



IMPACT OF MONGOL INVASION ON THE SOCIAL CONDITION OF ISLAMIC EMPIRE

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Abstract

Mongol invasion on Islamic empire began in around 1219A.D. from Otrar, a place under the dominion of Khwarazm dynasty. After one another Mongol army destroyed and plundered all the cities, which came in their way and. In 1258A.D. Mongol army reached to Baghdad where Al-Mustasim, the Abbasid Caliph was ruling. Without any resistance Baghdad, the capital city of the Islamic Empire was surrendered to the Mongol army. Thus, in 1258 A.D. the Islamic empire came to an end. Any invasion has its devastating effects however, the Mongol invasion on Islamic empire was more devastative therefore, its impacts on the Islamic empire was also more destructive. During Mongol invasion men, women and children in large number were killed. The destruction and plunder of the cities had almost destroyed the revenue generating systems, which ultimately weakened the economic condition of the country as well as of the people. It not only made the government treasury empty but people were also compelled to die in hunger and poverty. The hunger and poverty also compelled the people to either die or search new source of livelihood whether it was legal or illegal, which gave rise to various illegal practices in the society. These practices apart from the contemporary sources can even be imagined and felt in the various stories of the Masnavi-e Manvi of Maulana Rumi.

Keywords: *Condition, Impact, Invasion, Islamic Empire and Mongol.*

Introduction

Changez Khan a well -known name in the world history led the Mongol hordes across the breadth of Asia. Rising from utter obscurity, in 1219A.D. he turned west at the head of some

700000 men, many of them mounted on wiry steeds. At the limits of the Khwarazmian kingdom he paused to send envoys to Sultan Muhammad. The latter scorned to treat with these unknown savages, and the result was the speedy destruction of his realm. The Mongol army under the leadership of Changez Khan moved ahead to take Bokhara, Samarqand, Balkh, and Marv. Towns which offered resistance were besieged, stormed, burned, and frequently obliterated from the face of the land. Nishapur fell in 1221, its inhabitants and all living things, including cats and dogs, were slaughtered, and Sultan Muhammad was hunted across the country to the Caspian coast.

Changez Khan returned to the East when almost all of Iran had been overrun, and died there in 1227. The council which named his successor determined to send an army against the remnants of the Khwarazmian power, and the general Charmaghan led the Mongols as far as northwestern Iran and Iraq and plundering of the cities continued. In 1256 Halaku Khan carried out a mission against the Assassins, razing their fortresses and destroying their power. In 1258 he marched against Baghdad and after a siege lasting a month stormed the city. Thousands were slain, the palaces, mosques, and tombs of the Caliphs were burned, and a vast store of booty collected. The last of the Abbasid Caliphs was put to death and his line was wiped out.

Halaku withdrew to Maragha in northwest Iran, and there the Mongols settled permanently in Iran. In 1267 Halaku Khan died and was succeeded by his son Abaqa, who ruled until 1282. Takudar, a brother of Abaqa succeeded him on the throne, but he was murdered in 1284. He was succeeded by Arghun, a son of Abaqa. Upon Arghun's death in 1292 his brother Ghaikhatu reigned for four years and was then followed by Baidu who occupied the throne less than a year. The accession to the throne in 1295 by Ghazan Khan, a great-grandson of Halaku Khan, ushered in a new golden age, which was to continue during the reign of his successor Oljaitu. Thus from 1219 A.D. to 1258 A.D. Islamic Empire was continuously invaded by the Mongols which resulted in various social problems. People lived in fear. As the cities were plundered and burnt and there was no source of livelihood people were compelled to die in poverty and hunger. Poverty and hunger created various types of new social problems which due to Mongol invasion further aggravated the social problem.

Review of literature

Mongol invasion has destroyed the political system in other words the small and big Islamic states, which were the political systems, and which ruled over the country were destroyed. After defeat of small and major ruling dynasties of those days of the Islamic Empire and even the Abbasid Caliph, who it might be on paper and not practically was deposed,

captured, and killed mercilessly. Thus, it can be said that the Mongol invasion on Islamic Empire destroyed the whole existing system of the Islamic Empire and as the rulers were barbarous hence people lived in fear and had no capacity to oppose them.

Case study

Political condition of Islamic Empire was full of Political turmoil's therefore, social condition of thirteen century Iran and Islamic world in general was not healthy and prosperous rather full of disorder, and social order of Islam no longer represented the best that it had to offer to the world.

It is to be remembered here that the flourishing and progress of Islam was unparalleled in the annals of history. It produced a civilization at once refined, progressive and full of passionate life when Europe was sunk in superstition, stagnation and reaction. This was possible only because of the teachings of Quran and the life examples of Holy Prophet Muhammad. But the passage of centuries had beclouded the vision of Islamic society of Iran and by this time Iranian society had, almost, forgotten the Quranic teachings and life examples of the Holy Prophet Mohammad had become rather difficult for them to follow.

If we have a glimpse of the religious history of Islamic Empire, especially, in the last quarter of 12th century A.D. we find that Iranian society was divided into four major religious groups being, Sunni, Shia, Ismaili and Kharijites. Followers of these religious groups were fighting among themselves and that too in the name of religion. According to Cambridge History of Iran, "As always happens in formative ages, religious debates and quarrels, often ending in massacres were frequent. Even in moments of grave dangers religious antagonism was strong and active".(1)

It is referred that after the terrible onslaught of the Ghuz in around 1154 A.D. in Nishapur every night one sect would assault a quarter of the town inhabited by members of enemy sect, and there they would kill and burn. Similar things happened in Shiraz between Hanafies and Shafi-is. in Ray, between both and the Shi'as, and between all of them and the Ismaili⁽²⁾.

In the last quarter of 12th and beginning of 13th century the consolidating power of Ismilies had become major threat for the rest of the Muslim population. According to Camb. Hist. of Iran "Ismaili sense of their own grandeur was answered by Sunnis corresponding feeling that they still constituted a major threat to Sunni Muslim society. Zealous Sunnis were still inclined to see the Ismailis as the arch enemies of Islam".(3)

The greatest harm inflicted to the Muslim society was by Hasan bin Sabah, the zealous Ismaili leader and his disciples. According to Amir Ali His disciples drugged by Hashish, obtained on awakening a foretaste of the delights he promised them after life as the reward for their obedience and unfaltering execution of his orders. Beautiful maidens gathered from every quarter helped in fastening his chains on the neck of his votaries. His emissaries actuated by varied motives, but all subject to an irresistible driving force abounded in every city, town ship and village of central and western Asia. Every household contained a concealed member of the deadly fraternity. The best and noblest Muslims were struck down by these enemies of society- both men and women were seduced from their faith by alluring hopes of immediate reward from heaven".(4)

Social and moral forces which degraded lower and middle strata of the society had also contributed to a large extent to the degradation of ruling class and especially monarchs. The large haram had become common which was maintained by countless number of eunuchs, slave system had given rise to the girl and boy slaves (Ghilman) which contributed most to the degradation of women hood and men hood. The unlimited concubines and the numberless half-sisters in the imperial household and their unavoidable jealousies and intrigues weakened the empire and the luxurious living style of monarchs with the emphasis on wine and song, sapped the vitality of family life.(5)

Hence, the Muslim society which in the beginning of thirteenth century represented, a decadent social order, growing under the weight of superstition, ignorance, intellectual debauchery and moral cowardice, incapable of dynamic growth, divested of a capacity for effective resistance was invaded by Changez Khan, a Mongol and more formidable enemy against whom people could not raise to defend their country.

The fear and weakness that had gripped Islamic society can be judged by the fact that when Changez Khan approached the city of Ray, the Mongol found it divided between two factions the one composed of Shafiites and the other of Hanafites. The former at once entered secret negotiation undertaking to deliver up the city at night on condition that the Mongol massacred the member of the other sect. The Mongol never reluctant to Shed blood, gladly accepted the offer and being admitted into the city slaughtered both the Hanafites and Shafi-ites.

Another reference of cowardliness is found in the narration of Ibnul Asir. According to him "A Mongol entered a populous village and proceeded to kill the inhabitant one after the other without any one raising a hand. Another wished to kill a man and having no weapon with

him told him to lie down while he went for a sword with this he returned and killed the man who in the meantime had not even dared to move. Another officer with twenty-seven men met a Mongol who was insolent and he ordered them to kill him. They said they were too few for the task and so he had to kill the man himself'.(6) Invasion of Changez Khan resulted in permanent establishment of Mongol rule in around 1258 A.D. by Halaku, who also followed the line of Changez Khan and in whose time Islamic caliphate was ended and the caliph himself was brutally killed. In fact, the Mongol invasion over Islamic Empire was an enormous Universal catastrophe. Even, the pro-Mongol historian Juwaini speaking of the massacres perpetrated by the general of Changez Khan, concludes with the assertion that where there had been a hundred thousand people there remained not a hundred souls alive. Almost, the same condition continued till the accession of Ghazan in 1295 A.D.(7)

The primary result of the Mongol conquest was a fall in the population, mostly among the working class in town and country due to massacre. A Sizable number of remaining populations were abducted into slavery and captivity and most of the remaining members of the society took flight to safer places deserting thickly populated areas which resulted in deterioration of economic condition of the society.

The measurable condition of the society can be judged from the story of Saifi about Herat region of Khorasan, which he had drawn from the memories of old men. According to Saifi "After the slaughter of 1220 A.D. only sixteen people survived in the city of Herat and only forty if we include fugitives from other places, whilst not more than a hundred survivors remained in the surrounding country side. First, they fed upon the corpses of animals and men, then for a period of four years this handful of people were only able to get food by attacking passing caravans and this too at from 150 to 800 kms. from Herat".(8)

Not only the condition of Herat but of other cities like Balkh, Marv, Nishapur, Tus, Ray, Qazvin, Hamadan, Kuhistan, Tabaristan, Marageh, Ardbil and numerous others were by and large, the same. The plight of Balkh is also attested by the travelers e.g., Taoist Chang Chun (1223 A.D.) Marco polo (The second half of the thirteenth century) and Ibn-e-Batuta (The thirties of the fourteenth century).(9)

Thus, Islamic society which was already suffering from various social evils; during and after Mongol invasion came under severe new human problems like insecurity, poverty and hunger which further aggravated social condition in the given period. Maulana Rum was also a witness to these grave human problems therefore, he tried to revitalize the society through mysticism and having found no hopes in this world advised people to take refuge in it. To

conclude it may be said that the political and social condition of Islamic Empire played considerable role in shaping the mind and thoughts of Rumi.

Conclusion

In the light of the above facts and findings it can be concluded that the Mongol invasion had left tremendous impact on the social condition of the Islamic Empire. The Mongol invasions not only completely destroyed the ruling class but also finished them in such a way that they never raised their heads. During Mongol invasions over Islamic Empire a lot of innocent men, women and children were killed. A large number of people became homeless and children became orphan. The system of livelihood was totally destroyed, which gave rise to poverty, which ultimately created various social evils in the society.

Notes and References

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