

# Prelims Master Program (2023-24) – Ancient, Medieval, Art and Culture Handout 21 / 3: Delhi Sultanate Part 2

# Tughlaq Dynasty (1320-1414)

# (1) Ghiasuddin Tughlaq (1321-25)

- Originally called '**Ghazi Malik**', he was an important military commander under Alauddin Khilji, taking care of the Mongol problem.
- He ascended to the throne as Gihasuddin Tughlaq in 1321, thus becoming the **founder** of his dynasty.
- He laid the foundations of **Tughlaqabad** near Delhi.
- He didn't have great relations with Nizamuddin Auliya.

# (2) Mohammed bin Tughlaq (1325-51 CE)

Originally called **Jauna Khan**, he assassinated his father and ascended the throne as Mohammed bin Tughlaq.

In history, he is looked upon as a **paradox** - a **mixture of opposites**; new ideas which were great as well as crackpot, generosity of the king along with pitiless/ruthless behaviour; a <u>'Mad King;'</u> and the <u>'Wisest Fool'</u>. This was mostly due to his ambitious schemes and the novel experiments which were all far ahead of their time.

### **Ibn Battuta**

- Ibn Battuta was an inhabitant of **Morocco**. He started his tour from Africa and in 1333 he reached Delhi while crossing the regions of Constantinople, Alexandria, Kahira, Arabia, Persia, Balkh, Samarkand and Herat.
- In India
  - He easily got the patronage of **Muhammad-Bin-Tughlaq** and was appointed as the **Qazi of Delhi**, a post he held for the next 3 years.
  - Later, on corruption charges he was imprisoned.
  - After his release he was sent to China as an ambassador.
- Upon returning to Morocco, he composed his famous text Kitab-i-Rehla.
  - The account of Ibn Battuta is important for the knowledge of the political and social conditions during the period of Muhammad-Bin-Tughlaq.
  - o Ibn Battuta commented on almost all the political events of his time.

### **Theory of Kingship**

- Idea of divine origin of Kingship
- Idea of despotism
  - o Broader Secularism
    - He promoted a number of Hindus to high office, both in civilian as well as military capacities.
  - Heterogenous nobility



- Reintroduced Survey and Measurement
- Wali-ul-Kharaj
- Policy of imperialism
  - Direct control over south India as well.
  - As a Prince, he led an expedition against the **Kakatiya ruler Rai Rudra Dev** and brought Warangal under the direct control of the Delhi Sultanate.
  - In 1324 he also defeated Bhanu Dev II, the ruler of **Janjnagar** (Odisha), who had helped Rai Rudra Dev and annexed his territory as well.

### **Religious Policy of MBT:**

- He was the only Delhi sultan to have received comprehensive literary, religious and philosophical education.
- He patronised non-Muslim culture as well:
  - Muhammad Tughlaq also held discourses with several jogis.
  - O Jina Prabha Suri (Jain scholar) was his close personal friend and trusted advisor.
    - He wrote Vividha Tirtha Kalpa, a compilation of various Jaina tirtha site visits.
  - He also ordered the construction of a **new basadi** upasraya, a rest-house for monks.
  - He even **visited the Hindu and Jain Temples** of Mt. Abu and made donations towards them. He is said to have **visited the Shatrunjaya temples at Palitana.**
  - He celebrated the festival of Holi with great fanfare. (perhaps first Delhi Sultan to do so)

#### Towards Sufis:

- Some sources claim that he was the first Sultan of Delhi to visit the tomb of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti at Ajmer and the tomb of Salar Masud at Bahraich.
- The Sultan was a disciple of **Shaikh Alauddin**, a grandson of Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar, and was equally deferential towards Shaikh Ruknuddin Multani.
- o In addition, he had mausoleums built over the graves of Miran Mulhim at Badaun, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya at Delhi, Shaikh Ruknuddin at Multan, Shaikh Alauddin at Ajudhan, as well as of several other saints.

# Additional Facts about MBT:

- He massacred the entire population of Kannauj.
- He also maintained diplomatic relations with Egypt, Persian, China.

# Muhammad bin Tughlaq is famous for his 6 experiments:

# (1) Transfer of capital (1327–1328)

- The capital was shifted from Delhi to Daulatabad.
- Barani
  - Harassed by hate mail.. :)
  - All residents of Delhi were forced to make the long journey in the height of summer, on foot. Not even cats and dogs had been left behind.
- Reality
  - Daulatabad was better suited to govern the new territory in south India which not directly controlled.



- Moreover, it was relatively **safer than Delhi**, which was constantly under **Mongol** threat.
- Soon after reaching Daulatabad, the Sultan was forced to reconsider the transfer due to shifting political currents in South India. Many newly acquired territories had rebelled against the Sultanate and his position in Daulatabad had become precarious.

Had Delhi become a ghost town during these years? Most historians suggest that **Delhi was** never deserted completely.

# (2) Token Concurrency (1329–1333)

- Mohammed bin Tughlaq issued <u>base metal coins of copper and brass instead of gold and</u> silver coins.
- This experiment had to be abandoned due to widespread forgery.
  - As a result of forgery, currency lost value, people stopped accepting it, inflation became high.
    - In the rural areas, officials like the muqaddams paid the revenue in brass and copper coins and also used the same coins to purchase arms and horses.
  - Entire **monetary system collapsed** as public confidence declined and the state was forced to replace them with precious metal coins.
- Barani says that peasants used forged coins to pay revenue and rebels used them to buy horses and arms.

#### (3) Khorasan explanation (1333-1334)

- Muhammad bin Tughlaq wanted to capture the Khurasan region (Central Asia).
  - According to Barani, the flattery of some Khorasani nobles had filled the Sultan's head with lofty ideas. Other contemporary sources suggest that the plan was the outcome of the prevailing political chaos in Khurasan after the death of Tamarshin Khan.
  - He raised a 3.7 Lakh strong army and paid them 1 year's salary in advance.
- However, after waiting for six months the plan was abandoned.
  - Barani says that the Sultan realised his mistake and came to his senses.
  - However, other contemporary sources inform that a powerful ruler had established control over Khorasan even before the Sultan's plan could materialise.

### (4) Qarachil expedition (1333–1334)

- Qarachil was a small Himalayan tributary state of the sultanate, along the Indo-Tibetan frontier.
  - During Muhammad bin Tughlaq's reign, it declared independence and stopped paying the annual tribute. The Sultan in turn, sent a force of 10,000 soldiers to subdue the recalcitrant state.
- Barani
  - Sultan's real objective was to invade China through Tibet.
  - According to Barani the hasty campaign was disastrous. The men were poorly supplied, and the Sultan had made the mistake of appointing Hindu commanders. Thus, the forces were soundly defeated, and only 10 men returned to Delhi, empty handed.



- However, other contemporary sources suggest that:
  - The campaign was successful, and Qarachil was brought back into the fold.
  - However, the disaster of army was also costly due to the unfamiliar terrain and inclement weather.

# (5) Taxation in the Doab (1333-1334)

- Due to expensive military campaigns and disastrous policy experiments, the imperial treasury was critically depleted and in order to replenish it, the Sultan introduced a new tax policy in the Ganga Yamuna doab.
  - o Barani: taxation was increased by 10-20 times.
  - o Sirhindi: increased by more than 20 times.
  - o Isami: it was doubled.
  - Modern historical research: official rate was same as Alauddin's reign (50%).
- However, the policy failed due to the insensitivity and corruption of state officials in collecting revenue from helpless peasants.
  - The very year that the policy was implemented, a severe drought affected north India, resulting in widespread crop failure.
  - However, tax officials forced peasants to pay the increased land revenue. Further, they also collected 'Abwabs' (illegal cess) from the already distressed peasants.

#### Consequence

 Agriculture collapsed completely and contemporary sources inform us that famine affected north India for the next eight years.

#### Corrective Action

- A new department of agriculture known as the Diwan-i-Amir Kohi was established, through which the state made rehabilitative loans known as Sondhar/Taqavvi loans to peasants so that they may purchase seeds, agricultural implements, animals and fodder. The state also provided assistance in digging wells.
- A new famine code was also promulgated, consisting of guidelines regarding the state's response to famine.

# (6) Model Agricultural Farm (1337–38)

- **To revive** agriculture, the Sultan created a model agricultural farm
  - From which new methods, techniques and practices could be taken to the general population.
  - Further, expanded agriculture would replenish the state treasury.
- A parcel of land measuring roughly 100 square kilometres was selected, and a sum of 70
   Lakh Tankas was set aside for distribution among peasants to expand agriculture.
- **Consequence:** The Sultan had envisaged **expansion** of agriculture by bringing uncultivated fertile land under the plough. However, according to Barani, not a single inch of additional land was brought under the plough.
  - The plots of land selected were completely **barren**.
  - Much of the money set aside to expand agriculture was misappropriated by the bureaucracy.
  - Finally, the money which reached the peasants was used by them to fulfil their **basic needs** since they had still not recovered from the long years of famine.



As a result of these disastrous policies, revolts and rebellions were frequent. Some Rebellions during the MBT

- 1335 **Madurai** broke away from the Sultanate
- 1336 Raja Hammir Singh reconquered Rajputana in the battle of Singoli (1336)
- 1336 Harihara, Bukka declared independence and established the Vijayanagar Empire.
- 1338 Rebellion erupted in **Bengal** which declared its independence.
- 1347 Deccan slipped out of the grasp of the Sultanate and Alauddin Bahman Shah established the **Bahmani** Sultanate.

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq died in 1351 on his way to Thatta, Sindh, while he was campaigning in Sindh.

# (3) Feroz Shah Tughlaq (1351-88)

- After the death of Muhammad bin Tughluq at Thatta (Sindh) his cousin Feroz Shah Tughlaq was elevated to the position of Sultan by the nobles.
  - His father was the brother of GST while his mother was a Bhati Rajput princess from Dipalpur (Punjab)
- Feroz Shah Tughlaq ascended to the throne at a time of great crisis. His predecessor's
  policies had extracted a heavy cost.
  - The Sultanate had lost much of its territory and been reduced to a north Indian principality.
  - The **treasury** was completely **depleted** due to MBT's adventurism.
  - Agriculture was in ruins and was yet to recover from the disastrous taxation policy. Unrest among the peasants was high and they were on the verge of rebellion.
  - Rebellions were frequent, with Bengal and Sind being the most problematic.
  - Nobility and clergy were looking to retaliate. They didn't want a strong administrator as a ruler on throne.
- The situation demanded an able administrator and gifted general. Feroz Shah Tughlaq lacked both these qualities. Therefore, he adopted a policy of appeasement, both internally and externally.

# **External Policy**

- In the early part of his reign, Feroz Shah Tughlaq undertook four military campaigns.
  - He successfully raided the small Himalayan kingdom of Nagarkot (HP), destroyed the Jwalamukhi temple there, and extracted tribute from its ruler.
  - The **other three campaigns** ended in **complete failure**, two against Bengal and one against Sind.
- Following this, the Sultan abandoned the policy of war.
  - He declared that he did not wish to gain territory by shedding the blood of innocent Muslims.
  - However, most modern historians believe that his pacifism was a result of his military ineptitude.

# **Internal/Domestic Policy**



Feroz Shah Tughlaq's reign was <u>more notable for his internal administration</u>, to which he also applied his **policy of appeasement**, and **to restore normalcy** after the turbulent rule of his predecessor.

#### • Revenue Reforms

- A detailed survey was conducted under Maqbool Khan-i-Jahan Telangani (Prime Minister). The revenue of the entire Sultanate was permanently fixed at 6.5 Crore Tankas
- Feroz Shah Tughlaq **abolished 21 non-Shariat taxes** (like Ghari, Charai etc) and replaced them with the **5 Shariat taxes**. (kharaj, ushra, khums, zakat, jizya)
  - Khums was restored to the prescribed proportion of ⅓.
  - FST was the first Sultan to separate Kharaj from Jizya (Poll tax imposed on Non-Muslims) He also imposed it upon Brahmins, who had been exempted till now.
- Barani informs us that as a result of these reforms, agriculture flourished, and the imperial treasury was refilled. There was no shortage or famine, the peasants were happy and new land was brought under the plough.

# • Agrarian Reforms

- Small experimental farms were set up in the vicinity of Delhi.
- Cropping pattern
  - 1200 orchards/gardens were laid around Delhi, which yielded an annual income of 1.8 Lakh Tankas.
  - Encouraged the cultivation of superior crops: millets --> wheat --> grapes.
- Taqqavi loans made during Mohammed bin Tughlaq's reign were written off.
- Irrigation canals (Rajwahas)
  - A network of five major canals was constructed around Delhi. Two from the Yamuna, and one each from the Ghaggar, the Sutlej and the Kali Sindh.
  - An irrigation tax of 10%, known as 'Haq-i-Sharb' (water tax) was also introduced.

### Barani reports

- These reforms were highly successful.
- There was no shortage of food during his reign.
- The prices of food grains and fruits were low.
- Even the poor could afford rich fare including fruits and ghee.

# Judicial Reforms

- The penal code was made milder and inhumane practices such as torture and amputations were prohibited.
- Welfare Initiatives: Firoz Shah Tughlaq used the state machinery for the welfare of his subjects.
  - Diwan-i-Ishtiaq: Created to help those who had suffered under the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq by giving them state pensions.
  - Diwan-i-Khairat: Established to help poor Muslim parents who wanted to marry their daughters.
  - O **Diwan-i-Bandagan**: To look after the welfare of slaves. The Sultan himself and more than 1.8 lakh slaves.
  - Dar-ul Shifa/Dawakhana: Hospitals/infirmaries overseen by competent physicians employed by the state. Treatment was provided free of cost.
  - Free Kitchens: The state organized Langars to provide free meals to the poor.



 Travellers' Welfare: A number of measures were initiated for the welfare of travellers, such as maintenance of state owned rest houses and inns, plantation of shady trees along roads and digging of wells along state highways at state expense.

#### Public Works

- Firoz Shah Tughlaq was the most prolific builder among all the Sultan's of Delhi.
   He built five cities
  - Feroz Shah Kotla/ Firozabad (Delhi)
  - Fatehabad (Haryana)
  - Hisar Firoza (Haryana)
  - Firozabad (UP)
  - Jaunpur (UP)
- Water-work
  - He also constructed a network of five major canals around Delhi.
  - He repaired the Hauz-i-Shamsi (built by Iltutmish) and the Hauz-i-Alai/Hauz Khas (built by Alauddin Khilji).
- He repaired the Qutub Minar, which had been destroyed by lightning, and added its fifth story.
- He transported 2 Ashokan pillars to Delhi from Meerut and Topara.
- o Public work
  - He designed an astronomical calendar called 'Utsarlab' in order to better detect the onset of seasons.
  - Many clock-towers ware constructed by him.
  - He also constructed a number of saris, palaces, bridges, mosques, madrasas and pleasure resorts.

### Patronage to Learning

- Feroz Shah Tughlaq was a gifted scholar and the <u>only Sultan to write an</u> <u>autobiography called 'Futuhat-i-Firoz Shahi'.</u>
- He also patronised accomplished scholars such as **Barani** and **Afif**, among others.
- During the destruction of the Jwalamukhi Temple (Nagarkot), 1300 rare Sanskrit manuscripts were confiscated. Firoz Shah had them translated to Persian in 3 different compilations.
  - 'Ragdarpan' A work on music
  - 'Tib-i-Firuzshahi' A work on medicine
  - 'Dalil-i-Firuzshahi' A work on philosophy



#### Firozshah Tughlaq as the 'Ideal Muslim King':

**Barani,** in his 'Fatwa-i-Jahandari', defined the qualities of an ideal Muslim king. In his judgement, Firoz Shah Tughlaq fulfiled these qualities. According to Barani, he not only followed the Islamic law in letter and spirit, but also made it a state priority to promote Islam.

- Firoz Shah followed an **orthodox religious policy** in accordance with the Sharia.
  - He showed **utmost respect to the ulema**, who became immensely influential during his reign.
  - He abandoned the policy of violent conquest to avoid shedding the blood of innocent Muslims.
  - He opposed the art of Painting.
    - He says in his autobiography: "In former times it had been the custom to wear ornamented garments, and men received robes as tokens of honour from kings' court. Figures and devices were painted and displayed on saddles, bridles and collars, on censers, on goblets and cups and flagons, on dishes and ewers, in tents, on curtains and on chairs, and upon all articles and utensils. Under Divine guidance and favour I ordered all pictures and portraits to be removed from these things, and that such articles only should be made as are approved and recognized by the Law. Those pictures and portraits which were painted on the doors and walls of palaces I ordered to be effaced."
- He tried to promote Islam as a matter of state policy. For this, the carrot and stick approach was adopted.
  - Carrot:
    - Converted Hindus were rewarded: government appointments, tax exemptions and welfare measures.
    - Those who resisted conversion: Jizya, pilgrimage tax and destruction of temples.
    - He separated Jizya from Kharaj for the first time and also imposed it on Brahmins.
  - Stick:
    - Forcible conversions were also carried out even during peacetime.
    - Persecution of non-Muslims was also common.
      - He ordered a Brahmin, who was carrying a wooden tablet 'covered with paintings of demons and other objects', to be burnt alive if he were not to accept conversion to Islam.
- He was the only sultan who received a letter of investiture two times from the Khalifa.

Although Barani has portrayed Firoz Shah as an Ideal Muslim King, many of the Sultan's personal traits contradict this notion.

- He was **addicted to gambling and drinking**, which are both prohibited under Islam. He also did not make any efforts to prohibit these practices.
- Music is prohibited by orthodox Islamists. However, Feroz Shah himself was an accomplished musician and generously patronized musicians.
- Islam permits a man to have a **maximum of 4 wives.** The sultan had many more than that number.



- Although he abolished several non-Shariat taxes, he also introduced the Haqq-i-Sharb, which does not have any recognition under Shariat.
- While writing off Taqqavi loans, he did not differentiate between Muslims and Non-Muslims.

A closer examination of his reign reveals that <u>his religious policy was shaped not only by his personal outlook but also by his political compulsions</u>. Many historians believe that:

- Through his orthodox policy, he was <u>trying to compensate the insecurity for having a Hindu mother.</u>
- Due to his weak nature and the political turmoil within the Sultanate, he was <u>forced to</u> <u>seek the support of the Ulemas and orthodox Muslims</u>, which pulled the state towards greater orthodoxy.

As such, it would be safe to conclude that his religious policy was more of an outcome of his own weakness as a Sultan and the political compulsions of his time, rather than any desire to live up to the model of an Ideal Muslim King.

#### Invasion of Amir Timur (1398)

Although he was not himself a Mongol, his actions were no less barbaric.

- Afif, in his 'Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi', has recounted the horror of the Turkish invasion and the sack of Delhi under Amir Timur.
  - **Slaughtered** the huge population of Delhi, not sparing even the elderly and crippled. (almost 80,000)
  - There was large-scale plunder for a month. A large number of Indians were enslaved and sent to Central Asia in chains.
  - The Sultan was forced to pay a sum amounting to 3 years of revenue to purchase peace.
- The invasion had a lasting political impact on the Delhi Sultanate:
  - Disintegration of Delhi Sultanate
    - The prestige of the Tughlaqs was completely destroyed leading to its ultimate downfall.
    - Frequent **rebellions** destabilised the empire from within.
    - Punjab slipped out of the grasp of the Sultan. Amir Timur appointed Khizr Khan, as the governor of Punjab. He regularly interfered in the political affairs in Delhi. This became the background for the emergence of the Sayyid Dynasty founded by Khizr Khan. It replaced the Tughlags in 1414.
    - **Deccan, Bengal** which had already started to emerge as independent now became bolder.



The Defeat by Timur of the Sultan of Delhi

- **Delhi** lost its place as the cultural centre of the Islamic world.
  - Timur carried off the learned men, artists, architects, poets, musicians, scientists, philosophers and theologians of Delhi to Samarkand.



# Role of Firuz Shah Tughlaq in the decline of Delhi Sultanate

- **Traditionally** it was believed that the policy of **appeasement** by Firuzshah Tughlaq proved instrumental in the decline of Delhi Sultanate.
- But this issue should be discussed in a larger context. When we observe minutely, we find that from the very beginning, **many ruptures already existed** in the basic structure of the state. These were:
  - Conflict between Sultan and nobility
  - Conflict between Sultan and Ulema class
  - Conflict between different sections of the nobility
- It was not Firuzshah Tughlaq who gave birth to these problems.
  - o It was in this context that Muhammad-Bin-Tughlaq followed a strict policy. As a result of this, he left behind a **disgruntled nobility and dissatisfied Ulema.** So, Firuzshah Tughlaq <u>inherited a **bitter legacy** from his predecessor.</u>
- He tried to solve this question in his own way.
  - It was in this context that he followed the policy of appearement toward nobles and Ulemas.
  - For short term gains, he unconsciously enlarged the rift which had already existed within the structure of Delhi Sultanate.
- In conclusion, although we can't absolve Firuzshah Tughlaq from the responsibility for the
  decline of Delhi Sultanate, his role should be viewed in the context of objective material
  factors as well.

# Sayyid Dynasty (1414-1451)

Founder - Khijr Khan. He was the hand-picked governor of Punjab by Amir Timur.

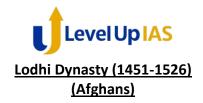
#### **Features:**

- Sayyids maintained their distinct identity by wearing a pointed cap which was known as Kullah (thus called **Kulhadaran**). It distinguished them from other **dastarbandi ulamas**.
- They ruled for a very short period and Sayyids rule was restricted to a small region.
- Basic characteristic of Sayyid period was the rise of feudalism. They were not able to
  establish royal supremacy, and the power remained decentralized. There were economic
  crises and military weakness.

#### **Transition to Lodhis**

Sayyids had got control of Delhi but **lost control of Punjab**. By this time, a new power was emerging in Punjab. It was a group of Afghans led by **Bahlol Lodhi**. He emerged as a major power broker during this period.

The fourth and the last Sayyid dynasty ruler **Alauddin Alam Shah** ruled for about 6 years and then **voluntarily surrendered** (abdicated) the throne, retired in Badaun. His territories were greatly shrunk and the popular saying at that time was: Shahanshah-e-Alam, Aj Delhi Ta Palam. Soon, Bahlol Lodhi captured the power in 1451.



# (1) Founder - Bahlol Lodhi.

In 1479, he defeated and annexed Jaunpur sultanate.

This is the first Pakhtun/Pathan dynasty ruling over north India. They had their own Afghan Tribal model of Kingship.

# **First Among Equals**

- So, the power is not centralized.
- o Bahlol Lodhi didn't even have a **throne** in Darbar, he used to sit on the **carpet** with his chiefs.

### Feudalization

- Important central government offices became hereditary in tribal families.
- o Iqtas also became hereditary.
- Tendency of revenue decentralization
- Feudalization of military (no permanent standing army, hereditary iqtadars prominent)
- (2) Sikandar Lodhi (real name: Nizam Khan) tried to assert royal supremacy by going back to Turkish model of kingship. But he was only partially successful, that too only at the central level upto some extent.
- Central Government: He handpicked major officials but iqtadars continued to remain hereditary.
- Revenue: He curbed the individualistic tendencies of his Pashtun nobles and compelled them to submit their accounts to a state audit.
- **Military:** He tried to revive the standing royal army.
- Suppression of rebellions: He took a leaf out of Balban's book and followed a policy of blood and iron against rebels.
- Shift of Capital: By this point of time, Delhi had become a capital of intrigues and conspiracies. So, he transferred his capital by constructing a new city - Agra (1504)

Sikandar Lodhi was an accomplished poet in Persian, with nom de plume Gulrukhi.

# (3) Ibrahmi Lodhi (r. 1517-26)

- Since his father and he both tried to centralize power, there was discontent. He faced several rebellions from nobles as well as close family members. It led to political instability and military weakness.
- It provided opportunity to neighbouring Rajput kingdoms. So, a number of strong Rajput kings started to emerge. Strongest among them was Rana Sanga, the king of Mewar.

#### **Contemporary Bhakti Saints**

- Chaitanya Mahaprabhu 1486-1534
- Guru Nanak 1469-1539
- Kabir 1440-1518
- Mirabai 1498-1548

Finally, Lodhis were ended by Babur, who was invited to attack Ibrahim Lodhi by his own family members such as Dilawar Khan Lodhi, Adil Khan Lodhi, Islam Khan Lodhi etc which



indicates towards a lot of infighting within the family. Also, **Daulat Khan Lodhi** (governor of Lahore) and probably Rana Sanga (debatable).

**Babur** was easily able to overcome Lodhis due to internal weakness. Ibrahim Khan Lodhi was defeated in **Panipat in 1526**. This was the end of the Delhi sultanate and the start of the Mughal era. The tomb of Ibrahim Khan Lodhi is located in Panipat.

