

HISTORY OF DELHI TO THE TIME OF TIMUR'S INVASION

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MORE than twenty years of personal study and research have convinced me of the fact that the history of Delhi (like all other portions of the history of India) has to be written afresh from the original sources. I have all along been collecting materials to compile such history of the Imperial Capital for the first centuries of the Muslim Rule to the time of Timur's invasion. I had almost commenced the compilation, which should take time to finish, when the idea of writing a short essay on the subject struck me at the time when my friends of the National University, Delhi, extended to me the honour of reading a paper in their Urdu Academy.

On the evening of the 19th January I actually availed myself of the opportunity, and the present brief memoir is based on the original paper written for the Academy in the Urdu language. The obvious advantages of reproducing the materials in the English language as well have induced me to the present venture, and I would feel my labours amply paid, if this brief memoir in English proves of interest or use to the general reader or the specialists devoted to this particular period of the history of our Indian Capital.

The subject has constantly been under treatment now for more than a century, and I honestly feel myself under deep obligations to all those who have preceded me in the field. While thus acknowledging my debts to them all freely and frankly, I must, however, confess that I have always made it a point to go for my information to the original sources first, and prefer them to our modern authorities, where the latter derive their materials from secondary records or content themselves to accept uncritically the current views and traditions.

The short space at my disposal has prohibited me from including a critical bibliographical study as well as from the discussion of the theories about the art of the period or the statement of the grounds whenever I have ventured to differ.

All these will find due place in my extended work. In the meanwhile I beg my readers to favour me with their suggestions and corrections, which will all be most gratefully utilized in a subsequent edition of this memoir as well as in my larger History of Delhi, with which I am still occupied.

—S. H. B.

N.B.—For the sake of convenience all the references to the authorities cited or relied upon have been collected in one appendix at the end of this article, and the figures in the text always relate to these references.

WE HAVE the authority of the Moorish traveller ibn Battutah to the effect that up to the middle of the eighth century A. H. (the middle of the 14th A. C.), the name of Delhi was strictly confined to the city originally founded by the Hindus and later on conquered by the Musalmans and raised by them to the position of the Capital of their Indian Empire.¹ It retained that proud privilege for full one century. But the next hundred years saw the birth, growth and also decay of five more capitals, having their separate names; so that at the time of Timur's invasion (801 A. H.-1398 A. C.) there existed the following cities also known by the general name of Delhi:

Shahri Nau Kilokhari, "The new city of Kilokhari", founded by Kaiqubad and completed by Jalal-Uddin Khilji—Capital for about ten years only.

Siri or Darulkhilafat founded by Alauddin Khilji and completed by Qutbuddin Mubarak-Shah Khilji.

Tughlaqabad built by Tughlaq and also the capital in the early times of the reign of his son, Mohammed.

Jahan Panah entirely built by Mohammed Tughlaq.

Firozabad built by Firoz Shah and the capital for more than forty years.

The increasing population as well as the desire of raising memorials to their fame were responsible for these incessant changes in the capitals during the comparatively short period of hundred years only. Ibn Battutah has explicitly stated that it had become almost a custom with the Sultans of Delhi to erect new palaces on their accession to the throne and desert the old ones, which were allowed to decay with their valuable movables. He actually found Balban's "Red Palace" in this wretched condition, which drew the pity of himself and his companion, a Spanish Arab then residing in India.²

Barani mentions that the same fate had betaken another "Imperial Palace" known as the "Green Palace", which was put to public service in the times of Alauddin Khilji.³

Of these old capitals Kilokhari and Siri have totally disappeared, but some vestiges of the other three have survived to our times.

In their original condition all these cities were defended by their separate fortifications; everyone of them had Imperial palaces, grand Friday mosques, colleges, monasteries, caravansarais and hospitals as well as the tombs of the Sultans, the grandees of their Courts and the eminent saints, all with extensive charitable establishments (Waqfs) connected with them. To understand the real nature of these Waqfs a reference to the account of Qutbuddin Khilji's tomb by Ibn Battutah, who had personally manages its affairs, is very illuminating.⁴

The Grand Mosques vied with one another in their grandeur and extensiveness, but the priority in all respects went to the first and also the biggest Friday Mosque of Old Delhi, the few remaining vestiges of

which hardly suffice to give a real idea of its original magnificence. Evidence abounds to show that these mosques were the sources of wonder to the strangers, and I believe have served as models not only for the later mosques of the Eastern, Western and Southern portions of India only, but also for those of Central Asia and other adjoining countries. It appears almost certain that the mosques of Jaunpur, known as belonging to a distinct "Eastern school" of Muslim architecture, and the oldest mosques of Gulbarga and Bidar were imitated from the Delhi models of Tughlaq's times, as was also Timur's mosque of Samarkand, on which Indian architects and masons were largely employed.

Some of these magnificent structures must have suffered damages by the ravages of time, but most of them, if left to themselves, would have easily resisted destruction. Greatest damage, however, was done to them by human hands in times of war as well as in times of peace. Some were destroyed in war madness, but many more were demolished to furnish materials for the newer structures of Firoz Shah, Sher Shah, Akbar and Shahjahan. I believe that the materials of the Imperial palaces of Kilokhari and other buildings have been utilized in Humayun's tomb, while those of many other buildings were used in the magnificent structures of Shahjahan's Delhi. It is difficult to say if our gains have in all cases outweighed the losses. The Moghal monuments, no doubt, are our proudest possession of the past art, but from the historian's point of view the buildings of the Turkish Sultans of Delhi were the original sources of inspiration to the succeeding generations. We have the testimony of history as well as a few remaining monuments to show that the buildings of the Khilji period, which drew admiration from the world-conqueror Timur, were the best specimens of the Indo-Islamic art, erroneously called "Pathan art", a term which has no sense or reality about it. Ibn Battutah says that the incomplete Imperial mosque of Siri, built by the last Khilji Sultan, would easily have been an unparalleled structure in its grandeur and beauty throughout the world.⁵ Firoz Shah's grand mosque extracted the praise of Timur, although judging from the remains of the period of that Sultan's reign, we are led to believe that art had somewhat declined in his time. The masters of the Slave and Khilji periods had not perhaps left many equally worthy successors behind them, and most of these had already dispersed, owing to Mohammed Khilji's change of capital, generally in the Deccan, where they laid the foundations of the art and architecture of the Southern Muslim capitals, earliest art of which is decidedly indebted to the Delhi models.

The early Muslim conquerors and rulers of Delhi are termed "barbarians". This judgment is based on entirely wrong conceptions. The truth of the matter is that Islamic culture had already reached its zenith centuries before the arrival of the Muslims in India and had more or less civilized nearly all the races, nations and countries that had come into its fold. The Ghauri Sultans were patrons of art and

literature. The famous philosopher and theologian, Imam Razi, had lived at the court of Ghayasuddin Ghauri who was very fond of building mosques and colleges and was buried in the mausoleum erected near his Imperial mosque in Herat.⁶

It was impossible for the Muslims in India to neglect the numerous Hindu monuments found all over the country. Many had no rivals anywhere else, and are still among the wonders of the world. However, the Muslims could not always copy those monuments just as they were. Firstly, the Mohammadans naturally leaned to their own models, of which there existed so many in the other Islamic countries. Then some of the Hindu features, e. g., the plan of the temple suitable for individual worship, could not be serviceable to the plan of a mosque where the Islamic ideals of mass-worship necessitated a wider area for the congregation. Nor could the specific Hindu ornaments, consisting of the statues and representatives of the deities and other living creatures, be acceptable to a community with avowedly iconoclastic beliefs.

The first Muslim builders at any rate had no scruple in utilizing and adapting Hindu materials as best as they could under the circumstances. The earliest monuments of Ajmere and Delhi particularly betray this feature in their structures. The mosques are raised on pillars, the statues and bas-relief figures have been disfigured or obliterated, the low and conical domes are built in old Hindu manner of corbelling. While standing beneath the roofs the view is similar to that obtained in the interiors of the Jaini temples of Mount Abu.

It appears that the similarity was noticed even by those early architects, and, as if to hide it, they raised high arches overtopping the interior portions. These arches are distinctly Muslim in form and ornament. They are all pointed, and their surface decorations consist of Kufic and Naskhi inscriptions and floral designs. This kind of ornamentation, and particularly the Kufic inscriptions, which are of a rather complicated nature, required expert hands to deal with.

It is, therefore, clear that they were inscribed by Muslim calligraphists. But it is also equally clear that no expert Muslim architects, masons and sculptors from outside were available in sufficient numbers at that time. The work was, therefore, often carried out by Hindu workmen, who did not till then know to construct a true arch with key stone and built these arches, therefore, in the Hindu manner, by arranging their slabs in parallel layers.

Thus one can easily notice a combination of the Hindu and Muslim styles even in the Qutbminar. The Indian architect and sculptor have united in creating an altogether new model of its own kind. The first minarets of Islam were square in their plan, and this type has throughout persisted in Spain and the Moorish West. Some of the towers in Europe are derived from these Islamic models. In the East the types of round towers in stages or plainly cylindrical had already prevailed; but the telescopic type on a star plan and with conical and panelled sides,

giving free play to light and shade, is obviously derived from the pattern of the ancient Hindu temples, of which the best models exist at Khajuraha and Bhuvaneshwar. The immediate precursors of the Qutbminar are considered to be the two minarets of Ghaznah, built on the plan of a star, but even in their case the idea seems to us to have been borrowed from the Hindu temples, and carried out by Hindu masons, whose assistance was available to Mahmud and his successors in their own capital. The raised inscriptions of the Qutb and its projecting balconies are nearer to the Indian style, and so far as I have been able to ascertain the use of the balconies in the various stages of the minaret even in other Islamic countries is most probably borrowed from our first Indian model. The stalactite decoration beneath the balconies, however, is of a purely Islamic kind, and is a proof that by the time that the Qutbminar was under construction the help of the Muslim masters, architects and masons had also become available. The decoration is not far removed from the contemporary stalactite decorations of the Hispano—Mauresque structures. The form of the pointed arch is admittedly Islamic, though it is found in some ancient Hindu monuments. It has rightly been suggested that the same in India was originally derived from the form of the *pipal* leaf.

These Hindu arches are all cut out of stone and none are known to have been constructed in masonry. It is possible to imagine that the suggestion of the pointed form was in the beginning derived from the Indian types, but in any case at the time when the Muslim Rule was established in India, the form was already quite familiar to the Muslims, who had also invented a number of other forms, e.g., horse-shoe, trefoil and indented, of which some of the most beautiful examples are found in the Umayyad buildings of Syria and Spain. The forms of such arches were known to the ancient Hindus as well, but there is no evidence of a direct connection between the Indian and the Islamic examples.

Judging from these early monuments it appears that the Indian Islamic architecture had from the outset chosen its own course in India. The Musalmans had determined to build in their own way, and had decided to combine the Hindu and the Muslim artistic conceptions. In about a century the art of Delhi had matured, and reached its zenith in the time of Alauddin Khilji. The monuments of this period are wrongly styles as purely Saracenic. The correct designation would be Indo-Islamic, as in the meanwhile both the styles had been combined and harmonized in wonderful perfection.

By the advent of the Tughlaq dynasty a clear reaction is noticeable which had its own reason. Within the century, owing to the social and economic intercourse, the Muslims who had come from outside were themselves being Indianized. The process was still on the increase, when the usurper Khusraw's insurrection put a check to it. Tughlaq came with different notions, and the few remains of the times of his dynasty strengthen our belief that his artistic conceptions were more purely

Islamic, particularly betraying Egyptian influence. *e.g.*, in the sloping walls.

It is difficult to judge the loss to Delhi of the experienced masters and true artistic sense due to Mohammad Tughlaq's change of capital to Deogiri. The monuments of Firoz Shah's period confirm the idea of decay in the artistic quality in his times. Firoz Shah repaired the Qutb-minar which had been struck with lightning, and made some changes and additions in the original structure. This portion is distinctly marked out and in its general quality—for instance, in the stalactite decorations—is much inferior to the original work in the minaret. The addition has raised the minaret a bit higher than its original stature, but it has thereby suffered as regards its proportions. The Christian architects committed the same mistake in respect of the Giralda, the one-time minaret of the Grand Mosque of Seville (Spain). An old representation of this minaret is preserved, which easily shows how much this famous tower has suffered in beauty and proportion owing to the misdirected zeal of the ignorant hands.

The three specific features of the Islamic architecture, the pointed arch, the dome and the minaret, appeared in India immediately after the Muslim conquest. In the reign of Alauddin the pointed horse-shoe arch also came into vogue, but the simpler pointed arch has always maintained its popularity till our own times. The arch acquired greater dignity and beautification in the Moghul period, but it is just a more developed form of the first arches. The dome had not yet obtained that predominance and grandeur which it had enjoyed with the Roman and Byzantine builders, or later on with the Moghuls. It was, however, gradually emerging from its humble levels. The domes of the Slave period are low and petty; even in the times of the Khiljis their outline is still segmentary. In the Tughlaq times it is nearly semicircular. The Qutbminar had presented an example which could not be easily excelled or copied. In the times of the Khiljis, who had a desire to excel in every field of activity, unsuccessful efforts were made by Alauddin and his successor, but apparently the idea was generally given up on account of the difficulty of its execution, and the courts of the provincial Mosques, built in the period, are almost free from this important feature. The Kufic ornamentations became rare after the slaves, and their place was rapidly taken by the Naskh. The Tartar invasions nearly put an end to the use of the old script. The Kufic inscriptions of the Qutb, Ajmer and Sultan Ghorî (Delhi), therefore, deserve special attention. They belong to that last phase of the Baghdad Caliphate when the Arab civilization and the arts of its past centuries were being destroyed with no chances of their revival in the subsequent ages.

THE PRE-ISLAMIC history of Delhi is mostly wrapped in darkness. The oldest city connected with this historic plot of land on which in Muslim times so many new capitals were to arise was Indraprastha, which

is mentioned in Mahabharat, and had subsisted in flourishing condition at least up to the time of the Guptas, the relics of whose time have been dug out from beneath the earth. In the medieval times, however, it had sunk to the level of a mere village, and as such it is mentioned by the Muslim writers and historians under the name of Indpat. In the time of Firoz Shah it had the status of a town which was completely incorporated in the new city of Firozabad. Later on the citadel of Sher Shah, of which the ruined walls and the beautiful mosque still exist, was built on its site. It can not, therefore, be doubted that the site of Indraprastha was separate and at a considerable distance from that of Delhi, and it is altogether wrong to regard both the sites as identical.

It is difficult to fix with certainty the actual time when Delhi acquired its present name. Various theories about its derivation have been advanced from time to time, but I am personally inclined to believe that it is derived from the word *dhili*, i.e., loose, being the description of its soil, as were also the names of *gili* (wet) and *siri* (pasture), the neighbouring plains which later on served as sites for the cities of Darulkhilafat and Jahan Panah.

A Sanskrit inscription coming from village Palam in the neighbourhood of Delhi and dated in the year 1337 Vikrami (1280-81 A. C.) also mentions it as *Dhilli*⁷.

The Iron Pillar is the oldest monument extant in Delhi, and even though it was set up on its present spot by some subsequent builders, as the archæologists are inclined to imagine, the theory that it was brought from some other place does not seem to be acceptable. It is more probable that it belongs to the very site where it is found and had stood in the old Hindu temple as an ancient monument. It is, however, possible that the Muslim conquerors, respecting it as a curious article, had set it up in the courtyard of their first mosque on its present spot.

Judging from the script as also from the bell-shaped capital of the pillar, it is ascribed to the Gupta period. Its oldest inscription mentions one illustrious Rajah Chandra, but his identity with the known historical personage is not yet conclusively established. Delhi is not at all mentioned in it. It only relates that the Rajah, a worshipper of Vishnu, had erected this tall flagpost of Bhagwan Vishnu on Vishnupadigri (the hill of Vishnu's feet).

The Moorish traveller Ibn Battutah saw it where it stands now, and says:

"In the central courtyard of the mosque is situated a pillar of unknown metal. Someone said to me that it was composed of seven metals melted together. Somebody had cut off from it a piece measuring a span only. The surface at that spot is quite smooth, and no iron would affect or scratch it. It is thirty hands high with a circumference of eight hands. I measured it with the help of my turban cloth."⁸

The dimensions in the above are a bit exaggerated, the real height being only 22½ feet above and fourteen inches below the ground.

Chemical analysis has shown it to be made of pure iron not subject to rust.

The most valuable inscription on the pillar relating to Delhi is as follows:

“Samvat Dihali 1109
Anangpal bhal.”

which has been interpreted to mean that in that year of the Vikrami era (corresponding to 1052 A.C. and 443 A.H.) Anangpal populated Delhi. This king belonged to the former line, who were succeeded by the Chuhans, to whom belonged the famous Prithvi Raj of Ajmer, the last king of the line.

Other historical facts and circumstances also lead us to believe that the first city of Delhi was populated in the middle of the eleventh century A.C., the middle of the fifth A.H., and had no position as a well-known locality of India in the times of Mahmud and Masud I. Thus, the greatest scholar of the time, al-Beruni, has not mentioned it either in his *Indica*, in which he has given almost all the important places of India, or in *Qanun-i-Masudi*, a book on Astronomy, in which he has given the longitudes and latitudes of such localities.

The first reference to this name I have come across in the course of my study is found in the *Travels* of Nasir Khushraw (446 A.H.), who says in his account of Cairo (page 67):

“And a crowd of the sons and nobility and princes of the various parts of the world were living there, having come from the West, from Yaman, Byzantium, [the country of the] Slavs, Nubia, Abyssinia, and also the sons of the Emperor of Delhi.”

The inscription next in importance to that of the Samvat 1109 is that of the Samvat 1114 (1067 A.C.), said to belong to the period of the Second Anangpal, a contemporary of the Ghaznavide Sultan Ibrahim. This indicates the year of the construction of the great temple of Delhi.

The reality of the matter is that with a view to defend Hindustan, the Hindus had constructed a double line of forts on either side of the Jumna, on the west being Delhi, Panipat, Kaithal, Sunnasu, etc., and on the east Meerut, Baran (now Bulandshahr), and Kol (now Aligarh), etc. Amir Khusraw writes in the *Nuhsipar* that Anangpal had a palace in Delhi with two lions on the gate wearing a chain of justice that was being pulled by the oppressed to draw the Rajah's attention.

At the time of the invasion of India by the Ghauris Delhi did not occupy the position of an Imperial capital. It was the seat of the local governor Govind Rao, a brother of Prithvi Raj⁹, Ajmer being the real Capital of the Chauhars. But as the author of *Tajulmaathir* says—and it is later on corroborated by the statement of Ibn Battutah—that the fortifications of Delhi were deemed to be matchless for their strength and loftiness throughout the seven climes of the world.¹⁰

The Muslims besieged Delhi for the first time in 588 A.H., but it

was then left in the hands of the Hindus by a treaty. The Muslims, who had remained encamped at Indarpat, seized it, however, next year, and made it their capital.¹¹

It appears from the inscriptions that the work of raising new buildings in the capital was taken up without delay and continued briskly throughout these two centuries.

The Friday mosque was probably the first building, the foundations of which were at once laid by Qutbuddin Aibak, and the inscription of its eastern door reads:

"This mosque was founded by Aibak. May God bless the person who prays for the founder of this work of public utility."

The second inscription on this very door purporting to give the date of the conquest as 587, by mistake read by Ibn Battutah as 584 (12), appears to have been set up just to explain the first inscription. It is not, however, possible to say with certainty as to when and by whom it was affixed; if in the time of Aibak, then the mistake is due to the scribe or the sculptor, and if in the times of Iltutmish, which in my opinion is more probable, then it is due to a slip of memory. From the inscription on the northern door of Aibak's mosque it is clear that the building was still going on in the year 592 A.H., and Mohammed Ghauri, then present in Delhi, had ordered its continuation. The screen arch of the mosque bearing the date Dhu'l-Qadah 594, shows that in that year the arches and probably also the mosque were completed.

The work on the minaret was taken up at once after this. Fortunately, the whole history of the construction of the Qutb Minaret is preserved in its own inscriptions. In the two small Sanskrit inscription on both sides of the door in the lowest storey of the minaret is inscribed Samavat 1256 (1199 A.C. or 595-596 A.H). In the inscriptions on the first storey are inscribed the Imperial names of Ghyasuddin and Mohammed Ghauri as well as the name of their general, Qutbuddin Aibak.

This by itself is a conclusive proof of the fact that at the time of the building of the first storey all these three persons were alive. The names are ranged in accordance with their respective position in life; that of Ghyasuddin being placed highest, and lowest being that of the general, while between them stands that of Mohammed Ghauri, the real conqueror.

There can be no doubt that the minaret was meant for calling people to prayers. The Quranic verse, *wa idhâ nûdiya li's-salâti* ("And when the call is raised for the prayer") is found in the second inscription on the second storey. The geographer and historian Abul-Fida calls it a *ma'dhana*, as does also Amir Khusraw in his *Qiranussadain* (pp. 30-31).

The second, third and fourth storeys were completed by Iltutmish; inscriptions bearing his name are preserved on them. No changes were made in the minaret for 125 years till the time of Firoz Shah. Abul-Fida states that the minaret originally contained 360 stairs, i.e., 19 less than

their present number. Ibn Battutah had the opportunity of seeing the minaret in its original condition before it underwent repairs and alteration at the hand of Firoz Shah, and says:

"To the north of the mosque is situated a *Sauma*, which has no match in any country throughout the Muslim world. It is built of red sand-stone, although the mosque is built of white marble. The stone slabs of the minaret are inscribed. The upper *chhatra* of the mosque is built of white marble, and the balls at the top are in real gold. The staircase from inside is wide enough to allow an elephant to ascend it."¹³

Amir Khusraw's earlier account in *Qiran* also confirms the statement that the minaret had golden balls at the top: "There being a golden crown on the top of the minaret it appears that the stone has become golden on account of its nearness to the sun. The stone of the minaret, having so constantly rubbed against the sun, the gold of the sun has proved its own purity by employing the minaret's top as its touchstone."¹⁴

The two other highest *ma'dhanas* of the Islamic world also belong to this period, i.e., those erected in 590 A.H. (1194 A.C.) by the Berber Sultan Almohade Yaqub al-Mansur in connection with the mosques of Seville (Spain) and Kutubia (Marocco), the former being about 308 ft., and the latter 350 ft. high. The height of the Qutb Minaret as it stands now is 238 ft., and must have been about the same originally.

The superintendent of the mosque in the times of Aibak was one Fazl bin Abul-Maali, the inscriptions of whose name are found on both the buildings. On a pillar of the mosque is inscribed: "Under the superintendence of the servant Fazl bin Abil Maali." To the right of the door of the minaret is inscribed: "The superintendent of this minaret was Fazl Abul Maali."

On the third storey of the minaret is inscribed: "Finished this building under the care of the sinful servant, Mohammad Amir Koh"—showing that in the times of Iltutmish the superintendent had been changed.

A few Sanskrit inscriptions are found in the various parts of the minaret, showing that Hindu masons, of whom a few names are also mentioned, had marked on it. They also indicate that some repairs were done to it in the times of Alauddin, as also in Samavat 1389 (1353 A.C.), in the time of Mohammad Tughlaq on account of a damage caused by lightning in Samavat 1384 (1338 A. C.)

In Samavat 1425 (1369 A. C.-770 A. H.) the minaret was once again damaged by lightning in the reign of Firoz Shah, who carried out some repairs, and also raised its stature by additions at its top.

In its present condition the minaret has suffered in its proportions, beauty and the setting of its historical records on account of the changes and additions of Firoz Shah's time, and the substitution of railings in place of its original parapets on the balustrades, the misplacement of portions of the inscriptions; and the removal of the dome from the top,

and the erection of a modern door at the lowest storey at the time of the unimaginative Major Smith's repairs in the early part of the last century.

From the inscription on the eastern door we learn that Aibak's mosque (apparently including the lowest storey of the minaret) cost 5 crores and 40 laks of *Diliwals*, which amounts to about 10 lacs of Rupees, being an amount equivalent to the costs of Shahjahan's famous Juma mosque of Delhi. But the whole mosque, including the additions by Iltutmish and Alauddin of which we shall speak later on, ought to have cost at least ten times as much, i.e., about a crore which ranks next only to the cost of a crore and a half estimated to have been expended in the completion of the Great Cordova mosque, and is probably the highest amount ever spent on any single mosque in the world.

Iltutmish extended this mosque and added two screens of three arches each on both sides to the north and south of the mosque, the whole work completing in the year 627 A. H. a date which is inscribed on the big southern arch of his additions.

The arrangement of the mosque is the same as was in vogue in the Eastern parts of the Islamic world—e.g., in the grand mosque at Samarra—with roofed areas all round, leaving an open courtyard in the middle. The same model was persued in the mosque of Ibri Tulam, almost a square with each side measuring 530 ft.

From the description of Ibn Battutah it appears that the mosque had twelve prominent domes; Amir Khusraw's account in *Qiranussadain* shows that in the time of the last Slave Sultan, Kaiqubad, that it had nine domes, which indicates the addition of the remaining three in the time of Alauddin in the parts built by his order.

Mr. Page, the superintendent of the Archæological Department, has written a valuable memoir on the Qutb, in which he has also attempted to present the picture of a conjectured restoration of the mosque in its entirety.¹⁶

He has imagined the tops of the arches as altogether flat in their treatment, but from a reference in *Fawaidul-Fuwad* of Amir Hasan I infer that they had parapets on them, an ornamental feature which persisted even in subsequent ages. The middle ones had golden parapets¹⁶ and also small minarets like those which we find in the central arch of the Ajmere mosque of the same period, another feature which also continued in subsequent times.

Besides the mosque and the minaret, which rank as masterpieces of the Slave Period, there were a number of palaces that were erected in these times, of which the most ancient was the *Daulat Khanah*, of which the foundations were laid in the times of Aibak, and in which the crowning ceremony of Il-tut-mish took place. Till the time of Mohammed Tughlaq the palace was always used for the same purpose by the subsequent sultans on their ascension to the Delhi throne.

The contemporary historians and Ibn Battutah have referred to this

palace, but the modern histories of Delhi do not mention it at all, and it was, for the first time that I give a brief but corrected history of this Imperial Building, considered almost sacred in those times on account of its past associations, in an article published in an Urdu magazine.¹⁷ The building remained intact at least upto the middle of the Ninth Century A. H., and the word "Daulat Khanah" current generally in our country as an honorific term for house is apparently derived from the name of this ancient building.¹⁸

Other palaces are named the "White Palace", the "Firozi Palace" and the "Green Palace". From Aibak to Muizuddin Bahram Shah, (i.e., 639 A.H.) the "White Palace" remained the Imperial residence; the Durbars of the Slave Kings Alauddin and Nasiruddin were held in the Qasri Firozi in which was also received in his time with the display of much eclat the Mongol ambassador.¹⁹ Barani states that the Palace was situated inside the fort of Delhi in front of the Badaun Gate.²⁰ while according to the statement of Ibn Battutah, the Koshiki Firozi was situated near the Great Mosque.²¹

Of all the palaces, the most famous, however, was the "Koshaki Lal", the "Red Palace", which was constructed by Balban in the reign of his master Nasiruddin Mahmood, and which became the Imperial Palace on his ascension. The best account of this palace, in which occurred many important incidents, is given by Ibn Battutah, who has, however, wrongly ascribed its erection to Sultan Jalaluddin:

"Sultan Jalaluddin's palace is famous by the name of Koshaki Lal and is situated inside the Delhi city. It is a big palace, with an extensive courtyard inside and a very high gateway with a dome, from which are visible the courts inside as well as outside the palace. Sultan Jalaluddin used to watch the Polo game played in the inner court. When Amir Saifuddin was lodged there I had an occasion to see it. It was full of valuable articles of all sorts, which were all in a decaying condition. It is a custom in India that when the King dies, his palace is left to itself, and the new king builds for himself a new palace. The movables of the former palace are not taken away from there. I wondered freely in the Palace, and also went upon the roof. It was a pathetic scene. Tears dropped from my eyes. The jurist Jalaluddin Maghribi of Granada, who had come to India with his father in his childhood was also with me there, and read the following verse:

"Ask the account of these Kings from the earth, their big heads have been reduced to mere bones."²²

Just a century after the conquest of Delhi, the account of the capital given by Amir Khusraw in his *Qiranussadain* shows that Delhi had three fortifications of which one was called the "new fortification", and was probably built in the Mohammedan period. A reference to it is also found in *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, where the movements of a rebellious army are described, indicating that the walls of the fortification ran to the north of the Great Mosque.

Amir Khurram says in his own peculiar poetic manner:

"The two worlds are gathered inside its three forts... The outermost fortifications are beyond the extent and the outside world is situated within the inside fort. The heaven said to the new fort, "Oh thou 'new skies', keep my friendship old for long!"

Besides the mosque and the minaret two more buildings belong to the same period. One is the tomb of Sultan Ghauri situated at Malakpur wherein is buried Nasiruddin, the eldest son of Iltutmish, who died in 626 A. H. The inscription on the door bears the year 629 A. H. as the date of its erection. Next to the Qutb Buildings this is the oldest building of note belonging to that period. In the middle of the courtyard was a dome probably of marble, now destroyed or removed in after times. Below is the roof of an underground cell which has given the tomb its present name, Sultan Ghauri i.e., the grave of the Sultan buried in a Ghâr or pit.

The tomb generally known by the name of Sultan Iltutmish is certainly wrongly ascribed to him. The account of the repairs as given by Firoz Shah in his memoirs leaves no doubt that the original tomb was built exactly on the plan of Sultan Ghauri. Its striking constructional features and ornamentations leave no doubt about its proximity in time to the buildings of the mosque and the minaret and priority to those of the Khilji period, but on the basis of the present information it is not possible to say with certainty who is really buried there or when it was actually built.

A slight uncertainty also pertains to the grave of Sultana Razia, situated in the Mohallah Bulbuli Khanah. Ibn Battutah says that he had seen her tomb situated on the bank of the Jumna, while Afif in his *Firoz Shahi*²³ relates that it was located in the city of Firozabad²⁴. I am, however, inclined to prefer Afif's statement, which is also confirmed by the current local tradition.

There is yet no internal evidence or historical clue available to confirm the tradition about the identity of the remains of the so-called Balban's tomb outside old Delhi. Ibn Battutah has left the following account of Balban's tomb:

"Balban had built a house called 'Darul Amân' the 'Place of Refuge'. The king used to pay off the debts of any person who would enter into it, as also the indemnity money on behalf of any murderer or other culprit who would take refuge inside that building. The grave of this king is also situated within this house. I have seen his grave."²⁵

For the first hundred years the Musalmans kept Delhi as their only capital, and devoted great energy to its expansion and development.

Kaiqubad, the youthful and pleasure-loving successor of Balban, for the first time thought of leaving the old city and erecting for himself a Palace in Kilokhari on the banks of the Jumna on the site where in later times was built Emperor Humayan's Tomb. This change proved ruinous to himself and to the Dynasty. Jalaluddin, the founder of the

Khilji dynasty, completed the palace and made it the Imperial Residence. He encircled it with a new Hisar, fort, and built a grand imperial mosque. Amir Khusraw has praised it in the following couplet:

"O King! thou hast built a fort in the new city (Kilokhari) which is so high that the moon is touched by the stones of its parapets."

The historian Zia Barani states:

"Within these eighty years the people of the city of Delhi had grown up under the favour and patronage of the Turks. They disliked the kingship of the Khilji clan. Sultan Jalaluddin, therefore, did not venture to go inside Delhi. All the prominent citizens, whose number was large in Delhi of those times, used to go in groups to Kilokhari. Jalaluddin made Kilokhari his capital and ordered for the completion and ornamentation of the Kilokhari palace, founded by Sultan Muizuddin Kaiqubad. All the leading personages also constructed their houses in Kilokhari, and magnificent buildings thus appeared there. Some shopkeepers also shifted themselves to Kilokhari, and the bazars of that city were thus fully populated. Kilokhari was called 'the New City'. A very high fort was built round it of stones, as were also its high domes. The parts of the buildings were distributed. People did not sincerely like to build these houses, but on account of the Sultan's residence there, the houses were constructed quickly and the Bazar was filled."²⁶

From an account in the *Siyarul-Auliya* it appears that the Juma Mosque of this city was very extensive and was visited for prayers by the Sultanul Mashaikh (the saint Nizamuddin) who preferred it as being the nearest to his place at Ghayaspur.²⁷ In the time of Alauddin separate Kotwal and treasury were kept in this city.²⁸

Alauddin Khilji claimed to be the second Alexander of his times. He had unlimited ambitions in all fields of activity. In the first period of his reign he resided in the Red Palace in old Delhi.²⁹ He added an eastern court to Aibak and to Iltutmish's parts of the old mosque of Delhi; and then extended it further to the south, this doubling its former area, which made the mosque very extensive indeed.³⁰ Including the roofed and open areas in the times of Alauddin, this mosque was probably the largest mosque in the whole Islamic world, being 736 feet long and 449 feet broad. The largest roofed mosque of the world is, that of Cordova, 620 ft. by 420 ft.

Alauddin had intended to erect another *ma'zanah* in the centre of the northern court, having twice the height of the Qutb Minaret³¹. The modern historians of Delhi have wrongly imagined that he had left it in its present uncouth and unfurnished condition with a height of 80 ft. only. We have the authority of Ibn Battutah showing that about one-third of it had been quite completed rising to the height of the Qutb Minaret.³² If this minaret had been completed to its intended height it would have had no match anywhere in the Muslim world. Its full height would have been above 700 feet. It was preserved in its original unfinished condition till the time of Babar, who has praised it in his *Memoirs*. In later

times stone slabs were removed both from Alauddin's mosque and minaret, although these later must have been superior in magnificence and beauty of design to the buildings of Aibak and Iltutmish's times. The construction of this *ma'zanah* had continued upto the time of Qutbuddin Khilji. Its one-third as seen by Ibn Battutah had taken about ten years to finish!

Ibn Battutah says:

"And Qutubuddin Khilji had intended to build another minaret higher than the previous one. He had built about one-third of it, when he was assassinated. Sultan Mohammed Tughlaq wanted to complete it, but gave up the idea considering the work as inauspicious. Had this minaret been completed it would have been one of the wonder of the world. It is wide enough from inside to admit three elephants abreast; and this third part is equal to the whole minaret in the North. I once ascended to the top of the incomplete minaret and looked round. The tall buildings of the city and the ramparts, in spite of their heights, looked very small, and the people standing at the base of the tower appeared like small children. From its base the incomplete tower looks lower than it really is on account of its huge massiveness."³³

After Alauddin the mosque received no further extensions. Ibn Battutah's description of it in the times of Mohammed Tughlaq is as follows:

"The Juma Mosque of the city is very extensive. Its walls and roofs are all made of white stones, bound together with iron cramps. Wood is nowhere employed. It has thirteen domes all built of stone. The *minbar* is also made of the same material. It has four courts."³⁴

Alauddin had repaired the fortifications of Delhi in his time. Ibn Battutah has lavished unqualified praises on these fortifications:

"The circuit wall of the city is unparalleled in the whole world. It is eleven cubits high. It contains cells and houses in which reside the watchmen and the gate-keepers. Grain is also stored therein. The war machines (*manjaniqs*) and other war materials are also stocked in them. Grain stored there is protected from every damage and change of colour. Once rice was being taken out from there stores in my presence, it had become blackish from outside, but tasted alright. Maizes (*makai* or *jwar*) were also being taken out. People told me that they had been stored there eighty years ago in the time of Sultan Balban. The ramparts are wide enough to allow several horsemen to ride abreast thereon. The store-houses have windows towards the interior to give access to light. Some part of the city wall is built of stones, while the upper one is built of bricks. The domed towers are very close to one another."³⁵

It appears from the statement of Amir Khurram towards the end of the Slave Period that the wall had altogether thirteen gates and one hundred large windows.³⁶

Barani has mentioned twelve gates³⁷ and Timur ten only³⁸.

Alauddin laid the foundation of a third city by building at Siri a new

Imperial Palace then surrounded by wide spaces. Barani says that Alauddin's choice was made on account of military exigencies, Siri had always served as a pasture land and camping ground. The military organisation on a large scale during his reign led him to leave the old Delhi and reside close to his Imperial camp³⁹. His successor, Qutbuddin, completed the palace and bounded the city of Siri by new fortifications. The building of *Hazar Sutun* (the Thousand-pillared Hall) was also erected in his time. The Imperial Palace had also a golden structure (*Qasri Zarrin*). Amir Khusraw has praised it in an ode in his Divan, *Nihayatul Kamal*, and from the wordings of the eulogy it can also be inferred that on its walls were painted the portraits of the kings, and a tank was situated inside it.

"Oh Heavens, look at the Golden Qasr of the King shedding light like the Paradise. The golden Iwan reflects faces just as a mirror does. Also look at the pictures of the kings painted and reflected on various parts. The *hauz* (tank) is like the clear Kausar (the river in the Paradise), and its water nourishes life like the *Ab-i-Haiwan* (the miraculous living water). (*Nihayatul-Kamal*)

Ibn Battutah has given an account of the palace and the city of Siri which had been gifted by Mohammed Tughlaq to the Abbaside *Ibnul-Khalifa*.⁴⁰ We have Amir Khusraw's authority to show that Qutbuddin had also laid the foundation of an Imperial mosque and minaret in Siri.

"The minaret was founded in the court of the mosque. The hard stone began to rival the very gems."⁴¹

In *Siyarul-Auliya* it is stated that the opening ceremony of this mosque was performed with much eclat.⁴² Ibn Battutah has bestowed much praise on this mosque, which had remained as incomplete up to his time:

"Sultan Qutbuddin had intended to build in Siri a mosque like that at the Qutb but had completed only the western hall and the *mihrab*. He had employed in its construction white, red, green and black stones. If it were completed, it should have had no rival anywhere in the world. Sultan Mohammed Tughlaq had a desire to complete it. He ordered the architects and craftsmen to submit an estimates which amounted to thirty-five lacs. He desisted owing to the heavy expenditure, but one of his courtiers told me that he did not begin the work as he considered it inauspicious on account of the fact that the founder had died soon after its commencement."⁴³

It is noteworthy that, against the tradition in favour of the Abbasides, Qutbuddin had abrogated the right of the Islamic Caliphate to himself, entitling himself Caliph and naming his Capital *Darul-Khilafah* (the place of Caliphate). Siri was known as such even in later times, says Ibn Battutah:

"Siri which is also called *Darul-Khilafa*."⁴⁴

However, the palace and the city survived him for a long time. Alauddin had also constructed a water reservoir known as Hauz-i-Khas.

which rivalled in its dimensions the Hauz-i-Shamsi, built by Iltutmish outside Delhi. Some remains of the Alai Reservoir are still preserved; the tomb and college of Firoz Shah are situated on its banks.

The situation of Siri has been subject to the discussion of the archæologists for a long time. It has generally been identified with the walled village of Shahpur. Ibn Battutah has explicitly stated that the Hauz-i-Khas was situated midway between the old Delhi and Siri. Timur and the author of *Zafarnamah* concur⁴⁵ in stating that the city was a round one. Shahpur is neither round, nor is the Hauz situated in the middle of the two capitals. Till we have more reliable finds or inscriptions to justify the identity, the site must remain doubtful. It is, however, apparent that it could not be very far from the Hauz-i-Khas.

Besides the ruins of Alauddin's *m'azanah* and some vestiges of his mosque at the Qutb, the Alai Gate to the North of the Qutb Minaret as well as the mosque at Nizamuddin, which according to a Persian manuscript was erected by the direction of Sultanji himself, but later received polish to the slabs of its outer walls in Akbar's time, are the only monuments extant of the Khilji Period. The central part of the Nizamuddin Mosque, certainly built in Alauddin's reign, and ascribed by some to the munificence of his eldest son Khizar Khan, who was also the saint's disciple, is very striking in its structure, ornamentations, pendentives of the dome, inscriptions and floral patterns. It is almost unrivalled in its own way, while the Alai Gate has suffered a good deal in its original beauty and proportions on account of the clumsy repairs. The central parts of its four sides were certainly higher than those on the either side, and had all along parapets at the tops. The dome at present looks mean and sunken. The true idea of the adjustment of the domes of these times can best be had in the Nizamuddin Mosque where the original features and true proportions have remained almost intact.

Behind the mosque is situated a building which is claimed to be the tomb and college of Alauddin. There is no internal and external evidence to justify this identity. I am inclined to believe on the authority of Barani that Alauddin's tomb must have been situated somewhere near his southern extensions⁴⁷. The style of construction appears to be certainly posterior to the Slave Period, but we are not in a position to identify it with any particular King's works. From *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* we learn that attached to the mosque was a college known as Madrasai Muizi⁴⁸ which most probably had its name after Sultan Muizuddin Mohammed Ghauri.

Ghyasuddin Tughlaq built the fort of Tughlaqabad. "Within the fort he had a golden palace gilded with pure gold", according to Amir Khusraw, and of which Ibn Battutah has the following account:

"Within this town (Tughlaqabad) the king had his treasures and palaces. He had constructed a palace, the bricks of which were gilded with gold. When the sun rose no one could gaze towards it with fixed eye. This king had hoarded much treasures and had filled a tank with

molten gold which had solidified into one whole bloc. His son Mohammed Tughlaq spent the whole of that gold."⁴⁹

The fortifications, palaces and all other structures of Tughlaqabad are in ruins now. Tughlaq's tomb alone has survived nearly intact. Ibn Battutah says that it was built by that king himself in his own life time⁵⁰. Firoz Shah calls this tomb also as Darul Aman, which shows that the kings of Delhi used to build their tombs in their own lives, and adopted the same manner to earn salvation in future life as Balban had done in respect of his own tomb, which was also known by the same name.

By comparing this tomb with the Alai Gate and the central portion of the mosque of Nizamuddin we find that the architecture of Delhi had taken a new turn with the advent of the Tughlaq Dynasty. The Indian elements mostly occupied secondary position, and the style tended to simplicity, and more durability, so that you will find even the tomb without any inscriptions, which occupied such a striking place in the style of the Slave period.

Mohammed Tughlaq was first enthroned in Tughlaqabad, and later formally in Daulatkhana. Soon after his ascension to the throne he began to think of new plans. He transferred in bloc the whole population of Delhi to Deogiri which he raised to the position of the Imperial capital. He repeopled Delhi with the outsiders. Delhi had to struggle hard to survive this severe blow. I have already discussed in detail the facts relating to this change of capital in a separate memoir, in the *Jamia*, the magazine of Islamic National University at Delhi.

On the soil of Delhi itself Mohammed Tughlaq raised another new city, which occupied the vast expanse between Siri and old Delhi. He gave it the name of Jahanpanah. Recently some vestiges have been discovered of an old building deemed to be the Hall of Thousand Pillars (*Hazar Sutun*) of Mohammed Tughlaq's times. Badi Manzil, and the mosques of Khirki and Begampur, which, in my opinion, are wrongly ascribed to Khani Jehan, the vizir of Firoz Shah, are all situated within the area of Jahanpanah and belong to that city. Ibn Battutah has written a detailed, lucid and extremely interesting account of the Delhi of his times which every student of the history of India and Delhi should carefully follow. The contemporary Arab historian, the author of *Masalikul-Absar* has given the following account of Delhi, which deserves consideration:

"I asked Sheikh Mubarak about the city of Delhi, and its Imperial court. He told me that Delhi consisted of several cities, all combined, only one of them having the name of Delhi which has been extended to all the rest. It is vast and wide, with a circuit of about forty miles. The houses are built with stones and bricks, having floors of white stones, resembling marble. No house has more than double stories, some having only one storey. Sheikh Abu Bakr, son of Jalal, says that Delhi is a combination of 20 cities. On all the three sides of Delhi

extend gardens upto twelve thousand paces. The western side alone has none on account of the hills on that side. Delhi has one thousand schools of which one alone belongs to the Shafites, while all the rest belong to the Hanafites. It has seventy hospitals called *Darush-Shifa*, two thousand monasteries, many very extensive, and a number of vast open spaces, and numerous baths.

"Sheikh Mubarak says that inside the Imperial palaces live the king, his queens, and their servants and slaves but none of the nobility, who all have to attend the court in the morning and the noon."

From the odes of Badri Chach, written in praise of Mohammed Tughlaq, and also from some other historical sources, we learn that Mohammed Tughlaq's Imperial Palace was known as the "Auspicious Castle". (*Qasr-i-Humayun*). The Durbar hall was known as *Hazar Sutun*. Ibn Battutah has described the palace in the following words:

"The Imperial Palace is known in Delhi as *Dari Sarai*. One has to pass through several gates. On the first gate are posted the watchmen and the men in charge of the musical instruments played at the entrance. Between the first and the second gate there is a large space, on both sides of which sit the drummers, and stand the watchmen. Between the second and the third gate there is a very big platform on which sits the chief herald who has a golden cane in hand and a studded golden cap with the peacock's feathers. The remaining heralds are furnished with golden belts, golden caps and hunters with gold or silver handler. There is a big *divan-khanah* in the second gate meant for visitors. On the third gate are posted officials who keep a record of the visitors. Every nobleman has a prescribed number of camp followers, and the officials put down in the Diary the fact that such person came at such time with so many followers. The king reads the Diary in the early part of the night after the night prayers."⁵¹

Once again he writes:

"When we had entered the third gate we found a big *divan-khanah* which is called *Hazar Sutun* in which the king holds his general assemblage."⁵²

He has also stated that these pillars were made of polished wood.

Firoz Shah was very fond of buildings. He began to build Firozabad in 754 A.H.⁵³ Just a year before he had built the Imperial mosque on the bank of the Jumna near his palace and also his college on the bank of the Hauz-i-Khas.⁵⁴ The mosque within the Kotlah near the Asoka's pillar is not the Juma mosque, but the palace mosque like those inside the Moghul forts of Agra and Delhi.

The historian of that reign. Afif, has described the city in the following words:

"Sultan Firoz thought of founding Firozabad city. He began to look for the proper site for it. Having found the vicinity of Delhi occupied all around by the sites of the capitals of the preceding generous kings, he at last selected the area of the village Kavin on the banks of the Jumna

for the construction of his Koshak. The officials in charge of the constructions and the experienced and well-informed craftsmen busied themselves with the buildings. All the nobles selected plots for their own houses as well. Five miles from the city of Delhi a big city grew up. It is related that the land of eighteen villages is included in the city of Firozabad.

"By the grace of God the city of Firozabad became so much populated that from the village of Indpat to Koshaki Shikar it occupied a distance of five *kos*; every *kos* was well inhabited. It had innumerable mosques for daily prayers. Out of these eight were Juma mosques, one built by the king himself, two by Khani Jahan (the vizir), one in the city and the other in Hajnagar, another by Nizamul-Mulk, another was the mosque of the Hunting Palace, Koshaki Shikar, and again another in Indpat. Thus there were altogether eight Juma mosques in Firozabad. They were all very big, each being extensive enough to accommodate ten thousand persons attending the prayers.

"It is still stranger that during the full forty years of the reign of this good-named king all along the five *kos* between the cities of Firozabad and Delhi, every day many people used to ply to and fro on account of their necessities and their connections. On the route all along these five *kos* people flocked like ants and locusts. Beginning with the time of morning prayer, carts, donkeys and horses were ready for hire. As soon as any one desired he obtained conveyance on fixed hire for the donkey or the horse to reach his own destination. The *kahars* had the *dolas* in readiness, and any one could have the same for conveyance. One had to pay four *jitaḥs* for the cart, six for the donkey, twelve for the horse and half a *tanka* for the *dola*. Thus the way was being traversed for the forty years, and all the labourers from the neighbourhood earned good wages and had a happy life during this period."³⁶

There were two more palaces built by Firoz Shah, the "Hunting Palace", Koshaki Shikar, and the "Alighting Palace" Koshaki Nuzul, both now obliterated. The site of the Hunting palace is indicated by the second pillar of Asoka, which Firoz Shah had fixed there³⁷. The celebration of Shab-i-Barat and the annual prayers of the two Ids took place near this palace.³⁷

Of the times of Firoz Shah the important existing monuments are the Kotlah, the palace, the pillars of Asoka which were placed on their respective sites by Firoz Shah³⁸, the small Kali Mosque in Shahajahanbad built by the Vizir Khani Jahan, son of Khani Jahan, as also the remains of Firoz Shah's college on the banks of Hauz-i-Khas.

At the time of Timur's invasion Delhi had reached its greatest extent and highest grandeur. Timur and his historians narrate that Siri was a round city with high buildings all surrounded by a fort, built of stones and bricks. The old Delhi also had a similar strong, but still larger fort. There was a vast distance between Siri and Delhi forts. A wall built of stones and lime united the two sites. The space within this wall was

called "Jahanpanah" and was situated in the midst of the populated parts. The surrounding fortifications of these three cities had thirty gates, Jahanpanah had thirteen—seven towards south and east and six to the north—Siri seven—four towards the outside and three towards the inside of Jahanpanah. The old Delhi wall had ten gates, some opening outside and the rest inside the city. Firozabad built by Firoz Shah was situated on the bank of the Jumna. Timur said his prayers in the Juma mosque, and then proceeding further encamped near the Hunting Palace.

The author of *Zafar Namah* says:

On the 8th Rabi II, 801 A. H. (17th December, 1938), Timur planted the standard of his conquest on the walls of Delhi. He sat in the Idgah. The gate of Jahanpanah faced the Hauz-i-Khas. Before his departure he ordered all the Syeds, judges, learned and pious men to gather in the Juma mosque of Jahanpanah. On the morning of 22nd Rabi II, 801 A. H., he began to march and reached Firozabad, 3 *kos* from Delhi. He stayed in the mosque of Firozabad built with hewn stones on the banks of the Jumna. Then he camped near Vazirabad beyond Jahan-Nama. Vazirabad is six *kos* from Delhi.

The pillage and ruin of Delhi at Timur's hands had already taken place on the 16th. On the 17th a number of the palaces of Jahanpanah and Siri had already been destroyed. The pillage continued on the 18th as well. On the 19th the whole of the old Delhi was looted. Of the captives of these cities thousands of the craftsmen and architects were set apart for transportation to Samarkand, where the invader had a mind to build a great Juma mosque.⁵⁹

Afif, the author of *Firozshahi*, on recalling this tragic episode of Delhi's history, speaks with sorrow and feeling in the following manner:

"Praised be the Almighty! Such a big and populous city as the capital of Delhi, the seat of the exalted throne, is beneath the heavens, and has, by the eternal doom and abiding order of God's ordination, been destroyed in so many ways; the inhabitants by God's order taken away as prisoners by the Mongols and the remaining dispersed in various parts. All these have been ordained by Divine wisdom. No one can venture to criticise it."

It is all true. Nature works in strange ways. Who could say at that time that two centuries or so after Timur one of his own descendents, Shahjahan, would again raise another Imperial city of Delhi and leave his name behind to be remembered with gratitude in later times?⁶⁰

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