

ON THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF ALAUDDIN KHILJI

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Introduction

From 1296 to 1316, the Delhi sultanate was ruled by sultan Alauddin Khilji, of the Khilji dynasty. Characterized as a ruthlessly cruel and efficient leader, sources available from his rule originate from people in a position of power who were threatened by Alauddin's heavily autocratic government. Thus, Alauddin's reign does not have many sources that can readily portray him in a neutral or positive light without clear biases towards him, making them less appealing to historians. This problem with sources has led to little variation in how historians have depicted Alauddin's reign.¹ I believe that his lack of variation is detrimental to the historical process as, not only is the evidence available extremely unreliable, this one-sided account of a twenty year long regime is not conducive to effective history.

The historiography of this time period is dominated by reliance on the account of Ziauddin Barani, a historian who used his position in the later court of Muhammad Bin Tughluq (R. 1324-51) to gather accounts of events necessary for his work. Many of his sources include hearsay or his own experiences. Barani had a negative view of Alaudin, which greatly affects the manner in which his figure is studied nowadays.² This makes Barani an extremely weak secondary source. Alauddin did employ his own court poet, Amir Khusrau.³ Khusrau's works serve as propaganda for the Sultan, meaning that independently of his thoughts on Alauddin, Khusrau had to write positively about him. As such, Khusrau's writings on Alauddin have been

¹ Sunil Kumar, "Assertions of Authority: A Study of the Discursive Statements of Two Sultans of Delhi," in *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture, Indian and French Studies*, eds. Muzaffar Alam. Francoise 'Nalini' Delvoye, Marc Gaborieau, (New Delhi: Manohar, 2000): 36-65; Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.); Richard Eaton, *India in the Persianate Age: 1000–1765*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019.); Alyssa Gabbay, *Islamic Tolerance: Amir Khusraw and Pluralism*, (New York: Taylor and Francis Group, 2010.)

² Kumar, "Assertions of Authority," 49-50.

³ Amir Khusrau, *In the Bazaar of Love*, Trans. Paul E. Losensky and Sunil Sharma (New Delhi: Penguin Publishers, 1213,) 12.

largely ignored by historians, claiming that they are nothing more than flattery. This view is shared with major studies of the period such as Sunil Kumar's "Assertions of Authority: A Study of the Discursive Statements of Two Sultans of Delhi" (published in 2000), who directly makes this claim.⁴ It is also seen by Peter Jackson in the book *The Delhi Sultanate: a Political and Military History* (published in 1999), which dedicates one page to Alauddin's rule, does not mention his affiliation with Khusrau, does not discuss his economic policies nor the cultural developments in his rule.⁵ Although Richard Eaton does discuss Alauddin and Khusrau in the second chapter of *India in the Persianate age* (published in 2019), he does not associate Khusrau as Alauddin's court poet, drawing a connection between Khusrau and Nizamuddin, something focused on by many scholars.⁶ Alyssa Gabby's book *Islamic Tolerance: Amir Khusrau and Pluralism* (published in 2010), only mentions Alauddin to set the context of one of Khusrau's books written during the reign of one of Alauddin's sons during the wars of succession.⁷ However, I believe that Khusrau thought of Alauddin as an effective leader, and the propaganda Khusrau wrote about him was sincere.

This perspective fundamentally changes how historians view his work. Since Khusrau believed in what he was writing, his words have more validity than simple flattery, and using his writings as a valid primary source opens a new source for this time period. In this essay, I will argue that Amir Khusrau, Alauddin's court poet, had a positive relationship with the Sultan and believed in the praise he was writing; he was not merely a sycophant. By doing this I hope to prove that Khusrau's works can be used as effective primary sources for history, and introduce a new perspective to counteract the critiques of Barani, a far less reliable source. My methodology

⁴ Kumar, "Assertions of Authority," 49.

⁵ Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 75.

⁶ Eaton, *India in the Persianate Age*, 75.

⁷ Alyssa Gabbay, *Islamic Tolerance*, 66.

will involve showing how Alauddin's policies aligned with Khusrau's ethical perspective on religion, and the mutual respect they had for each other, through the analysis of primary sources, supplemented by secondary sources, I will demonstrate how the bond between Alauddin and Khusrau has been interpreted historiographically.

Sources

Primary sources used in this essay will showcase how Khusrau writes about Alauddin. Such sources include Amir Khusrau's *Treasures of Victory* (translation published in 1931),⁸ which is a narrative account of Alauddin's successes, going over his reforms and his campaigns through the Deccan. Khusrau wrote the manuscript for Alauddin, meaning it was a panegyric account written with the approval of the emperor. On the other hand, the purpose of writing it was to praise Alauddin, meaning that Khusrau needs to exaggerate successes and omit failures.⁹ I will also use the poetry anthology *In the Bazaar of Love* (published in 2013),¹⁰ which contains many of Khusrau's poems and the short prose Duwal Rani Khizr Khan, which contains the only critique Khusrau makes to Alauddin. In addition, I examine the role of Alauddin's Alai Darwaza (built in 1311), the gate to the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque, and inscriptions placed throughout the complex which were composed by Khusrau.

Khusrau was a poet and musician from a noble background. His father, a Turk tribesman, served in the police force of Delhi under Sultan Iltutmish, while his maternal grandfather, a Indian convert to Islam, was the keeper of the royal falcon under the same Sultan.¹¹ He was also an avid practitioner of Islam, which is clear with his connection to the Sufi Pir Nizamuddin

⁸ Amir Khusrau, *Treasures Of Victory*, Trans. Muhammed Habib, (Mumbai: D. B. Taraporewala, sons & co., 1931).

⁹ Aiyangar, *Treasures of Victory*, XIX.

¹⁰ Khusrau, *In the Bazaar of Love*, Penguin Publishers, 2013.

¹¹ Khusrau, *In the Bazaar of Love*, 9.

Auliya. Khusrau was proud of his multicultural heritage, which is seen in verses such as “I am an Indian Turk, ask me a question and I will answer in Hindavi.”¹² This is extremely out of the norm in this time period.

The Islamic elite that dominates the nobility of the Sultanate in the Chehelgan and the army looked down upon the local Hindus and recently converted Muslims.¹³ Such can be seen in Barni’s work: “And in their Capital [Delhi], Muslim kings not only allow but are pleased with the fact that infidels, polytheists, idol-worshippers and cow-dung [sargin] worshippers build houses like palaces, wear clothes of brocade and ride Arab horses caparisoned with gold and silver ornaments. ... By merely paying a few tankas and the poll tax [/izya] they are able to continue the traditions of infidelity.”¹⁴ This quote was made by Barani in reference to Balban’s reign, and Highlights this prejudice. Barani was clearly annoyed that the sultans were not enforcing muslim societal norms, allowing non-muslims to rise to positions equivalent or greater than muslims in the sultanates social order. Barani was uncomfortable with this because by giving non muslims similar rights to muslims the sultans were challenging a world view where followers of Islam, in Barani’s perspective the correct religion, were the same as non believers. This social structure put Barani’s position in the social hierarchy under threat.

Khusrau goes against this norm by advocating for the Indian people. Khusrau also lived a long life of 72 years, closely witnessing multiple reigns of different sultans from different dynasties, going from Kishlu Khan, a nephew of Sultan Balban, to Sultan Muhammad Shah.¹⁵ With his close relation to the ruling sultan due to his position as imperial court poet, he was able to intimately understand the facets of rule.

¹² Gabbay, *Islamic Tolerance*, 21.

¹³ Khusrau, *In the Bazaar of Love*, 9; Gabby, 5

¹⁴ Eaton, *India in the Persianate Age*, 53-54.

¹⁵ Khusrau, *In the Bazaar of Love*, 9.

Another primary source used will be Ziya Barani's *The Reign of Alauddin Khilji*,¹⁶ a historical work written forty years after Alauddin's reign and based on accounts of his family members, and Khusrau himself, as well as written records of the time.¹⁷ While the fact that this book was published forty years after its discussed time period would make it a secondary source, historians covering Alauddin treat Barani as a primary source. This essay will exemplify why Barani should not be treated as such in this time period. Barani is one of the main sources used for knowledge on Alauddin's reign. His unreliability is on par with, if not greater than, that perceived from Khusrau's panegyric writings on Alauddin, and this essay will highlight the problematic ways this source has been used. According to Jackson, Barani's views of a good king were described as one who can "balance the opposing qualities of benevolence and severity that are necessary if kingship is truly to be a lieutenancy on behalf of God."¹⁸ Since Alauddin was known as a very aggressive ruler, being described by Gabbay as "notoriously tight fisted,"¹⁹ along with other examples seen throughout this essay, one can understand that Alauddin only filled one of those qualities. It is clear that Barani believed that these qualities should be prescribed to specific individuals, meaning that a king should be benevolent to his subjects and severe towards his enemies. This is seen with the following examples given by Jackson, that being the leniency of Jalal ud-Din, who was lenient with punishments towards enemies,²⁰ and Alauddin's cutthroat nature towards his allies. The fact that he brought greater regulations to the army and economy that placed restrictions on the nobility was not positive to Barani as he was a member of such nobility.²¹

¹⁶ Ziya' al-Din Barani, *The Reign of 'Alāuddīn Khiljī*, Trans. A. R. Fuller and A. Khallaque (Calcutta: Pilgrim Publishers, 1967.)

¹⁷ Kumar, *Assertions of Authority*, 49-50.

¹⁸ Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 54.

¹⁹ Gabbay, *Islamic Tolerance*, 41.

²⁰ Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 54.

²¹ Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 156.

The works of Barani should not be disregarded by historians. He provides useful information in the form of prose that, as highlighted by Aiyangar in the introduction to *Treasures of Victory*, even corroborates with the writings of Khusrau. The issue arises from the fact that he is overused. In Jackson's *The Delhi Sultanate, a Political and Military History*, he acknowledges Barani's unreliability by stating that he was twelve when Alauddin came to power and even wrote the book 40 years after his reign.²² However, even with this acknowledgement, Jackson's book is still littered with citations from Barani. Although Barani paints Alauddin as a ruthless and authoritarian ruler, so does Khusrau. In the section "Description of the justice meted out in this reign, so that the dragon has become submissive before the ant"²³ in *Treasures of Victory*, Khusrau described Alauddin's system of justice as so wonderful as to make "mad elephants kneel down to painting ants, and tigers repent of their morning draught of animal blood under his arched sword!"²⁴ This description of a force of justice that has the capacity of making the most fearsome animals in India cower before the Sultan Alauddin is not too dissimilar from the cruel authoritarian described by Barani, as both poet and historian are describing the same ruler.

The main secondary sources used will be Allisa Gabby's *Islamic Tolerance: Amir Khusraw and Pluralism*,²⁵ one of the few sources that directly discusses Khusrau's personality in highlighting his tendency to express religious pluralism in his poems. Gabbay is also one of the few works that puts this perspective into a biographical study of Khusrau. This source will be used to establish some facets of Khusrau's ethical viewpoint. Sunil Kumar's "Assertions of Authority: A Study of the Discursive Statements of Two Sultans of Delhi",²⁶ is a source that highlights the dispute over moral authority between Alauddin and Nizamuddin. This source also

²² Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 5.

²³ Khusrau, *Treasures of Victory*, 10.

²⁴ Khusrau, *Treasures of Victory*, 10.

²⁵ Gabbay, *Islamic Tolerance*.

²⁶ Kumar, "Assertions of Authority."

uses Khusrau's writings as evidence for discussing Alauddin's reign, and aids in establishing a connection between the Sultan and the poet. K. S Lal's "Cultural Activity during the Reign of Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316)" (published in 1947)²⁷ highlights the increased cultural production under Alauddin. This source will be used to discuss how Alauddin's reforms impacted artistic production, along with the presence of talented artisans and scholars in Alauddin's court, and how this accumulation of talented individuals is analyzed through history. Other secondary sources will be used to exemplify how Khusrau's poetry is used in historiography and to have an understanding of how Alauddin's regime operated.

Khusrau's critique in the Duwal Rani Khizr Khan

Scholars tend to gloss over Khusrau's connection with Alauddin and his other patrons because the writings for political purposes serve as simple flattery, choosing instead to focus on his spiritual connection with the Sufi Pir Nizamuddin Auliya. This leads to an increased amount of scholarship on Khusrau's relation with Nizamuddin in comparison with his patrons. A reason for this could be because his writings tend to have religious connotations, meaning that it is easier to associate him with religion, and therefore Nizamuddin. Even his political writings can be used in conjunction with religion, while connecting his other writings to politics becomes extremely complicated.

To understand that Khusrau had a positive relation with Alauddin one must first analyze his critiques to the Sultan. The problem with this form of analysis is that there is a lack of such material. The secondary sources used for this essay either mention none, or in some cases use the final line of the epic romance *Duwal Rani Khizr Khan*. The epic is situated in the final days of the

²⁷ K. S. Lal and Muḥammad Shāh I, 'Alā' al-Dīn, Khalji Sultan, of Delhi, and / . Alauddin Khalji Ala-ud-Din Khalji. "Cultural Activity during the Reign of Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316)." (*Journal of Indian History* 25, 1947.)

Khilji Sultanate and is recounted as a tragedy which describes the killing of Alauddin's sons and grandsons in the attempted palace coup following his death. The line in question is "Dry rituals won't provide you the water you desire, to perform Godly deeds you must depend on love."²⁸

This line is extremely general and vague. I believe that Khusrau was critiquing the lack of a system for hereditary power instead of solely critiquing Alauddin. Khusrau does not paint Alauddin as a malevolent character throughout the story. Alauddin does not set an obstacle in between the young monarchs' relationship. It was Alauddin's wife, not him, that stops Duval and Khizr from being together once they notice that they still see each other behind the queen's back.²⁹

As this prose is inherently fictional, Khusrau could have established Alauddin as the antagonist, using his experiences with the Sultan to portray a less regal vision of him in comparison to the works he did while he was alive. The fact that he chooses to portray Alauddin's wife as the antagonist, along with only circulating the completed work years after Alauddin's death leads me to believe that this critique was not made solely to Alauddin. This message criticized the lack of a system of hereditary rulership over the sultanate. Throughout Khusrau's life, he witnessed multiple successions through struggle – Jalal al-Din Khilji's coup on Balban (1290),³⁰ Alauddin's coup on Jalal al-Din (1296), Alauddin's violent purge of nobles loyal to Jalal al Din. (1296-8)³¹ It was also seen in the succession struggle following Alauddin's death conducted by Kafur, where all of Alauddin's sons were murdered.³² All this violence would lead to stagnated governments, where the Chehelgan would seize the opportunity to put a king in power that benefited them, as seen with the coalition that put Jalal in power. This led to a period

²⁸ Khusrau, *In the Bazaar of Love*, 75.

²⁹ Khusrau, *In the Bazaar of Love*, 70.

³⁰ Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 81-82.

³¹ Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 85.

³² Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 157.

of stagnation, as the reforms made by Balban were undone by Jalal al-Din, and Alauddin's reforms were undone by Muhammad Bin Tughluq. I understand the final line of Duwal Rani Khizr Khan to be a call for an organized system of hereditary rulership, where possible kinsmen do not perform the dry rituals of usurpation for the water of the royal crown, but perform the godly deeds of rulership by believing in the sultans capacity of raising their children to be competent rulers.

Tensions between Alauddin and Nizamuddin Auliya

Khusrau had a strong relation with the Sufi Pir Nizamuddin, and I believe that there are more sources regarding Nizamuddin than Alauddin. This in turn leads historians to connect Khusrau with Nizamuddin rather than Alauddin. As the Pir's discourses were transcribed, there is more available material to analyze regarding Nizamuddin's thoughts than the speculative work of understanding Khusrau's relation with the Sultan when there is little written record of Alauddin's own thoughts.

Khusrau's relationship with Nizamuddin would be somewhat awkward for Khusrau and Alauddin, as both Nizamuddin and the Sultan were experiencing tensions over who had moral authority in the empire. Sunil Kumar exemplifies scholarship around these tensions in his article "Assertions of Authority" where he discusses how the Sultan and the Sufi claimed to rule the material and the spiritual realm of the sultanate respectfully, yet argued over who held moral authority over the other.³³ Although most of the secondary sources used for this paper discuss Khusrau, none of them besides Kumar and Lal mention a strong connection with Alauddin, even if he has enough respect for the poet to allow him to visit the Pir during this conflict over his legitimacy in his own kingdom.

³³ Kumar, *Assertions of Authority*, 38.

This dispute would prove to be a challenge for Khusrau, as he would be caught in the crossfire between his pir and his Sultan. Yet this did not seem to happen. Khusrau was involved in the conflict through Alauddin, who had his writings transcribed in the Alai Darwaza, the gate to the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque in Delhi. The inscriptions in the Alai Darwaza included many Qur'anic verses, and claims stating that Alauddin was, in Khusrau's wordings: "The strengthener of the pulpits of religious instruction and mosques, the confirmer of the rules of the schools and places of worship, the fortifier of the foundations of Muslim laws."³⁴ The inscriptions on the building were written in Naskh, an Islamic script made for religious purposes, meaning that only a select few religious scholars would be able to read it, out of the few in the population that knew how to read.³⁵ Although it could be argued that it was fitting to add religious script in a religious building, it would not be practical for the exact reasons mentioned above, as simple Arabic or even Persian would drastically increase the capacity of the message being spread. However, even if these manuscripts were not being directly read by most people, Khusrau would read his works aloud at Alauddin's court, as was common in manuscript based societies. It was likely that Nizamuddin would catch word of the meanings behind the transcriptions, as they were spreading through word of mouth. After understanding the severity of these tensions, it is surprising to believe that Khusrau was not directly dragged into it.

Although Khusrau was somewhat involved in the dispute by having his writings transcribed into the Alai Darwaza, Alauddin did not restrict Khusrau's capacity to visit the Pir. While Nizamuddin would urge his followers to leave the courtly life, as its material wealth and vices led one away from God, his fondness for Khusrau would not diminish, going as far as to call him "The Turk of God."³⁶ This shows the respect both Nizamuddin and Alauddin have for

³⁴ Khilji, Alauddin. *Alai Darwaza*. 1311. Inscription on the right pier, south door.

³⁵ Kumar, *Assertions of Authority*, 43.

³⁶ Gabbay, *Islamic Tolerance*, 84.

Khusrau, as both do not infringe on the fact that he was actively visiting both parties even during this dispute, and each was aware of these relationships. The sheer amount of historical writings detailing the connection between Khusrau and Nizamuddin implies that there was not a connection with Alauddin, or the connection with his courtly patron was slight. The trust between them serves as evidence that their relation had more friendly intonations than sultan and poet.

Artistic prosperity in Alauddin's reign

Paintings, architecture, and literature were widely celebrated under Alauddin.³⁷ Although the Sultan financed the construction of multiple temples, schools, and even the city of Kaushak-i-Siri,³⁸ other art forms were receiving wide acclaim even without his direct support. The reasons for this are multiple, however, the market reforms conducted by Alauddin cannot be overlooked as one of the reasons. The patronage of art was part of Alauddin's larger attempts at investing in public infrastructure and connecting with non-elite communities.

Alauddin was storing grain collected from the Doab in the royal granary, and selling it in times of drought or in monsoon seasons at a fixed rate.³⁹ This secured the capacity for peasants to acquire food in times of disparity, and in a geographical location where droughts occur with frequency, this would mean that richer peasants and individuals with artistic talent would have more time to pursue their craft, since those who can afford them are wealthy. Khusrau describes this well in the line "whenever the white clouds have had no water left and destruction has

³⁷ Lal, "Cultural Activity During the Reign of Alauddin Khalji," 39, 52, 54.

³⁸ Lal, "Cultural Activity During the Reign of Alauddin Khalji," 42-43.

³⁹ Barani, *The Reign of Alauddin Khalji*, 104-105.

starred people in the face, he has cheapened the price of grain for every section of the public by generously opening the royal stores.”⁴⁰

Because of this increase in the reproduction and consumption of the arts across the nobility and in neighboring states, it would not be hard for Khusrau to find a different patron. Yet, he decided to continue to work under Alauddin, not because of the undoubtedly high pay he would acquire from being the imperial court poet, but because of his connection with the Sultan. In her article titled “Cultural activity during the reign of Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316)” Lal describes an anecdote where the famous musician Gopal Nayak visited the imperial court for a performance. Not standing seeing his favorite musician get bested, Alauddin hid Khusrau under his throne, where the poet could listen to the performance. The next day Gopal was surprised to hear Khusrau play the same style.⁴¹ Alauddin devised such a complicated plan to protect the image of a single man, being that Khusrau was already a master of multiple different styles of music. This shows the fondness Alauddin had for Khusrau, and serves to show how the Sultan was willing to stand up for Khusrau. Formations such as these are rarely made in historiography. Part of the problem is that these cultural developments are not mentioned in Barani’s accounts. Although he lists the famous scholars and artists in his court, he portrays this amount of cultural development as luck, seen in the quote, given after listing such individuals: “This was the good fortune of Sultan 'Alauddin that such distinguished masters of art and knowledge were present in his court, the example of which is not found in any period.”⁴² Historians using his work as a primary source do the same.

⁴⁰ Khusrau, *Treasures of Victory*, 13.

⁴¹ Lal, “Cultural Activity During the Reign of Alauddin Khalji,” 54; Cffurratul Kama. Also see Beale : *Oriental Biographical Dictionary*, 145.

⁴² Baranī, *The Reign of Alauddin Khalji*, 151-152.

Khusrau's pluralistic tendencies and Alauddin's religious policy

In her book *Islamic Tolerance: Amir Khusrau and Pluralism*, Gabby gleans some insight into Khusrau's ethical perspective by analyzing his works, the manner in which they describe Indic peoples, and the way he describes his own positions towards the cultural majority of India. In her analysis of the preface to the *Dibachah*, or introduction to Khusrau's last poetic collection, Gabby highlights how Khusrau challenges the norms on academic writing at the time. These were mostly dominated by religious scholars, and dictated that Arabic was the ultimate language as the language of the Qur'an, indicating that the other languages practiced in India were below it. Following the same logic, Persian as the principal language spoken by the Muslim elite of the kingdom, was above Sanskrit, the language of the sacred Hindu texts, and Hindavi, languages spoken by those considered lesser by society for not following the Qur'an.⁴³ Khusrau details in the preface how he values Arabic for being the language of the Qur'an, but praises Persian for being more beautiful. He then elaborates on the intricacies of Indian languages and Persian, and how an individual who is native to Arabic will have difficulties writing in Persian, and an individual native to India, who has been exposed to multiple languages, and someone who speaks Persian will easily write in Arabic.⁴⁴ Later, he draws a linguistic hierarchy that puts Sanskrit below Arabic and above Persian as languages of religious practice.⁴⁵ This demonstrates a willingness to break cultural norms that would be at the bare minimum controversial at his time.

Yet, even as Alauddin took the throne of Delhi and has the knowledge of such writings by Khusrau, he still decides to keep Khusrau as court poet. Although there is no concrete text pointing towards Alauddin's thoughts on non-Muslim practitioners, Barani points to a

⁴³ Gabby, *Islamic Tolerance*, 26.

⁴⁴ Gabby, *Islamic Tolerance*, 31.

⁴⁵ Gabby, *Islamic Tolerance*, 35.

conversation held between Alauddin and an Alim, or religious scholar, where Alauddin claims to not receive tax from the Hindus in his realm. The Alim claimed that Divine law was enough grounds for making them subservient, yet Alauddin argued that tough laws and authority put in place by himself make them so.⁴⁶ This implies that Alauddin was putting this aggressive form of authority over all Indian subjects, and that this form of authority was necessary as the Hindus are an aggressive people.⁴⁷ Or at least, this is Barani's claim, let's test this source.

The validity of Barani's source is questionable. Since he was not a member of Alauddin's court he would not have heard this personally. Thus, his capacity to cite the words of both Alauddin and the Alim for eight pages continuously imply that he was at the bare minimum taking some creative interpretations of the words said, as I doubt anyone would have the capacity to memorize such a lengthy conversation. By treating Barani in this time period as a primary source, one assumes that he was present, or at least close to someone who was, when this conversation took place. Such an assumption would give this account of the conversation more validity, and ignores the reality of the incredible time gap between the conversation and this account of it. Barani used this conversation to point out how Alauddin ignored the advice of the Alim. Since Barani believed that a ruler should respect religious law, a theme that runs through much of his work, the idea that Alauddin could treat an Alim in such a manner was outrageous. This is seen in the manner he praised Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq for being a model Muslim ruler, while ignoring how Tughluq executed the wives and children of his enemies, something he criticized Alauddin for doing.⁴⁸ His disdain for Alauddin's restrictive policies is seen with how he praised Mubarak Shah, on reversing Alauddin's policies.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Barani, *The Reign of Alauddin Khilji*, 82-84.

⁴⁷ Barani, *The Reign of Alauddin Khilji*, 81.

⁴⁸ Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 161.

⁴⁹ Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 158.

Although the passage highlights how authoritarian Alauddin was towards Hindus, this aggression did not translate to Khusrau and his views on Hindus. Although the preface to the *Dibachah* was written before Alauddin's reign, he kept Khusrau as court poet, and allowed him to continue writing controversial works, as seen with the reception to the *Eight Paradises*⁵⁰ Although there is no evidence to support the claim that Alauddin was in full support of Khusrau's writings, they were not in clashing positions on the topic. Moreover, as the analysis of his religious patronage to temples, Hindu communities, and larger economic reforms suggest to historians, Alauddin had strong pragmatic tendencies of economic inclusion in his policies. This seems very contrary to the account given by Barani, forty years after his death.

Conclusion

Through this essay, I have established connections between Alauddin and Khusrau, which evidence the manner in which Khusrau believes Alauddin to be a good ruler. He was firm in action and took control of his kingdom, qualities valued by Khusrau who witnessed multiple violent wars of succession. Although such a conflict was present after Alauddin's reign, it only occurred after his death, being that he was bedridden for an extensive amount of time. And yet, his son still became ruler for a short period after him. These connections drew aid in dispelling the idea that Khusrau praises Alauddin because he was being paid to do so, and helped establish his propaganda as sincere belief. Through this understanding, I hope to urge historians studying the Delhi Sultanate to see the claims made by both Khusrau and Barani as rooted in opposing ideologies, providing differing perspectives of the Sultan. As the example on Alauddin's justice described in *Treasures of Victory* proves, both scholars are describing the same man.

⁵⁰ Gabby, *Islamic Tolerance*, 41.

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