-ṣanādīd*, Delhi, 1847, p. 152). ‘Alā’-al-dīn’s tomb, which was probably built by his sons, is now in a dilapidated condition in old Delhi (Sayyed Aḥmad, *Āṭār*, p. 157; Bašīr-al-dīn Aḥmad, *Wāqe’āt-e dār-al-ḥokūma*, Delhi, 1921, II, p. 276).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also H. M. Eliot and J. Dowson, *History of India as Told by its own Historians*, Bombay, 1950.