

Building Nizamuddin: A Delhi Sultanate *Dargah*  
and its Surrounding Buildings

by


Hussein Keshani  
B.E.S., University of Manitoba, 1992

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of


MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of History in Art


We accept this thesis as conforming  
to the required standard




Dr. S. Anthony Welch, Supervisor  
(Department of History in Art)



Dr. Astri Wright, Departmental Member  
(Department of History in Art)



Dr. Harold Coward, Outside Member  
(Department of History)



Dr. Robert Bedeski, External Examiner  
(Department of Political Science)

© HUSSEIN KESHANI, 2000

University of Victoria

All rights reserved. Thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part,  
by photocopy or other means, without the permission of the author.

Supervisor: Dr. S. Anthony Welch

### ABSTRACT


This study focuses on the architectural development of the site of the *dargah* (tomb complex) of Nizamuddin, a fourteenth century Muslim mystic of the Chishti tradition in Delhi, India during the Delhi Sultanate Period (602-932/1206-1526). Mughal and British contributions to the site are briefly surveyed as well. The *dargah* is considered an important historical and religious site for both Indians and South Asian Muslims. It has continued to attract numerous pilgrims from its inception to the present day, a period spanning over six hundred and fifty years. New evidence that is contributed in this study includes recent photographs of most of the Sultanate structures at the site that were taken in the course of field research conducted in November and December of 1998.


Previously unrecorded epigraphs on the structure scholars call the *Jamatkhana* are documented and identified for the first time. Existing textual evidence is reused in new ways to determine historical perceptions of the built environment. Previous studies of the site have left important chronological issues unresolved. They have also not fully explored why the site developed the way it did and have overlooked how the *Jamatkhana* epigraphs can serve as historical evidence. Here these problems are addressed with an approach that integrates a variety of types of archaeological, anthropological, historical and art historical data. First, the chronology of the site is reviewed and reassessed. Second the beliefs, uses and patrons of the site are analyzed in their historical and cultural context. Third, a detailed study of scholarly approaches to Quranic epigraphy and the epigraphs of the *Jamatkhana* is made. Finally, post-Delhi Sultanate developments are


reviewed to open avenues for further study. I argue that the developments take place after the death of Shaikh Nizamuddin in 1325 and were prompted by public attention given to the site. The resulting developments transformed the gravesite into a centre for religious activities and human settlement that facilitated the desires of the site's patrons to secure lasting memory and spiritual reward, as well as Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq's interest in controlling the Chishti religious legacy.

Examiners:

  
Dr. S. Anthony Welch, Supervisor (Department of History in Art)

  
Dr. Astri Wright, Departmental Member (Department of History in Art)

  
Dr. Harold Coward, Outside Member (Department of History)

  
Dr. Robert Bedeski, External Examiner (Department of Political Science)

## Table of Contents

Title Page	i
Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Figures	v
Acknowledgements	x
Dedication	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Historical Background	32
Chapter 3: A Chronology of Construction Events at the Nizamuddin <i>Dargah</i> Complex During the Delhi Sultanates	48
Chapter 4: Beliefs, Uses and Patrons - The Role of the Development of the <i>Dargah</i> and its Surrounding Buildings in Delhi Sultanate Society	81
Chapter 5: The Epigraphic Program of the <i>Jamatkhana</i>	119
Chapter 6: Post-Delhi Sultanate Developments at the <i>Dargah</i> of Nizamuddin	162
Chapter 7: Conclusion	194
Bibliography	205
Appendix 1: Proposed Chronology of Delhi Sultanate Building Events at Nizamuddin West	214
Appendix 2: <i>Jamatkhana</i> Epigraphs	215
Figures	224

## List of Figures

All photographs and drawings are by the author unless stated otherwise. Photographs are reproduced here as colour laser prints.

- Figure 1: Map of Nizamuddin West, (Based on: Lt. General S.M. Chadha (Rtd.): Delhi City Guide, New Delhi: Eicher Goodearth Ltd., 1998, Maps 22, 23).
- Figure 2: Photograph of *dargah* of Nizamuddin. December 1998.
- Figure 3: Photograph of *dargah* of Nizamuddin and “Khizri” *Masjid* in background. December 1998.
- Figure 4: Map of Northern India
- Figure 5: Photograph of epigraphs on exterior of main entrance to “Khizri” *Masjid*. December 1998.
- Figure 6: Photograph of *Suraj Kund* (Source: Deepak Hiranandani, Delhi City Guide, New Delhi: Eicher Goodearth Ltd., 1998).
- Figure 7: Map of Delhi region showing the location of *Qila Rai Pithora*, *Siri*, *Hauz Shamsi* (Based on: Faiz Habib, Delhi Through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society, ed. R.E. Frykenberg Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986, inside front jacket).
- Figure 8: Photograph of *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid*. December 1998.
- Figure 9: Photograph of the exterior of the *Alai Darwaza* (lower right) and *Qutb Minar*. December 1998.
- Figure 10: Photograph of calligraphy and lotus buds on exterior of *Alai Darwaza*. December 1998.
- Figure 11: Photograph of the tomb of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq. December 1998.
- Figure 12: Photograph of court, “sanctuary” and north arcade Begumpur Mosque. December 1998.
- Figure 13: Photograph of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq’s *madrasah* at *Hauz Khas*. December 1998.
- Figure 14: Photograph of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq’s tomb at *Hauz Khas*. December 1998.

- Figure 15: Photograph of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq's tomb showing inscriptions. December 1998.
- Figure 16: Photograph of a portion of the *Qadam Sharif* commissioned by Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq. December 1998.
- Figure 17: Plan drawing of Delhi Sultanate buildings at Nizamuddin West (Based on: Zafar Hasan, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10: A Guide to Nizamuddin. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922, Plate I).
- Figure 18: Plan of Nizamuddin's tomb and surrounding buildings and graves built during the Delhi Sultanate period.
- Figure 19: Photograph of *baoli* (stepwell). December 1998.
- Figure 20: Plan of Humayun's tomb and *chillagah* of Nizamuddin.
- Figure 21: Photograph of *chillagah* of Nizamuddin. December 1998.
- Figure 22: Photograph of Tughluq era building at Nizamuddin known as "*langar khana*" (Source: Zafar Hasan, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10: A Guide to Nizamuddin. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922, Plate V b.).
- Figure 23: Photograph of Tughluq era building south of *dargah* of Nizamuddin resembling *chillagah* but with late Mughal additions. December 1998.
- Figure 24: Photograph of main entrance to *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah Maqbul *Masjid*. December 1998.
- Figure 25: Photograph of interior of Maruf's passageway on south end of *baoli*. December 1998.
- Figure 26: Photograph of exterior of unidentified building known as "*Lal Mahall*". December 1998.
- Figure 27: Photograph of unidentified building known as "*Bara Khamba*". December 1998.
- Figure 28: Photograph of unidentified building at Mahihpalpur, Delhi, resembling *chillagah*. December 1998.
- Figure 29: Photograph of arcade surrounding interior court of Begampur Mosque commissioned by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. December 1998.

- Figure 30: Photograph of arcade surrounding interior court of "*Kali*" *Masjid* commissioned by *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah. December 1998.
- Figure 31: Photograph of grave marker in tomb of *Khan-i-Jahan* Tilangani. December 1998. (Source: Welch, Anthony and Howard Crane. "The Tughluqs: Master Builders of the Delhi Sultanate." *Muqarnas*. (1983) 1: 148, Plate 19.
- Figure 32: Photograph of small domed tombs on grounds of Sultan Firoz Shah's *madrasah*. December 1998.
- Figure 33: Photograph of small domed tomb at the *dargah* of Nasiruddin. December 1998.
- Figure 34: Photograph of interior of dome of Sultan Firoz Shah's tomb at *Hauz Khas*, Delhi. December 1998.
- Figure 35: Photograph of interior side chamber dome in *Jamatkhana* ("*Khizri*" *Masjid*). December 1998.
- Figure 36: Photograph of entrance way to *Alai Darwaza*. December 1998.
- Figure 37: Photograph of squinch in *Alai Darwaza*. December 1998.
- Figure 38: Photograph of main entrance arch to *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.
- Figure 39: Photograph of squinch in central chamber of *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.
- Figure 40: Photograph of lotus buds on *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.
- Figure 41: Photograph of arch over entrance to tomb of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq showing use of dressed red sandstone and lotus buds. December 1998.
- Figure 42: Photograph of exterior of "*Lal Gumbad*". December 1998.
- Figure 43: Photograph of small arch on exterior of *Jamatkhana* showing lotus buds. December 1998.
- Figure 44: Photograph of lotus buds on *Jahanpanah Masjid* (Begampur Mosque). December 1998.
- Figure 45: Photograph of bracket on *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.
- Figure 46: Photograph of squinch on Sultan Firoz Shah's tomb at *Hauz Khas*. December 1998.

- Figure 47: Photograph of screen in Sultan Firoz Shah's tomb at *Hauz Khas*. December 1998.
- Figure 48: Photograph of interior of south *Jamatkhana* side chamber. December 1998.
- Figure 49: Photograph of *Jamatkhana* side chamber arch. December 1998.
- Figure 50: Photograph of arch on gateway to *dargah* of Nasiruddin. December 1998.
- Figure 51: Photograph of posts and screens in *Jamatkhana* side chamber. December 1998.
- Figure 52: Photograph of window in *Jamatkhana* dome. December 1998.
- Figure 53: Photograph of screen in Jahanpanah *Masjid* (Begampur Mosque). December 1998.
- Figure 54: Photograph of screen behind Princess Jahanara's tomb. December 1998.
- Figure 55: Photograph showing post and beams of original enclosure on east side of the *dargah*. December 1998.
- Figure 56: Photograph showing north end of enclosure with inscription referring to Humayun. December 1998.
- Figure 57: Photograph of exterior of *Khan-i-Jahan* Tilangani's tomb surrounded by modern development. December 1998.
- Figure 58: Photograph of exterior east passageway on *baoli*. December 1998.
- Figure 59: Daniells' drawing of the *baoli*. December 1998. (Source: Page, J. A., ed. Monuments of Delhi: Lasting Splendour of the Great Mughals and Others, Maulvi Zafar Hasan, compiler. 4 vols. in 3 bindings. [1917] reprint ed. New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 1997. vol. 3.
- Figure 60: Photograph of *Gandak ki Baoli*. December 1998.
- Figure 61: Photograph of two-storey *Masjid/tomb* ("*Chini Ka Buruj*"). December 1998.
- Figure 62: Photograph of unidentified tomb east of Nizamuddin's tomb. December 1998.
- Figure 63: Photograph of Nizamuddin's grave with flower petals. December 1998.
- Figure 64: Photograph of interior central chamber of *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.

- Figure 65: Photograph of medallion in *Jamatkhana* side chamber. December 1998.
- Figure 66: Photograph of small arch on interior south wall of *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.
- Figure 67: Photograph of calligraphy on tomb of Atgah Khan. December 1998.
- Figure 68: Photograph of *mihrab* in central chamber of *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.
- Figure 69: Photograph of epigraph on interior of base of dome in *Jamatkhana* central chamber. December 1998.
- Figure 70: Photograph of north side chamber of *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.
- Figure 71: Photograph of the beginning of *Surah ar-Rahman* on exterior of main entrance to *Jamatkhana* and of small arch between main and north arches December 1998.
- Figure 72: Daniells' drawing of the *dargah* and *Jamatkhana*. (Source: H. K Kaul, Historic Delhi (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985).
- Figure 73: M.A. Khan's drawing of Nizamuddin's *dargah* and *Jamatkhana*. (Source: M.M. Kaye, ed. The Golden Calm: An English Lady's Life in Moghul Delhi. Exeter: Webb & Bower, 1980.
- Figure 74: Photograph of exterior of Centenary Methodist Church. December 1998.
- Figure 75: Photograph of Islamic Centre at Nizamuddin. December 1998.
- Figure 76: Photograph of Hindu temple near the *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.
- Figure 77: Photograph of interior of *dargah* of Innayat Khan. December 1998.

## Acknowledgements

The *Dargah* of Nizamuddin was initially brought to my attention by my supervisor, Dr. Anthony Welch. I would like to thank him not only for pointing out this intriguing site but for his consistent guidance, insight, encouragement and friendship throughout this project. It has been a privilege to work with him. Thanks are also due to the second reader on my committee, Dr. Astri Wright, who pushed me to rewrite my introduction, making this a better thesis.

I am grateful for the financial support of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Without their intervention, field research in Delhi would not have been possible. Helping me in Delhi were the kind souls, Gurminder Singh, Sadri and Munira Ahmad and the accommodating staff of the International Youth Hostel, where I resided. In addition to shelter, they gave me friendship and I hope that I can repay their generosity one day.

My parents, Allauddin and Laila Keshani, helped me locate and purchase the software that I needed to identify the epigraphs on the *Jamatkhana*. This is one of infinite generousities that they have bestowed upon me. Finally, the proofreading of this text owes so much to my wife Hanifa, who bravely stayed up with me in the wee hours of the night poring over incomprehensible text. Of such love, I am undeserving.

***Shukran lillah al-Hamdulillah***

Thanks be to Allah,  
All Praise is Due to Allah

To Hanifa.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

In the haze of India's sprawling capital New Delhi, near the tomb of the Mughal emperor Humayun, is an area of the city that officials call Nizamuddin West. Bounded by three dangerously busy roads (Mathura Road, Lodi Road and Lala Lajpat Rai Path) and a malodorous drainage canal (Figure 1), the historic area is currently home to both a wealthy elite and the devastatingly poor. The area is an important hub for Muslim life in a city buffeted by the Hindu nationalist dialogue of the nineteen-nineties. Buried within the dense layers of development is a core of architectural gems, and historical buildings from India's Delhi Sultanate (602-932/1206-1526)<sup>1</sup> and Mughal past (932-1274/1526-1858). Two buildings stand at the centre of this historic core, a tomb or *dargah*<sup>2</sup> and a large building of unknown origin. These two buildings also form the core of this thesis.

The tomb or *dargah* of the fourteenth century shaikh, Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya, is one of the most important shrines in South Asia, attracting hundreds of people daily (Figure 2). Among them are local residents of diverse faiths, as well as Muslim pilgrims from India, Pakistan and abroad, tourists of all persuasions, documentary filmmakers and scholars. Immediately across from the *dargah* lies one of the oldest structures at the site, a large red sandstone building used to complete Islamic prayers and known locally by some as the "Khizri" *Masjid* (Figure 3).<sup>3</sup>

Nizamuddin was born in 641/1244 in Badaon (Figure 4), a northern Indian city near Delhi, to parents who had fled their home in Bukhara due the Mongol invasions of Central Asia.<sup>4</sup> Beginning his education in Badaon, Nizamuddin left for Delhi to pursue further studies but later traveled to Ajodhan (Pakpatan), a town over 400 kilometres

northwest of Delhi, to meet the famous Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shakar, the principal *khalifa* (spiritual leader) of the Chishti Sufi tradition. In Ajodhan, Nizamuddin resided with the Shaikh and his other followers and quickly became a favourite *murid* (disciple) of Fariduddin.<sup>5</sup> Fariduddin soon gave Nizamuddin the authority to enroll murids of his own, effectively designating him as a shaikh, after which Nizamuddin returned to Delhi. On Fariduddin's deathbed, Shaikh Nizamuddin was further designated as the principal *khalifa* of the Chishti tradition. Living in the capital region of the Delhi Sultanate empire, Shaikh Nizamuddin attracted many of the elite from courts of the Delhi Sultans and achieved wide-spread fame and popularity with the public, enrolling numerous murids. He pursued a life of religious devotion, teaching, discussion and community service, while witnessing the rise and fall of many of the Delhi Sultans. Shaikh Nizamuddin died in 725/1325 and his gravesite was surrounded by extensive architectural development.

This study inquires into the early development of the historic buildings of Nizamuddin West, with a particular emphasis on the "Khizri" *Masjid*, following the Shaikh's death in 725/1325 until the rise of the Mughal empire in 932/1526.<sup>6</sup> The historical evidence is examined closely and a particular sequence of building, form and meanings is hypothesized. These developments are further considered as part of the interactions between the ruling elite, the *mashaikh* and the inhabitants of the Delhi region of the time. Since much of the site was developed afterwards by Mughal patrons, restored under the British Colonial administration of South Asia and enveloped by twentieth century urban development, these contributions are briefly surveyed as well.

A variety of sources of data have been used to accomplish this study. These include: nineteenth and twentieth century archaeological and art historical studies of the site, its epigraphs and architecture of the period;<sup>7</sup> historical writings from the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal eras;<sup>8</sup> personal observations and documentation of the structures and epigraphs at Nizamuddin West and contemporary Delhi Sultanate architecture;<sup>9</sup> perceptions and beliefs recorded in a twentieth-century anthropological study of the site;<sup>10</sup> and local knowledge of the site's history and use as it is recorded in past scholarly literature and articulated today.<sup>11</sup>

Using the data sources mentioned above, an array of hypotheses and conclusions have been formed and presented in the following chapters. Uniting these elements is the idea that the site's early development is part of the ongoing exchange in concepts of religion and authority between rulers, the elite, the *mashaikh* (Sufi masters) and the primarily Muslim public. Shaikh Nizamuddin contributed strongly to the development of popular beliefs and practices that were inevitably applied to his gravesite by an adoring public accustomed to incorporating Hindu venerative practices into their interactions with Muslim gravesites. A centre for Nizamuddin's dependents and disciples, the Shaikh's gravesite attracted large architectural commissions after the Shaikh's death by elite murids that encouraged further human activity and settlement and commissions by Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq that legitimated his political and religious authority by alluding to past Delhi Sultanate architecture and epigraphy and by structuring religious activities and thought at the *dargah* site.

South Asian dargahs have been the subject of a number of studies in the past. Most notable is Christian Troll's compilation of essays, entitled Muslim Shrines in India

(1989), that provide a variety of historical and anthropological approaches to various dargahs.<sup>12</sup> Matsuo Ara made a comprehensive study of the dargahs of Delhi in his work, Dargahs of Medieval India (1977), using archaeological surveys and historical analysis. A study of the history of the Chishti shaikhs and historic texts associated with the complex of graves and tombs in Khuldabad, entitled Eternal Garden, was published in 1992 by Carl Ernst.<sup>13</sup> P. M. Currie conducted a historical study of the *dargah* of Muinuddin Chishti in Ajmer, The Shrine and Cult of Muin al-din Chishti of Ajmer (1989), and developed a schematic of the site's layout and development.<sup>14</sup>

The *dargah* of Nizamuddin and its surrounding buildings were initially described in Sayyid Ahmad Khan's nineteenth century study of Delhi architecture, which included wood-cut drawings of the site.<sup>15</sup> Carr Stephen also described various buildings at the site in his work, Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi (1876).<sup>16</sup> The site was briefly mentioned in Alexander Cunningham and J. D. Beglar's reports for the Archaeological Survey of India, which included a plan drawing of the main tomb and another Mughal era tomb ("*Chaunsath Khambha*").<sup>17</sup> The Commissioner of the Delhi Division, H. C. Fanshawe, claimed to have developed the first plan of the site in his book Delhi Past and Present published in 1902.<sup>18</sup> The buildings at the site and many of its "historical" inscriptions identifying patrons and construction dates appeared in the list of Delhi monuments compiled by Zafar Hasan for the Archaeological Survey of India.<sup>19</sup> Zafar Hasan conducted the most comprehensive survey of the site which was published in 1922 and entitled A Guide to Nizamuddin. The study included historical research, a site plan, photographs and "historical" inscriptions presented in their original text and in translation. Quranic or "religious" epigraphs for many of the buildings at the site were

collected by M. A. Husain and published in 1936.<sup>20</sup> Percy Brown's analysis of the stylistic evolutions of Indian architecture included a brief discussion of the "Khizri" *Masjid*.<sup>21</sup> The *dargah* complex was included in the photographic survey of Delhi by T. Yamamoto, M. Ara and T. Tsukinowa in Delhi: Architectural Remains of the Sultanate Period (1968-1970). In 1977, Matsuo Ara completed the only other detailed study of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin in his work on the major *dargahs* of Delhi.<sup>22</sup> In addition to reviewing Hasan's survey of the site, Ara documented a number of the graves at the site. He also analyzed the *dargah's* role within its contemporary social context. R. Nath's 1978 morphological treatment of Delhi Sultanate architecture also treated the site briefly.<sup>23</sup> Various British Colonial portrayals of the site were identified in Sonia Lochner's M.A. thesis, Ruins of Power: Picturesque Portraits of Delhi Sultanate Architecture (1990).<sup>24</sup> The noted historian of the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal periods, K. A. Nizami included a discussion of the site's early development in his biographical study of Nizamuddin entitled Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya (1991).<sup>25</sup> On-site anthropological investigations were undertaken by Desiderio Pinto and published as Piri-Muridi Relationship: A Study of the Nizamuddin Dargah in 1995. An M.A. thesis entitled The Shrine and Cult of Shaykh Nizam al-Din Awliya: Tradition, Religion and Ritual Practice at a Modern Sufi Dargah was also completed in 1995, relying primarily on secondary sources based on historical and anthropological approaches.<sup>26</sup> Another M.A. thesis completed in the same year by J. E. Lort, included a brief discussion of a key feature of the *dargah* site, the *baoli* (step-well). Over the years, the Archaeological Survey of India has made various drawings of buildings at the site, which remain unpublished.

The diversity in types of data and approaches used in the studies dealing with the *dargah* of Nizamuddin and its surrounding buildings presents some difficulties.

Historical concerns with patrons and construction dates and anthropological concerns with rituals and activities are not integrated with each other. For example, there is little meeting ground between Pinto's study of various twentieth century perceptions of the site and Hasan's survey of the buildings and their associated construction chronologies. The various types of historical evidence (oral, textual, and archaeological) used in the studies mentioned above have not been reconciled with each other. For example, regarding the patronage of the "Khizri" *Masjid*, Nizami relies primarily on textual evidence for his arguments without addressing the seemingly contradictory archaeological evidence noted by Brown and Nath. Except for Ara's study, the architectural developments of the site are not related to contemporary social events and trends. For example, both Hasan and Nizami keep their discussions of construction events at the site and of historical events concerning the actions and thought of people separate.

A variety of specific problems regarding the early formation of the *dargah* in terms of architecture, conceptualization and use also remain unresolved. Confusion continues to surround the architectural vocabulary (*khanaqah*, *jamatkhana* and *dargah*) relevant to understanding the site's early development. Hasan's survey of the site is arranged spatially instead of chronologically, obscuring the site's early appearance and development. This confusion is deepened by the extensive additions and rebuilding of the site following the Delhi Sultanate period by Mughal patrons and Mughal era texts. The various arguments regarding the patronage of the "Khizri" *Masjid* have not been reconciled with each other making it unclear if any architectural development occurred

near Shaikh Nizamuddin's gravesite before his death. As a result, further attempts to draw conclusions about how subsequent developments altered the site and reinterpreted its significance can not be made. The exterior and interior of the "Khizri" *Masjid* contain an extensive epigraphic program (Figure 5) that has never been documented or analyzed, nor has any attempt been made to fix the identity of the site's designers and builders. No attempt has been made to determine the role of pre-Muslim cultures in the early development of the site in terms of its design, construction or use, due no doubt to the little data that is available. It remains unclear when the rituals associated with the site today were first introduced. The genealogies of the current custodians of the site, who claim descent from Shaikh Nizamuddin's sister, have never been studied, nor has the evolution of their system for receiving and using the considerable financial donations that the site attracts.

This study attempts to address some of the problems outlined above. Chapter 2 presents an integrated historical overview of political, architectural and cultural trends affecting the capital region of Delhi during the Delhi Sultanate period leading up to the onset of the Mughal era. Key terms are introduced as well as many of the monuments used for comparative purposes in subsequent chapters.

Since any historical study depends on establishing an accurate sequence of events, Chapter 3 is devoted to developing a chronology of the early construction events at the Nizamuddin *dargah* complex during the Delhi Sultanate period. In particular, the various arguments and types of evidence (oral, textual and archaeological) concerning who commissioned the "Khizri *Masjid*" are assessed. Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq is concluded to be the patron of "Khizri *Masjid*," which he termed a *jamatkhana*. The early structures

are concluded to have been developed after Shaikh Nizamuddin's death between 725/1325 and 782/1381 primarily in the reign of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq (r. 752-790/1351-1388) and designed for active human use.

Having established a chronology, Chapter 4 considers the relationship between the various beliefs and practices associated with the *mashaikh* and their gravesites, the uses of Shaikh Nizamuddin's gravesite and surrounding architecture and the architectural patronage the site attracted. It becomes clear that the immensely popular Shaikh contributed to the cultural traditions guiding how his gravesite would be perceived and used. Pre-Muslim venerative practices are also shown to have been incorporated into interactions with gravesites by Delhi residents of the period. The Shaikh's dependents are proposed to be the first inhabitants of the site facilitating the inevitable transfer of activities revolving around the Shaikh's residence during his lifetime to his gravesite. The architectural developments at the gravesite following the Shaikh's death encourage the emergence of the *dargah* as a new centre for religious activity, pilgrimage and settlement in addition to its role as a centre for the burial of the Shaikh's associates and others. These architectural developments are attributable to members of the Delhi Sultanate elite, who were also murids of the Shaikh and his successor Shaikh Nasiruddin. Sultan Firoz Shah's commissions are set in the context of his religious policies and suggested to facilitate the Sultan's claims to religious authority. A hypothesis regarding the identity of the architect and builders of the *Jamatkhana* is also made.

Continuing the investigation into the interests of architectural patrons and the general interactions of people with the site, Chapter 5 deals with a particular aspect of Firoz Shah's *Jamatkhana* ("Khizri" *Masjid*) commission, the epigraphic program, which

consists of selections taken primarily from the Quran. Following a review of scholarly approaches to Quranic epigraphy, the epigraphs are documented and analyzed for the first time. Comparisons are made with epigraphic programs on earlier Delhi Sultanate structures and an analysis is made of the themes within the selections. Consideration is also given to how these epigraphs would have been perceived and interpreted. Clearly modeled on the epigraphic programs of earlier Delhi Sultanate structures, the inscriptions comprehensively articulate the major motifs of Islamic faith but also allude generally to Sufi practices, subtly suggesting these were state-endorsed practices.

Chapter 6 surveys the development of the site following the Delhi-Sultanate period until the present time. Through the various political and cultural transformations of the region, the site retained its importance but for different reasons. The extensive Mughal developments are surveyed chronologically. An attempt is made to identify many of the patrons using historical texts and to place the developments in their historical context with the intent of facilitating further study. The attitudes and efforts of British colonials who studied and preserved the site as well as the impact of British military action and urban development on the site are also considered. Though sympathetic in nature, architectural research and conservation comes to be seen as one aspect of British control over India. Some of the most recent developments in the area of Nizamuddin West are also discussed. Finally, Chapter 7 summarizes the conclusions of this study.

### **Historical texts**

Chapters 2 through 5 make reference to various Delhi Sultanate and Mughal historical sources, the majority of which are introduced here in chronological order.

These texts can be grouped into two classes: literature that emanates from the courts of Sultans and literature from the *khanaqahs* (residences) of the *mashaikh*. The former can include *tarikh* (official court and scholarly histories), *farmans* (royal addresses) and declarations, while the latter can include *malfuzat* (records of conversations), *siyar* (biographies/hagiographies) and *maktabat* (letters of guidance). The following is a list of the literature from the courts of Sultans:

Completed around 420/1030, Al-Biruni's *Tarikh-i-Hind*, was a disciplined study of the customs, mathematics, astronomy, religion, and legal system of India. A native of the Central Asian city Khiva, Al-Biruni was captured by Mahmud of Ghazna's armies, but his work appears to have been dedicated to Sultan Mahmud's successor. Apparently having spent time in northern region of the subcontinent, Al-Biruni, who is not without his own strong biases, remains one of the most useful sources of information on the life and culture of the people who inhabited the northern Indian plains (*Hindustan*) prior to the establishment of the Delhi Sultanates.<sup>27</sup>

Dedicated to Alauddin Bahman Shah, the *Futuh-us-salatin* by Isami (b. 710/1311 d. 751/1351) was written between 749/1349 and 750/1350 in the city of Daulatabad.<sup>28</sup> The poetic work includes discussions of the political history of the Delhi Sultanates, the city of Delhi and a highly critical account of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq's relocation of the Muslim elite to Daulatabad. Isami and his family had a long history of service with the Delhi Sultans and were among those compelled to leave Delhi for Daulatabad.

The *Futuh-i-Firoz Shah* is a rhetorical public pronouncement attributed to the Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq himself and defines his achievements in glorious and religious terms.<sup>29</sup> The text is thought to have appeared on the *masjid* in Firoz Shah's palace

complex. The text includes references to the major policies and construction efforts of the Sultan.

Ziauddin Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* was finished in 760/1359 and discusses the political history of the Delhi Sultanates beginning with Sultan Balban and concluding with the first six years of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq's reign. Scholarly in nature, Barani's work depends on information from his grandfather, father, various nobles and himself, all of whom had first hand contact with various Delhi sultans.<sup>30</sup>

Ibn Battuta, a North African *qazi* (judge) trained in the *Maliki* school of jurisprudence, traveled extensively across the Muslim world, recording his experiences along the way.<sup>31</sup> His travels included a lengthy stay in Delhi (733-744/1333-43) during the reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, which is mentioned in his detailed travel writings entitled *Rehla*.

The *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* of Shams-i-Siraj Afif is modeled after Barani's work by the same name. The date of the text is not known but was probably written after 800/1398 since the text refers to Timur's attack on Delhi in that year. A court appointed historian, the author reveals details about the personal character and administration of Firoz Shah. The architectural endeavours listed in the *Futuh-at-i-Firoz Shah* are also reiterated.

The *Masalik al-absar fi-mamalik al-amsar* was compiled around 744/1344 in Damascus by Shihab al-Din Umari from people who had visited the region during the reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq.<sup>32</sup>

Bayazid Biyat finished the *Tadkhirat-i-Humayun wa Akbar* in 999/1591 in Lahore.<sup>33</sup> The work provides a history of the Mughal emperors Humayun and Akbar between the years 949-99/1542-1590.

Lal Bakshi, the paymaster of Prince Murad who was the second son of the Mughal emperor Akbar, wrote the *Thamarut-ul-quds* in 1006/1597-98, nearly 275 years after the death of the Shaikh.<sup>34</sup>

Supported by Ibrahim II Adil Shah of Bijapur, the *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* by Muhammad Qasim Ferishta was completed in 1018/1609-10 during Akbar's reign.<sup>35</sup> It provides an extensive history of Muslim rule in India based on previous historical texts.

The literature from the khanaqahs of the *mashaikh* is as follows: The *Fawaid-ul-fuad* is a collection of conversations between Shaikh Nizamuddin and his murids compiled between 707/1308 and 711/1322 by one of the Shaikh's murids Amir Hasan Sijzi, a soldier in the Delhi Sultanate military, and was reviewed by the Shaikh himself.<sup>36</sup> The text includes parables, religious guidance and incidental references to contemporary times. Popular during the Shaikh's lifetime, the text was also studied and memorized after his death.

The recollections of a disciple of Shaikh Nizamuddin are recorded in the *Qiwam-ul-aqaid*, written by the disciple's grandson Muhammad Jamal Qiwamuddin.<sup>37</sup> The text was compiled in the Deccan and is assigned the date 755/1354, making it one of the earliest sources of information on the life of Shaikh Nizamuddin, compiled just 29 years after the Shaikh's death.

The conversations of Shaikh Nasiruddin, one of Shaikh Nizamuddin's disciples, were recorded in the *Khair-ul-majalis*, a *malfuzat* compiled by his *murid*, Hamid Qalandar around 750/1350.<sup>38</sup> The text gives information on Shaikh Nasiruddin's time in Shaikh Nizamuddin's *jamatkhana*.

Sayyid Muhammad bin Mubarak Kirmani (“Amir Khvurd”) compiled the *Siyar-ul-auliya* between 752/1351 and 790/1382.<sup>39</sup> He was a disciple in the Chishti tradition and had contact with the principal khalifas and relatives of the Shaikh. His objective was to create a hagiography of the Shaikh and a record of his life for others to follow.

The *Jawami-ul-kalim* is a collection of the conversations of Shaikh Gesu Daraz, a *khalifa* of Shaikh Nasiruddin, by Gesu Daraz’s son Muhammad Akbar Husayni between 801/1399 and 802/1400.<sup>40</sup>

Written 200 years after the death of Shaikh Nizamuddin, the *Siyar-ul-arifin* by Jamaluddin Kanboh (“Jamali”) (d. 942/1536) is a collection of the stories (biographies/hagiographies) of various Shaikhs from different traditions. A disciple of Samauddin Dihlawi (d. 901/1496) of the Suhrawardi tradition, Jamali begins writing at the beginning of the Lodi period and completes his work some time during the reign of the Mughal emperor Humayun.<sup>41</sup>

The perspectives of these historical texts have been described and their reliability have been assessed by various scholars.<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, many of the preceding historical texts remain unpublished and difficult to access, existing in manuscript form only. Consequently, secondary sources containing translated excerpts, often accompanied by the text in its original language, are heavily relied upon in this study. Parts of several historical texts, for example the *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* by Afif, have been translated and published as part of the immense collection, *The History of India as told by its Own Historians*, but significant sections are missing from these translations, since the authors edited out what they thought to be unimportant.<sup>43</sup> However, some key texts such as the *Fawaid-ul-fuad* have recently been translated in their entirety.

## **Historiographical context and methodology**

Highly critical of its eighteenth and nineteenth century roots, historiography in the Anglo-European tradition today is the focus of much debate resulting in tremendously diverse approaches to the discipline. Some of the general trends in historiography that have influenced this study, as well as the primary and secondary sources it consults, are highlighted in the following discussion.

The views of nineteenth century German historian Leopold von Ranke (1795-1885) have come to symbolize, perhaps excessively, the historiographic tradition of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>44</sup> Dissatisfied with historical writing that failed to reconcile differing accounts and assess the reliability of information sources, Leopold Ranke advocated the use of archival data and popularized source-criticism techniques.<sup>45</sup> Ranke made an important contribution to the historiography of the time, but overstated the degree to which objective knowledge could be determined.

Historians, particularly in the past few decades, have become increasingly uncertain about the achievability or even the existence of objective historical truths, regarded by many as either a myth or unachievable for various reasons.<sup>46</sup> Variances in the historical data available for different periods, places and culture, means different levels of possible accuracy exist. As a result traditional definitions of what constitutes evidence has increasingly expanded to include non-textual data. It is also thought that the extraction of historical facts from data sets is a highly interpretive process, weakening the historian's claims to objectivity. Traditional methods of determining causal relations are thought to be too simplistic excluding the immense variety of factors that can influence

an outcome.<sup>47</sup> Some consider historiography as a means of political influence in addition to being a knowledge-based discipline while some doubt that the biases of the historian can ever be transcended.<sup>48</sup> As an alternative to pursuing objective claims some advocate representing various subjectivities.<sup>49</sup>

The selection of topics for historical inquiry has also attracted much debate resulting in the field's widening scope. Both the historical context and the identity of the historian are seen as influencing the selection of topics, leading to greater scrutiny of both.<sup>50</sup> Early historiography is criticized for focusing on the powerful male elites of society and on exclusively political themes, excluding other essential aspects of human societies such as economics, science, art, popular culture and the role of women. However, thematic approaches and disciplines have also been criticized for obscuring the interrelationships between the various aspects of society, leading to calls for total or interdisciplinary histories.<sup>51</sup> Driven by the Marxist assumption that class struggle is the primary historiographical problem, additional criticisms against the lack of historical research into the lower classes, women, minority groups and non-European cultures have been made leading to charges of inherent bias in the discipline. As a result, attempts have been made to broaden the scope of historical writing and methodologies so that they become more inclusive.

Traditional historiography has also been judged as inadequate for dealing with the complexities of modern nation states, giving rise to a plethora of theoretical investigations into the definitions and workings of society. The resulting structuralist notion of an all-powerful elite dominating the ineffective masses have in turn been challenged as well as refined to include notions of hegemony where the elite must win

the consent of the masses in order to pursue their agendas.<sup>52</sup> Discourse analysis, rooted in theories of language, has also impacted how traditional sources are examined for evidence.<sup>53</sup> These theoretical developments have in turn exerted enormous influence over the entire discipline of historiography. Earlier assumptions basing social and individual identities on race, have also been judged to be too inflexible and misleading, giving rise to experiments in defining communities and identities.

The emergence of the Social Sciences, including fields such as Anthropology, Sociology and Psychology, have also influenced the nature of historiography. As a result, greater attention has been focused on the structure of society as well as the consciousness of individuals.

Traditional Oriental Studies and Art History have inevitably been swayed by the above mentioned debates in historiography as a whole, experiencing their own internal evolutions as well. Initially a fusion of historical, archaeological, ethnographic and language studies of the cultures east of Western Europe, Oriental Studies dissolved into various area studies departments and other disciplines like Linguistics, Art History, Anthropology, Archaeology, Religious Studies and History within modern academic institutions. The field in its earlier and later incarnations has been heavily criticized by post-colonial critiques charging that earlier scholarship never transcended its cultural biases and preconceived notions of the Orient and was complicit with nineteenth-century Anglo-European colonial expansion.<sup>54</sup>

Within the discipline of Art History there has been a general shift in focus from making judgements of quality, stylistic influences and aesthetics to the use of textual evidence to illuminate the development of art and artistic traditions. Emphasis on the

role of the individual in creating art has shifted to include the role of patrons and public tastes. Traditional Art Historical concepts of art have expanded into broader notions of visual material culture leading to overlaps with the fields of cultural studies, anthropology, archaeology and others. More recently, Art Historical discourse like historiography in general, has been influenced by the rise of feminist, psychoanalytic, deconstructive and post-Marxist critical theory. Influenced by the field of Linguistics, approaches to art as a medium of communication for specific ideas have become more complex moving from iconographic to semiotic to discourse analysis.

Given the various approaches to historiography, it is worth reflecting upon the approaches and historical contexts that have influenced the primary and secondary sources used by this study. The following is by no means a thorough analysis of the historiographical positions and influences upon the various works, but an attempt incorporate an awareness of their perspectives and biases into this study.

As indicated before, many of the historical texts useful for studying Delhi Sultanate history were initially edited and translated by Elliot and Dowson, who justified their work as casting British rule in India in a favourable light in contrast to previous Muslim rule. Elliot and Dowson concentrated primarily on the literature of court historians and tended to exclude information concerning the *mashaikh* and religious concepts. As a result, it is necessary to consult the original texts and if this is not possible, then the works of scholars with greater access and familiarity with the texts in their original form must be used.

Permeated by an aloof sense of responsibility, many of the early archaeological studies consulted were driven by the British passion for documenting, studying and

conserving monumental archaeological remains. British approaches to draftsmanship and engineering, initially useful for military goals were applied to archaeological scholarship that was focused on conducting extensive archaeological surveys of the Indian subcontinent.<sup>55</sup> British intellectual tastes shaped the intellectual climate of Delhi in which Sayyid Ahmad Khan's survey of Delhi architecture was conceived. Though it was written in Urdu, the *Asar-ul-sanadid* was specifically reformatted to suit British intellectual tastes. More dates and quotations from historical sources were added to please a British intellectual audience and a full translation from Urdu to English was always a goal.<sup>56</sup> It is important to be aware of British scholarship's emphasis on monumental remains and aesthetically superior works and not let smaller works of architecture go unnoticed.

The biases of Elliot and Dowson were most heavily criticized following Indian independence in the historical scholarship of Habib and Nizami in particular.<sup>57</sup> Both Habib and Nizami were historians at the Aligarh Muslim University, which dominated historical study of the Delhi Sultanate period. Muhammad Habib and British scholar Peter Hardy, both scrutinized the positions and intents of Delhi Sultanate court historians recognizing that they were based on historiographic traditions rooted in principles that varied from Anglo-European historiography. For Habib, Anglo-European historiography with its emphasis on political movements was inadequate when considering Indian history, which he saw as a series of religious movements. Habib also introduced the literature of Sufis as historical texts to counterbalance the reliance of earlier British historians on court literature for developing Indian history. In order to distinguish

authentic Sufi texts from spurious ones, Habib applied Rankean principles of source criticism.

Responding to post-Partition animosity between Hindus and Muslims, Nizami pursued historical narratives stressing the peaceful interactions and coexistence of the two groups, paying close attention to references to Hindus in Muslim literature. Undoubtedly in response to British claims to superior social progress, Nizami portrayed Sufis as liberal humanist intellectuals and in the process, provided a historically credible alternative to Sufi hagiographies for Muslim and Indian audiences. Interestingly enough, Nizami recognized that the spurious texts rejected by Habib were still a type of historical evidence, illuminating popular religious beliefs. Like Habib, Nizami felt that Marxist historiographical approaches to Indian history excluded the role of religion in the country's history. It is important to be aware that much of Indian historiography following independence has been influenced by a growing sense of nationalism, the redistribution of Hindus and Muslims following the partition of India and Pakistan and the resulting realignment of historic Hindu-Muslim relations.

Proceeding from the assumption of cultural difference and a preoccupation with cultural syncretism that permeated Oriental Studies and its later incarnation as various area studies departments in modern universities, recent European and North American historical studies of dargahs have assumed a more anthropological character, generally attempting to address the problem of how and why conversion to Islam did and did not take place in South Asia, as well as describe and dissect the mechanisms of Sufi saint and shrine worship. They have also attempted to correct the earlier British narratives of Muslim fanaticism and the segregation of Hindu and Muslim identities. While

impressive attempts have been made to transcend cultural biases, the difference in approaches between scholars from South Asia and abroad suggest that the goals for historical writing are different between the two. The former write to reconstruct an Indian identity while the latter write to deconstruct Indian identities.

Maintaining a rigorous approach to source criticism, Simon Digby's research interests include the phenomenon of Indian Sufism and the Chishti tradition. He is also concerned with subaltern groups such as the *Hyderis* and *Qalandars*. Digby challenges early British portrayals of the Delhi Sultanate period as a time of Muslim fanaticism in contrast to the unusual religious tolerance of the Mughal emperor Akbar.<sup>58</sup> P.M. Currie, a student of Digby, also focuses on understanding the phenomenon of Sufi veneration and tomb rituals. Currie uses historical sources to distinguish between what is really known about Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti and the myth surrounding the Shaikh.

Bruce Lawrence's studies focus on the history of Sufism and Sufi thought and also includes work on textual sources. His work includes arguments against the portrayal of Sufism as a deviant version of Islam, responding to Islamic purist movements represented by Wahabbi ideology.<sup>59</sup> Lawrence also attempts to make the differences between Gurus and Shaikhs in Indian society clear by paying attention to the changing representations of the *mashaikh* in genuine and spurious Sufi texts.<sup>60</sup> Particular interest is taken in Shaikh Nizamuddin who is studied as a contributor to universal mysticism. The Shaikh's lasting popularity is attributed to his participation in the textual documentation of his ideas.

Critical of the Rankean model of historiography persisting in Indian historical writing, Carl Ernst, in Eternal Garden, claims to avoid using historical texts to arrive at

objective truths, aiming instead to situate them in their original perspectives and represent various subjectivities. It is worth noting that Ernst, whose study was conceived to present the Khuldabad documents that he rediscovered, still places heavy emphasis on the use of historical texts and their assessment for usefulness and reliability.<sup>61</sup> Addressing issues of Hindu and Muslim identity, Ernst studies Muslim sources for concepts of Hindus and consults Sanskrit sources for concepts of Muslims.<sup>62</sup> Like Nizami, Ernst's study aims to counter stereotypical portrayals of Hindus and Muslim and the perceived increasing communalism in India and in Pakistan. Like Habib, he draws greater attention to the importance of using historical texts of the *mashaikh* in writing about Indian history.

Instead of using systematic surveys, Desiderio Pinto's anthropological study of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin attempts to relate the subjective experiences of people visiting the gravesite at the time of his study through the relation of anecdotes arranged to illuminate institutionalized concepts, rituals and relationships.<sup>63</sup> The historical development of these elements are not addressed in Pinto's studies, which include descriptions of rituals and activities at the site accompanied by people's explanations of their actions.

The architectural histories consulted in this study rely heavily on British colonial scholarship on archaeological sites and historical texts, as well as the methodologies used by historians of Islamic art and architecture. In the past few decades, Indian Islamic architecture has generally been approached as a subset of Islamic art and architecture as a whole. Given the relative lack of scholarship on the Delhi Sultanate period, the studies are mainly surveys of stylistic, morphological and typological developments of primarily monumental and political Muslim architecture, a notable exception being Ara's survey of

Delhi's dargahs. Unfortunately, there is even less scholarship available on contemporary non-Muslim architecture of the period.<sup>64</sup> Efforts to interpret the significance of architecture have been based on relating building construction and epigraphy to contemporary events related in court histories, leaving Sufi literature generally unexplored.

The growing communalism in South Asia that Ernst refers to is affecting popular and scholarly discourses regarding Indian Islamic architecture today. Two examples, the claims of P. N. Oak and the destruction of the Babri *Masjid*, illustrate some extreme cases. For the past few decades, P. N. Oak has relentlessly argued that most Islamic architecture in India, including the Taj Mahal, are pre-Muslim works of Hindu architecture.<sup>65</sup> Although Oak's views have no credibility in terms of historical research, his ideas have gained some popularity.

Over the past few decades, there have been several cases in India where attempts have been made to reclaim historic Hindu sites to correct perceived past injustices, the most visible example being the occupation and destruction of the Babri *Masjid* in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh 1992. The Babri *Masjid* issue has shown how historical sites can be highly volatile points of conflict in modern India in which scholarship plays a role. In late 1992, a *masjid* located in Ayodhya and attributed to the Mughal emperor Babur was destroyed by people claiming it to be the site of a historic Hindu temple and the birthplace of Rama, the protagonist of the Ramayana. The state of Uttar Pradesh was governed at the time by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a political party that counters the Congress party with a platform advocating a stronger Hindu identity for the nation.

The vandals' claims were based in part on the findings of Professor B. B. Lal the former Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, who was a member of a team investigating pre-Muslim architecture near the Babri *Masjid* site.<sup>66</sup> Lal and his team discovered pre-Muslim sculptures at the site and recommended a controlled excavation under the *Masjid*. Following its destruction, Lal was criticized by some in the Indian media as falsifying his claims and encouraging the *Masjid's* destruction. Ambivalent about its destruction, Lal furiously denied falsifying his data, pointing out that subsequent research at the site confirmed the existence of a twelfth century temple and that he had initially proposed a controlled excavation at the site.

It is important to note that the destruction of the Babri *Masjid* was widely criticized in India's newspapers as a violation of the modern nation's secular principles and religious tolerance.<sup>67</sup> The BJP's tacit support of the vandals was interpreted as political manipulation of the masses to further the party's aspirations to national political success based on populist appeals for Hindu solidarity.

The study of historical architecture in India today is also affected by the massive population and urban expansion of Indian cities due to rural migration and economic restructuring, processes escalated by industrialization and globalization. In the past few decades, these pressures have understandably led to the disappearance of much of Delhi's historic architecture, including buildings from the Delhi Sultanate period. Their disappearance means important sources of data for the historical study of a significant part of India's past have been eliminated.<sup>68</sup>

Journalists in New Delhi have increasingly advocated a growing sense of historical consciousness and architectural conservation in the face of the city's growth.

Some elitist appeals for the conservation of Delhi's historic architecture, including dargahs, are also being made in the interest of national heritage. Citing the President of the Conservation Society of Delhi, Neena Bhanderi writes,

“Now the scale around the dargahs has become colossal, different groups and functions have added on. What we need is a legislation to be heritage specific with the *dargah* as a component in it,” suggests Nalini Thakkur, President of the Conservation Society of Delhi. It is therefore important to become aware of our spiritual heritage and at the same time be conscious of the hardware. Moreover literature on these dargahs in the form of pamphlets can be distributed, especially during Urs, to raise consciousness among the people. What we require is a heritage management plan. The financial resources of the *dargah* can be tapped to conduct repair, restoration and upkeep. The economic forces are already at work and the peripheral building around the *dargah* has begun to rise beyond three floors. Pilgrim facilities need to be provided and incorporated as an integral part of the development of the area. But unless the locals realize the importance of the historicity of the *dargah*, they will not cease to unwittingly destroy important heritage.<sup>69</sup>

In addition to the calls for conservation, current local government initiatives in New Delhi indicate a desire to make the *dargah* of Nizamuddin more amenable to tourism.<sup>70</sup>

It is beyond the scope of this study to provide an extensive philosophically reasoned approach to the study of history and architecture, but the governing motivations, principles and methodologies used throughout this effort can be reflected upon briefly. Four intellectual interests have motivated this study. These are: the relationship between social concepts and the built environment; knowledge of Islam in “Western” societies; the modes of knowledge and practice of Muslims; and the historical fusion of Hindu and Muslim beliefs and culture. In addition, the format of this study has been inspired by Oleg Grabar's treatments of the *Masjid* of Isfahan in Iran and the Al-Hambra palace in Granada, Spain.<sup>71</sup> The interpretive approaches taken in Chapter 4 have been inspired in part by film and cultural studies and the ideas of Antonio Gramsci.<sup>72</sup>

This study takes a problem-based approach to historiography. As mentioned earlier, the obscurity of the early development and interactions of all classes and types of people with the *dargah* of Nizamuddin and its surrounding buildings is identified as the key problem. Proceeding from the assumption that accurate claims about past events taking place in space and time can be made and given sufficient evidence, the problem is first approached by developing a chronology of building events that is as accurate as possible by examining the surviving oral, textual and archaeological evidence for consistencies and corroboration. Textual evidence is scrutinized by assessing the likelihood of the various sources having access to accurate information. Oral evidence is assessed based on its coherence with textual evidence. Archaeological evidence is assessed on the basis of stylistic similarities being observable between structures that have been confidently dated.

There is considerably less evidence available that directly illuminates interactions with the site; however, there is sufficient evidence illuminating the motives of patrons, contemporary beliefs and practices regarding the *mashaikh* and gravesites in the Delhi region. Both direct and indirect evidence are used together to formulate credible hypotheses regarding interactions with the site. The types of evidence used are again diverse, being drawn from textual, archaeological and anthropological data. Hypotheses are formed under the assumption that the process of developing the built environment is not simply an imposition of the wealthy elite onto the masses, but a process controlled by the elite but strongly influenced by the rest of society.

Since this study of the early development of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin and its surrounding buildings draws from various scholarly discourses, it is hoped that it will in

turn be useful to those various discourses. In terms of anthropological studies, this study aims to contribute additional historical parameters for the institutionalized rituals performed at the *dargah* of Nizamuddin. The fusion of Hindu and Muslim beliefs observable at the site today are given a historical basis for comparison.

With respect to historical studies of the Delhi Sultanate period and Indian Sufism, this study contributes to our knowledge of Sultan Firoz Shah's religious policies and focuses on the aftermath of Shaikh Nizamuddin's death and the people and activities associated with his gravesite. The relationship between the two important social institutions, khanaqahs and dargahs, is also highlighted. This study also aims to contribute archaeological evidence as a complement to textual evidence in the study of dargahs and help integrate discussions of the built environment into historical analysis. Like historical texts, architecture is proposed as an additional means of maintaining the importance of Shaikh Nizamuddin in social memory.

To the history of Islamic art and architecture, this study can contribute to our knowledge of understudied building types, khanaqahs and dargahs and of Firoz Shah Tughluq's architectural commissions. Historical evidence is used in new ways to reconstruct perceptions and ritual uses of the site's architecture. This study also offers a reconsideration of how to approach the omnipresent use of Quranic epigraphy throughout Islamic architecture and provides new data on Delhi Sultanate epigraphy.

---

<sup>1</sup> The format for dates used throughout this study consists of Muslim calendar or Hijra Era dates (*anno hegirae*, A.H.) followed by Gregorian or Common Era calendar dates.

<sup>2</sup> Non-English words are rendered in italics throughout the text except for anglicized plural forms such as dargahs and murids, which are in common use throughout the scholarship consulted. Diacritical marks have not been employed.

<sup>3</sup> Quotation marks around the names of various building are used to indicate popular terms of reference.

<sup>4</sup> The details of Shaikh Nizamuddin's life are derived from K. A Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya [hereafter Life of Nizamuddin] (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991). Nizami relies in the earliest sources of information on the Shaikh's life which includes the Siyar-ul-auliya, the Fawaid-ul-fuad, the Khair-ul-majalis, the Jawami-ul-kalim and the Qiwam-ul-aqaid. See descriptions of text below.

<sup>5</sup> Selecting a shaikh as a spiritual guide was a common practice. To become a murid one had to perform initiation rites, which included taking of an oath of allegiance to one's shaikh (*bayat*)

<sup>6</sup> The onset of the Mughal empire marked by Babur's victory over Ibrahim Lodi in 932/1526 is used as an endpoint since the Mughal dynasty introduced a new wave of architectural developments influenced by their cultural traditions. See a discussion of Mughal contributions to the gravesite of Nizamuddin in Chapter 6.

<sup>7</sup> Sayyid A. Khan, Asar al-sanadid [1854 edition, in Urdu] partial trans. R. Nath as Monuments of Delhi: Historical Study (New Delhi: Ambika, 1978); J. A. Page, ed. Monuments of Delhi: Lasting Splendour of the Great Mughals and Others, Maulvi Zafar Hasan, compiler, 4 vols. in 3 bindings (1917; reprint ed. New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 1997) 3:125, 137-181; Zafar Hasan, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10: A Guide to Nizamuddin [hereafter A Guide to Nizamuddin] (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922); T. Yamamoto, M. Ara, and T. Tsukinowa, Delhi: Architectural Remains of the Sultanate Period, 3 vols. (Tokyo: 1968-70 [in Japanese]); Matsuo Ara, Dargahs in Medieval India: A Historical Study on the Shrines of Sufi Saints in Delhi with Reference to the Relationship between the Religious Authority and the Ruling Power (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1977 [in Japanese]); Anthony Welch and Howard Crane, "The Tughluqs: Master Builders of the Delhi Sultanate." Muqarnas (1983) 1:123-166.

<sup>8</sup> See listing and description of historical texts below.

<sup>9</sup> Fieldwork in Delhi was conducted in November and December of 1998. The current state of the various buildings at the site and the epigraphs of the "Khizri" *Masjid* were documented with photographs.

<sup>10</sup> Desiderio Pinto, Piri-Muridi Relationship: A Study of the Nizamuddin Dargah (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995).

<sup>11</sup> For example see a description of the legend surrounding the step-well (*baoli*) near the dargah of Nizamuddin in Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 7.

<sup>12</sup> Christian W. Troll, ed., Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History and Significance (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989).

- 
- <sup>13</sup> Carl W. Ernst, Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992).
- <sup>14</sup> P.M. Currie, The Shrine and Cult of Muin al-din Chishti of Ajmer (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989).
- <sup>15</sup> Khan 35, 37-38, 52, 54, 56.
- <sup>16</sup> Carr Stephen, Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi (1876; reprint ed. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1967) 112.
- <sup>17</sup> Alexander Cunningham, Archaeological Survey of India: Four Reports Made During the Years 1862-63-64-65. (reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1972) 215, 230. J. D. Beglar, Archaeological Survey of India: Report for the Year 1871-72 (reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1966) 4: 75.
- <sup>18</sup> H. C. Fanshawe, Delhi Past and Present (1902; reprint ed. Gurgaon, Haryana: Vintage Books, 1998) 235-243.
- <sup>19</sup> Monuments of Delhi 3:125, 137-181.
- <sup>20</sup> M. A. Husain, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 47 A Record of All the Qur'anic and Non-Historical Epigraphs on the Protected Monuments in the Delhi Province (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1936) 21-31.
- <sup>21</sup> Percy Brown, Indian Architecture (Islamic Period) (1947; reprint ed. Bombay: Taraporevala's Treasure House of Books, 1964) 18-19.
- <sup>22</sup> Ara 181-299, 651-656.
- <sup>23</sup> R. Nath, History of Sultanate Architecture (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1978).
- <sup>24</sup> Sonia W. Lochner, Ruins of Power: Picturesque Portraits of Delhi Sultanate Architecture (Victoria, BC: University of Victoria, M. A. Thesis, 1990).
- <sup>25</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 197-201.
- <sup>26</sup> Robert T. Rozehnal, The Shrine and Cult of Shaykh Nizam-al-Din Awliya (Madison: University of Wisconsin, M. A. Thesis, 1995).
- <sup>27</sup> Edward Sachau, "Preface," Alberuni's India, 2 vols. in 1 binding (1910; reprint ed. New Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1996) vii-xxix. See a brief discussion of Al-Biruni's approach and application of concepts of organized religion to the belief systems of people on the subcontinent in Ernst 23-24.
- <sup>28</sup> Jamini Mohan Banerjee, History of Firoz Shah Tughluq (1967; reprint ed. Delhi: Munishiram Manoharlal, n.d.) 201.

<sup>29</sup> Banerjee 204.

<sup>30</sup> *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* [Barani, 1359, in Farsi] trans. H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, The History of India as Told by its Own Historians, 30 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952-60?) 14: 6, 36, 48.

<sup>31</sup> H. A. R. Gibb, "Foreword to Volume Three," The Travels of Ibn Battuta A.D. 1325-1354 (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1971) 3: ix-x.

<sup>32</sup> I.H. Siddiqi and Q.M. Ahmad, "Introduction," A Fourteenth Century Arab Account of India and Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq (Alligarh: Siddiqi Publishing House, 1971) 1-23.

<sup>33</sup> M. Hidayat Husain, "Introduction," Tadkhirat-i-Humayun wa Akbar (Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1941) v.

<sup>34</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 11. The text is not published and is accessible only through citations and Farsi excerpts and translations in Hasan's work on Nizamuddin.

<sup>35</sup> Banerjee 210.

<sup>36</sup> Bruce Lawrence, "Translator's Introduction," Nizam ad-Din Awliya: Morals for the Heart (New York: Paulist Press, 1992) 66.

<sup>37</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 8. The text is not published and is accessible through citations and translated excerpts in Nizami's works.

<sup>38</sup> Nizami, Life and Times of Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh-i-Delhi (Delhi: Idarah-i-Adabyat-i Delli 1991) 18. This text was unavailable to me. Translated excerpts are available in various sources. For example, see Simon Digby, "Qalandars and Related Groups," Islam in Asia (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984) 1: 60-108.

<sup>39</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 8.

<sup>40</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 10.

<sup>41</sup> Bruce Lawrence, Notes from a Distant Flute: The Extant Literature of pre-Mughal Indian Sufism (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1978) 71.

<sup>42</sup> For reviews of court histories see Peter Hardy, Historians of Medieval India: Studies in Indo-Muslim Historical Writing (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1960). For studies of the literature of the mashaikh see M. Habib, "Chishti Mystic Records of the Sultanate Period" in Politics and Society During the Early Medieval Period: Collected Works of Professor Mohammad Habib, ed. K.A. Nizami, 2 vols. (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1974), Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin, Ernst The Eternal Garden and Lawrence, Notes from a Distant Flute. For an assessment of the value of court literature in terms of architectural history see Welch and Crane 163-166.

---

<sup>43</sup> Some corrections and supplements to the Elliot and Dawson effort are listed in Ernst 284 n. 54.

<sup>44</sup> For example see Ernst 21.

<sup>45</sup> James W. Thompson, "University of Berlin: Niebuhr and Ranke," A History of Historical Writing, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, New York, 1942) 168-191.

<sup>46</sup> E. H. Carr, What is History? (1961; reprint ed. London: Penguin, 1990) 8.

<sup>47</sup> John Tosh, The Pursuit of History: Aims Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History (1984; reprint ed. London: Longman, 1993) 117.

<sup>48</sup> Tosh 1-29.

<sup>49</sup> For example, see Ernst 18.

<sup>50</sup> Carr 39-40.

<sup>51</sup> Tosh 92.

<sup>52</sup> Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebook, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and G.S. Smith (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971) 12, 57, 178.

<sup>53</sup> Tosh 88.

<sup>54</sup> Edward Said, Orientalism (London: Routledge, 1978) 1-28. See also Edward Said, Culture and Imperialism (New York : Knopf, 1994).

<sup>55</sup> See Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion of British archaeological efforts with respect to the *dargah* of Nizamuddin and its surrounding buildings.

<sup>56</sup> Khan xvii.

<sup>57</sup> Nizami, State and Culture in Medieval India (New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, 1985) 3-20.

<sup>58</sup> Simon Digby, "The Literary Evidence for Painting in the Delhi Sultanate," cited in B.N. Goswamy, "In the Sultan's Shadow," Delhi Through the Ages, ed. R.E. Frykenberg (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986) 130.

<sup>59</sup> Bruce Lawrence, "Early Indo-Muslim Saints and Conversion," Islam in Asia, ed. Yohanan Friedmann (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984) 128.

<sup>60</sup> Lawrence, "Early Indo-Muslim Saints" 134.

<sup>61</sup> Ernst xxv.

---

<sup>62</sup> Ernst 22-37.

<sup>63</sup> Desiderio Pinto, "The Mystery of the Nizamuddin Dargah," Muslim Shrines in India, ed. Christian W. Troll (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989) 112.

<sup>64</sup> Catherine Asher, Architecture of Mughal India (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 336.

<sup>65</sup> For example see P. N. Oak, "Cities and Region Since," Vaishnava News Network, June 4, 1999.

<sup>66</sup> B. B. Lal, "Archeology and Babri Masjid, Facts of history cannot be altered," The Hindu, July 1, 1998.

<sup>67</sup> For example, see the various editorials from Indian Express, The Times of India, The Statesman, The Hindu, The Hindustan Times compiled by the India Tribune (Chicago), December 12, 1992.

<sup>68</sup> Matsuo Ara and Tsukinowa Tokifusa, "Outline of Surveys and Studies of the Architectural Remains of the Delhi Sultanate Period," Acta Asiatica (1982) 43:93.

<sup>69</sup> Neena Bhandari, "Shadows Of The Original," The Pioneer, October 01, 1995.

<sup>70</sup> See plans to landscape dargah area and construct a subway across Mathura Road linking the dargah and Humayun's Tomb in Budget Of Govt. Of Nct, Delhi For The Year 1999 – 2000. (Viewed at [www.delhisalestax.com/delhigovtbudget99/new1.htm](http://www.delhisalestax.com/delhigovtbudget99/new1.htm) on October 13, 1999)

<sup>71</sup> Oleg Grabar, The Alhambra (London: Allen Lane, 1978). Oleg Grabar, The Great Mosque of Isfahan (New York: New York University Press, 1990).

<sup>72</sup> For example see, Masud Zavarzadeh, Seeing Films Politically (Albany: SUNY, 1991).

## Chapter 2: Historical Background

Knowledge of the twelfth through the fifteenth century of India's past and more specifically the Delhi region is due in large part to the survival of documents issued by rulers, the literature of court historians, the literature of the *mashaikh* and their disciples and architectural remains. Twentieth century historians of the Delhi Sultanate period have used these texts to establish some prevailing themes for the period on a regional and urban level.<sup>1</sup> These themes can be summarized to include the following: the relationship between Muslims, Hindus and other populations settled in the Indian sub-continent; the Mongol intrusions; economic conditions; political and religious authority; Islamic faith and principles; and Delhi as an imperial capital.<sup>2</sup> The following background history illustrates these themes with key events and examples of architecture that provide a useful historical context for this study.

In the early eleventh century, the Muslim scholar al-Biruni wrote a detailed study of the customs and thought of the people of *Hindustan* (northern plains of India). Speaking of northern Indian culture, Al-Biruni presented a picture of human settlements revolving around the region's major rivers and temples for housing "idols."<sup>3</sup> He was amazed at the giant step-wells that the region's rulers had commissioned for the benefit of the populace and noted their integration into religious belief and practice.<sup>4</sup> One step-well that survives today in the Delhi region is the *Suraj Kund* reservoir located on the southwestern outskirts of the current metropolis and credited to the Rajput Tomars of the ninth and tenth century (Figure 6).<sup>5</sup> Al-Biruni observed that there was enmity between the followers of the two major religious systems, Buddhists and Hindus.<sup>6</sup> Preeminent

members of the Hindu social order defined by the caste system, the Brahmins administered temples devoted to Vishnu.<sup>7</sup> They were supported from the revenue of surrounding villages and pilgrims expressing their devotion, especially during festivals.<sup>8</sup> The towns and villages were composed of elite castes surrounded by people from the lower social ranks that were organized according to the type work they performed. Al-Biruni argued that the people of *Hindustan* were not idol-worshippers as defined by the Quran and in Mahmud of Ghazna's religious justifications for his raids in the region. Instead, he saw the veneration of idols not as a substitute for the divine but as a means that flourished amongst the lower classes to interact with the divine and was subject to misinterpretation, while the upper castes maintained more abstract conceptions of faith.<sup>9</sup> According to al-Biruni, the elite Brahmins were losing their political authority and were increasingly dependent on the *Kshatrya* caste.<sup>10</sup> Among the customs al-Biruni observed being practiced in *Hindustan*, was the practice of cremating the dead.<sup>11</sup> Never abandoning his sense Islam's superiority, al-Biruni still felt that there were great similarities between Sufi thought and the beliefs articulated in Indian religious texts, the *Puranas* and the *Vedas*.<sup>12</sup>

Based primarily on the principles of Islamic faith and Persian kingship, a strong Muslim social order was established over the societies of *Hindustan* in the twelfth century.<sup>13</sup> Focused on securing control over what was the Ghaznavid empire of Central Asia and Persia, Sultan Shamsuddin Muizuddin Ghurri commanded one of his Turkish generals, Qutbuddin Aibek, to help support the empire based in Ghazna, Afghanistan by invading the Delhi region.<sup>14</sup> Aibek defeated the famous Rajput Rai Pithora of the Chauhan dynasty, who was later celebrated in Hindu bardic literature. The Rajput leader

had established his capital, now termed *Qila Rai Pithora*, by expanding on a pre-existing fort located over five kilometres from the Jumna River (Figure 7).<sup>15</sup> This fort was one of the earliest among a series of cities built in the region that is generally termed Delhi.

Aibek's military project brought Turkish Muslims guided by Sunni and Hanafi interpretations of Islam into control over local Hindu and Jain society.

A major symbol of the Islamic presence, the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* (Figure 8) and *Qutb Minar* (Figure 9), was commissioned by Aibek in 587/1191-2 in the fort of the defeated Rai Pithora, using materials from destroyed Hindu and Jain temples.<sup>16</sup>

Incorporating an Ashokan iron pillar, local temple construction methods and decorative motifs with an extensive Quranic epigraphic program and Muslim notions of *masjid* design, the buildings were a synthesis of Indian and Islamic architectural traditions.<sup>17</sup>

Following the death of Sultan Muizuddin in 602/1206, Aibek (r. 602-607/1206-1210) assumed power of the South Asian portion of the Ghurid empire.

Aibek's successor Sultan Altamsh (r. 607-633/1211-1236) made the city-fort of Delhi the headquarters for the consolidation of Indian territories under Muslim control and for military expansion throughout the subcontinent. He further developed the city by commissioning a large reservoir (*Hauz Shamsi*) southwest of the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* and expanded the *Masjid's* façade or *qiblah* screen.<sup>18</sup> Altamsh commissioned a tomb for his son Nasiruddin away from the city-fort, but Altamsh himself appears to have been buried behind the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* in a tomb. Both tombs were heavily inscribed with *ayah* from the Quran and designed with crypts.<sup>19</sup> The *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* complex would serve for centuries as a model and reservoir of design ideas for subsequent Muslim monumental architecture. The *masjid* and old fort probably formed a

citadel for the early Turkish Sultans. The surrounding land, particularly the land stretching east of the city until the Jumna River as well as the land across the river (Figure 7), was probably part of a surrounding agricultural district that seems to have included a number of villages.<sup>20</sup>

The new Turkish-Muslim social order encouraged the further migration of the *mashaikh* (masters of Sufi orders) from present-day Afghanistan and Iran into the Panjab and Delhi region.<sup>21</sup> Amongst Muslims, the religious authority of the *mashaikh* was supported by their chains of spiritual lineage (*silsilah*) dating back to the Prophet Muhammad, their religious devotion and popular belief in their miracles. At their residences, the *mashaikh* taught Persian Islamic traditions of mysticism and morality. The *mashaikh* ensured the survival of their teachings by appointing on their deathbeds worthy successors (khalifas) to continue the chain of transmission.<sup>22</sup>

The organized social and religious activities involving the *mashaikh*, their spiritual followers and the public took place at the *khanaqahs* of the *mashaikh*, which were Persian Islamic social institutions originating from tenth century Khorasan.<sup>23</sup> The centres for these activities, initially the homes of the *mashaikh*, expanded to accommodate increased numbers of people, depending on the sponsorship of wealthy *murids* and the ruling establishment. Purpose-built structures were also commissioned. In the Indian subcontinent, the term *dargah*, a Farsi word literally meaning doorway or threshold, also seems to have connoted a *khanaqah* as well as a household or throne.<sup>24</sup> The term was further used in relation to the tombs of esteemed shaikhs.<sup>25</sup>

Since the *mashaikh* were often able to attract wide numbers of followers among the Muslim populace, they exerted considerable influence over popular religious beliefs

and practices. This made them a social force to be accommodated by the reigning Sultans and the religious establishment (*ulama*). The practice of *sama* (recital of Sufi poetry to music) seems to have been a point of contention between the *ulama* and the *mashaikh* in the capital region of Delhi. Two Sufi orders which were to have lasting and widespread influence in the subcontinent were the Suhrawardis and the Chishtis. A key distinction between the two orders was the type of relationship they cultivated with the ruling elite. The Suhrawardis accepted state-endowments and favours while the Chishtis resisted political interference.<sup>26</sup>

The name of the Chishti order apparently originated from the village of Chisht near Herat in present-day Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup> The order's presence in the subcontinent is attributed to Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti, who is thought to have settled in Ajmer in the twelfth century.<sup>28</sup> Muinuddin's successor (*khalifa*), Shaikh Qutbuddin Bhaktiyar Kaki considered settling in Multan, where the *khanqah* of Suhrawardi Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariyya, or *dargah* as Shaikh Nizamuddin referred to it, was located.<sup>29</sup> Instead Qutbuddin chose to live in Delhi during the reign of Sultan Altamsh (r. 607-633/1211-1236), who was favorably disposed towards the *mashaikh* and offered them state-funded positions in the religious establishment.<sup>30</sup> Shaikh Qutbuddin was eventually buried in Delhi between the *Hauz Shamsi* and the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid*. Historic cemeteries with domed tombs also developed on the northeast side of the old fort.<sup>31</sup>

Qutbuddin's famous successor, Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shakar ("Baba Farid"), came for the funeral from his residence in Ajodhan to Delhi, where he was mobbed by Muslims anxious to greet this reputedly, spiritually endowed individual.<sup>32</sup> A young unknown Nizamuddin traveled to Ajodhan to become the Shaikh's *murid* and resided in a

communal hall for junior disciples (*jamatkhana*) at Shaikh Fariduddin's residence.<sup>33</sup>

Nizamuddin became a favorite of the famous Shaikh and was trusted to enroll disciples, later being designated as the *khalifa* of the Chishti tradition.

During the reign of the fierce Delhi Sultan, Balban (r. 664-686/1266-1287), the Mongol invasions of Central Asia began to be felt in *Hindustan*.<sup>34</sup> Sultan Balban appears to have made significant changes to the landscape around Delhi, which seems to have been a jungle with roads connecting the human settlements. He ordered the jungle area surrounding the capital cleared as part of his efforts to end *Miwatti* attacks along the roads.<sup>35</sup> Balban's son, Prince Muhammad, was educated by friends of Shaikh Nizamuddin, Amir Hasan and Amir Khusrau, and he aspired to commission a *khanaqah* for the famed poet Sadi in Multan, to be supported by the revenue of several villages.<sup>36</sup> It was during Balban's reign that Shaikh Nizamuddin returned to Delhi and decided to settle permanently in Ghiyaspur, a village next to the Jumna River.<sup>37</sup>

Balban's successor, Sultan Muizuddin Kaikubad (r. 686-689/1287-1290), moved his court away from Aibek's Delhi to the settlement of Kilugarhi, located closer to the Jumna River and downstream from Ghiyaspur (Figure 7).<sup>38</sup> A palace complex and dwellings for members of the Sultan's court were erected at Kilugarhi, increasing the number of people in the area and causing Shaikh Nizamuddin to reconsider his choice to reside in Ghiyaspur. However, the Shaikh remained and routinely offered his Friday prayers at the Kilugarhi *Masjid*.<sup>39</sup>

Delhi's ruling class was overthrown in 689/1290 by the Khaljis, a powerful Turkish clan that had formed an important part of the Ghurid and Delhi Sultanate militaries. The Khaljis had originally come from Khalaj in eastern Afghanistan but

settled in India.<sup>40</sup> Before claiming complete control of Delhi, Jalaluddin Khalji (689-695/1290-1296) was enthroned in Kilugarhi and resided there until he was powerful enough to control Delhi. He offered villages to support Shaikh Nizamuddin and attempted in vain to visit him but was refused despite the fact that the Shaikh's friend, Amir Khusrau, served in the new Sultan's court.<sup>41</sup> Defying Sultans was not without its risks. A prominent religious figure in the capital, Sidi Maula, was executed when Sultan Jalaluddin found him guilty of political intrigue.<sup>42</sup> During Jalaluddin's reign, the city of Delhi witnessed an influx of Hindus and their families due to a drought.<sup>43</sup> They presumably sought grain from the royal stores and Delhi markets. On a regional level, the Sultan also had to cope with Mongol attacks and was successful. Conquered Mongols were settled in Kilugarhi and Ghiyaspur.<sup>44</sup> The Sultan also had to quell Hindu resistance in the Delhi Sultanate territories.

The brutal Alauddin Khalji gained the throne in 695/1296. Alauddin initiated the largest military expansion of the Delhi Sultanate, extending its territories to the southern limits of the Deccan. He seized the "idol" at Somanath, a town on the western seacoast of the subcontinent located at the mouth of the Sarsati River, to be disrespectfully tread upon at Delhi and imposed heavy taxes on Hindus on the advice of his Hanafi qazis (judges).<sup>45</sup> Following a wave of insurrections, Alauddin introduced a series of harsh reforms, the least of which included the prohibition of wine in Delhi and its surrounding villages, which probably included Ghiyaspur.<sup>46</sup> Due to Mongol raids, a consistent threat to the Delhi Sultanate since its inception, Alauddin reinforced the fort of Rai Pithora and developed, closer to the Jumna River, the walled city of Siri which served as his residence (Figure 7).<sup>47</sup> To the west of Siri, Alauddin also built an immense reservoir

(*Hauz-i-Alai* later known as *Hauz Khas*). Reflecting the capital region's growing numbers due to Central Asian and Persian refugees from the Mongol invasions, Alauddin also commissioned a massive expansion to the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* complex. The expansion included a continuation of the extensive Quranic epigraphic program and the famed gate to the expanded *masjid* known as the *Alai Darwaza* (Figure 9), which was also adorned with calligraphy (Figure 10).<sup>48</sup> The site of Alauddin's tomb and *madrasah* complex are thought to lie behind the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid*.<sup>49</sup>

Alauddin Khalji never met Shaikh Nizamuddin but nobles of his court and members of his family did.<sup>50</sup> One of his wives, Malika Jahan sent their two sons, Khizr Khan and Shadi Khan, to become murids of the Shaikh. The two princes showed their devotion by distributing donations at the *khanqaah*.

In contrast, the later Sultan Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah Khalji was very hostile to Shaikh Nizamuddin despite the fact that he too employed the Shaikh's friend, Amir Khusrau, who had become the leading poet of the age.<sup>51</sup> The Sultan tried to ban visits to the Shaikh's home by nobles of the royal court.

A noble of Mubarak Shah's court named Khusrau Khan, who was a Gujerati Hindu convert, managed to seize the throne with the aid of armed Parwaris. Khusrau Khan renounced Islam and with his aides commenced "idol worship" in the Siri palace.<sup>52</sup> He apparently donated a large sum of money to Shaikh Nizamuddin's *khanqaah*.<sup>53</sup>

The Muslim Turco-Indian general, Ghiyasuddin Tughluq (r. 720-725/1320-1325), seized the throne from Khusrau Khan and assumed power in Siri in 720/1320. He instituted heavy taxes against the local Hindus in retribution for the Khusrau Khan episode.<sup>54</sup> Ghiyasuddin commenced the development of another walled city,

Tughluqabad, for himself and his family, his nobles and his officials.<sup>55</sup> The city was located approximately eight kilometres east of the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* towards the Jumna River (Figure 7). Outside the city, the Sultan constructed a large fortified tomb for himself (Figure 11).<sup>56</sup> The Sultan seemed to have been inclined towards the Hanafi *ulama* and supported an inquest into the practice of *sama*, which Shaikh Nizamuddin attended.<sup>57</sup> Ghiyasuddin's son, Muhammad bin Tughluq, who incidentally had served under Sultan Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah Khalji, visited the Shaikh as a prince and offered his devotion.<sup>58</sup>

By this point, the Shaikh Nizamuddin's residence had probably evolved into a *khanaqah* with its own *jamatkhana* to accommodate the large number of visitors and *murids*.<sup>59</sup> To visit the threshold of the Shaikh's residence was considered a great honour.<sup>60</sup> Residents at or near the *khanaqah* probably included the sons of the Shaikh's sister and Baba Farid's grandsons, whom Nizamuddin was responsible for.<sup>61</sup> Before his death, Shaikh Nizamuddin appointed several khalifas, which included Shaikh Nasiruddin who had settled in Delhi, Shaikh Burhanuddin Gharib who settled in the Deccan and Shaikh Qutbuddin Munnawar who settled in Hansi.<sup>62</sup> Shaikh Nizamuddin and his friend Amir Khusrau both died in 725/1325, the same year as Sultan Ghiyasuddin, who died in a building collapse and was buried in his tomb outside Tughluqabad.

Muhammad bin Tughluq assumed the throne in 725/1325 and his reign witnessed the greater integration of Hindus into the state bureaucracy.<sup>63</sup> During his reign, Sultan Muhammad (r. 725-752/1325-1351) attempted to expand and consolidate the empire by relocating the capital further south to Deogir.<sup>64</sup> He compelled many of the *mashaikh* to accompany his administration to the new capital, renamed Daulatabad, including several

disciples of Shaikh Nizamuddin, facilitating the Chishti order's presence in the Deccan. During his rule, the Sultan executed uncooperative *mashaikh*<sup>65</sup> and involved himself closely with the appointment of successors at the Suhrawardi *khanqah* in Multan.<sup>66</sup> Muhammad's experiment in Daulatabad failed and the capital was relocated back to the Delhi region. In Delhi, Sultan Muhammad united the cities of Siri and the historic fort of Rai Pithora with a surrounding wall into a single city he named Jahanpanah (Figure 7).<sup>67</sup> He provided new waterworks for the city and also commissioned a new palace complex and a large *jami masjid* (Friday mosque) known today as the Begampur Mosque (Figure 12).<sup>68</sup> Out of respect for his former Sultan, Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah Khalji, Muhammad ordered the visiting North African, Ibn Battuta, to administer a tomb for the deceased ruler.<sup>69</sup>

Sultan Muhammad died unexpectedly in Thatta without declaring a successor. One of Nizamuddin's designated khalifas, Shaikh Nasiruddin, was part of a group that approached the Sultan's nephew Firoz Shah Tughluq to assume the throne in order to ensure the stability of the Delhi Sultanate.<sup>70</sup> The new Sultan never formed any major ambitions to expand the Sultanate. Born to a woman who was a member of the Hindu nobility and advised by Sultan Muhammad's advisor, the *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani who was an Indian convert to Islam, Firoz Shah curiously insisted on the application of a poll-tax (*jisya*) to the Brahmins.<sup>71</sup> The Brahmins resisted threatening suicide but were rescued by a Hindu public offering to pay their taxes.

Firoz Shah undertook a large number of architectural commissions during his reign. He developed yet another city, Firozabad, upstream on the banks of the Jumna River over three kilometres north of Ghiyaspur (Figure 7).<sup>72</sup> Located within the city and

closest to the river was a *kotla* (palace complex) with a large *masjid*, which appears to have contained a lengthy inscription listing the Sultan's accomplishments and architectural restoration efforts.<sup>73</sup> The Sultan restored a large number of the buildings and tombs of the former Delhi Sultans. He also commissioned a large *madrasah* on the edge of Alauddin Khalji's reservoir (*Hauz Alai/Hauz Khas*) outside of Siri (Figure 13).<sup>74</sup> An integral part of the complex was Firoz Shah's own tomb (Figure 14), which had no crypt but bore epigraphs that included *ayah* from the Quran (Figure 15). The *madrasah* was no doubt an immense boost to the religious establishment, the Hanafi *ulama*, and related to Firoz Shah's extensive *khanaqah* building program. Firoz also commissioned the *dargah* for the *Qadam Sharif* (Figure 16), where his son was buried and the alleged imprints of the Prophet's feet were interred.<sup>75</sup>

The decades following Firoz Shah's reign witnessed growing political instability. The arrival of Timur's central Asian military machine at Delhi in 800/1398 no doubt had some impact on Ghiyaspur and the activities of the Nizamuddin *dargah* complex. Timur ordered his soldiers to plunder the villages and territories south of Firozabad, which would have included Ghiyaspur.<sup>76</sup> "Hindus and *gabrs*" fleeing the countryside sought refuge in old Delhi, Jahanpanah and Siri only to be ruthlessly massacred by a greedy army out of control and set loose upon the three cities. However, the quarters of Muslim inhabitants, particularly the Sayyids and the *ulama*, were excepted by Timur, suggesting that the Muslim residents of Ghiyaspur and the *dargah* area would have been shielded from harm.<sup>77</sup> Timur left Delhi never to return, stealing Delhi's craftsmen and leaving Khizr Khan (r. 817-824/1414-1421) as its ruler.

The influence of the Delhi Sultanate waned under the rule of Khizr Khan's successors who also contributed to Delhi's architecture; however, these developments are not clearly understood. The Afghan descended Lodis came to power under the leadership of Bahlul Lodi (r. 855-894/1451-1489) and attempted to rebuild the Delhi Sultanate empire. Attention seems to have shifted to the *dargah* of Shaikh Nasiruddin where Bahlul Lodi is reputed to have been buried in a nearby tomb. The Lodis embarked on an impressive architectural program, which does not seem to have impacted the *dargah's* architecture. Sikander Lodi (r. 894-923/1489-1517), Bahlul's son and successor, made Agra his capital during his reign but was entombed in Delhi, where he had been an active architectural patron. Lodi rule ended in 932/1526 when the Babur, a central Asian Muslim claiming descent from Timur, defeated Sikander's son Ibrahim at Panipat, located 90 kilometres north of Delhi. In his victory tour of the newly conquered Delhi, Babur made sure to pay his respects at the still famous *dargah* of Nizamuddin.

---

<sup>1</sup> For example see R.E. Frykenberg, ed. Delhi Through the Ages: Essays in Urban History Culture and Society (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986); K.A. Nizami, State and Culture in Medieval India (New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, 1985); R.C. Majumdar, ed. et al., The History and Culture of the Indian People: The Delhi Sultanate (Bombay: 1960); Ashirbadi Lal Shrivastava, The Sultanate of Delhi (711-1526 A.D.) (Agra: Shiva Lal Agarwala and Co., 1966); Richard M. Eaton, Sufis of Bijapur 1300-1700: Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Muhammad Habib and Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, A Comprehensive History of India: Vol. 5: The Delhi Sultanate (A.D. 1206-1526) (reprint ed. New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1982); Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, A History of Sufism in India, 2 vols. (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1975); Annemarie Schimmel, Islam in the Indian subcontinent (Leiden : E.J. Brill, 1980).

<sup>2</sup> There has been relatively little work done addressing gender during the Delhi Sultanates. One exception is Lokesh Chandra Nand, Women in Delhi Sultanate (Allahabad, India : Vohra Publishers, 1989).

<sup>3</sup> Tarikh-i-Hind [Al-Biruni, 1030, in Arabic] trans. Edward C. Sachau, Alberuni's India, 2 vols. in 1 binding (1910; New Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1996) 1:116-117.

<sup>4</sup> *Tarikh-i-Hind* 2:144.

<sup>5</sup> J. Burton-Page "Dihli," *Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition*, Various eds. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960-) 2:255.

<sup>6</sup> *Tarikh-i-Hind* 1:21.

<sup>7</sup> *Tarikh-i-Hind* 1:99. Sachau notes that al-Biruni's work demonstrates familiarity with only "Vishnuitic" religious traditions (Sachau xivii).

<sup>8</sup> A. Yusuf Ali, *Medieval India: Social and Economic Conditions* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932) 33.

<sup>9</sup> *Tarikh-i-Hind* 1:111-113, 122.

<sup>10</sup> *Tarikh-i-Hind* 2:161.

<sup>11</sup> *Tarikh-i-Hind* 2:167.

<sup>12</sup> *Tarikh-i-Hind* 1:82-83. Al-Biruni refers to similarities in thought regarding the distinction between soul and body.

<sup>13</sup> K. A. Nizami, *State and Culture in Medieval India* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, 1985) 143.

<sup>14</sup> C.E. Bosworth, *The Islamic Dynasties* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1967) 188.

<sup>15</sup> Burton-Page 260.

<sup>16</sup> Burton-Page 259. Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India: Four Reports Made During the Years 1862-63-64-65* (reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1972) 183.

<sup>17</sup> Cunningham 193.

<sup>18</sup> Burton-Page 260.

<sup>19</sup> For a comparison of the epigraphic programs in these two tombs, see Anthony Welch, "Quran and Tomb" *Indian Epigraphy: Its Bearing on the History of Art*, eds. Frederick M. Asher and G.S. Gai (New Delhi: Oxford & IBH Publishing Co., 1985) 257-267.

<sup>20</sup> *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* [Barani, 1359, in Farsi] trans. H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, *The History of India as Told by its Own Historians*, 30 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952-60?) 14:13, 98.

<sup>21</sup> Nizami, *State and Culture* 75.

- <sup>22</sup> For a discussion of Chishti succession see, Simon Digby, "Tabarrukat and Succession among the Great Chishti Shaykhs of the Delhi Sultanate," Delhi Through the Ages 63-103.
- <sup>23</sup> J. Chabbi, "Khankah," Encyclopaedia of Islam 4:1025. Rizvi 1:216.
- <sup>24</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad [Amir Hasan, 1308-1322, in Farsi] trans. Bruce Lawrence as Morals for the Heart: Conversations of Shaykh Nizam ad-din Awliya recorded by Amir Hasan (New York: Paulist Press, 1992) 90.
- <sup>25</sup> Christian W. Troll, "Introduction," Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History and Significance, ed. Christian W. Troll (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989) xi.
- <sup>26</sup> Nizami, State and Culture 98.
- <sup>27</sup> K. A. Nizami, "Cishtiyya," Encyclopedia of Islam 2:50.
- <sup>28</sup> K. A. Nizami, "Khwaja Muin al-din Hasan Chishti," Encyclopaedia of Islam 2:49-50. See also, P.M. Currie, The Shrine and Cult of Muin al-din Chishti of Ajmer (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989).
- <sup>29</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 90.
- <sup>30</sup> K. A. Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar [hereafter Life of Fariduddin] (1955; reprint ed. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1973) 20.
- <sup>31</sup> Rehla [Ibn Battuta, 1325-1354, in Arabic] trans. H. A. R. Gibb, The Travels of Ibn Battuta, 4 vols. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971) 3:622.
- <sup>32</sup> K. A. Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya [hereafter Life of Nizamuddin] (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991) 36.
- <sup>33</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 39-40.
- <sup>34</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 23.
- <sup>35</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 14. The Miwattis seem to refer to the non-Muslim inhabitants of Miwat, a settlement near the capital region.
- <sup>36</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 20.
- <sup>37</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 244.
- <sup>38</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 37.
- <sup>39</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 261.
- <sup>40</sup> Bosworth 190.

- 
- <sup>41</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 105.
- <sup>42</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 59.
- <sup>43</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 59.
- <sup>44</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 61.
- <sup>45</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 78. See reference to similar seizure and desecration of the *linga* of Mahadeva or “idol” at Somanath by Mahmud of Ghazna in Tarikh-i-Hind 102-104. According to Al-Biruni the ornate *linga* at Somanath was very famous attracting daily tributes of water from the Ganges River and flowers from Kashmir. It was also believed to help cure diseases. Barani’s reference suggests the *linga* seized by Mahmud was replaced.
- <sup>46</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 98.
- <sup>47</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 110.
- <sup>48</sup> Burton-Page 260. See also, Alexandra Bain, Qur’anic Epigraphy in the Delhi Sultanate: The ‘Alai Darwaza (Victoria, BC: University of Victoria, M.A. thesis, 1992).
- <sup>49</sup> See Jeffrey B. Cohn, The Madrasa of Alauddin Khalji (Victoria, BC: University of Victoria, M.A. thesis, 1984).
- <sup>50</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 107-108.
- <sup>51</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 114.
- <sup>52</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 144.
- <sup>53</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 119.
- <sup>54</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 153.
- <sup>55</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 157.
- <sup>56</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 159.
- <sup>57</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 119.
- <sup>58</sup> Rehla 653-654.
- <sup>59</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] cited and excerpt translated in Nizami, State and Culture 193.

- <sup>60</sup> *Futuhs-salatin* [Abd-ul-Malik Isami, 1350, in Persian] trans. Agha Mahdi Husain *Shah namah-i Hind of Isami*, 3 vols. (Bombay, New York: Published for the Dept. of History, Aligarh Muslim University [by] Asia Pub. House, c1967-1977) 1:688.
- <sup>61</sup> Nizami, *Life of Nizamuddin* 153, 155.
- <sup>62</sup> Nizami, *Life of Nizamuddin* 158-164.
- <sup>63</sup> Anthony Welch and Howard Crane, "The Tughluqs: Master Builders of the Delhi Sultanate." *Muqarnas* (1983) 1:125. The authors also point out that Sultan Muhammad participated in Hindu festivals and endorsed the construction of new temples.
- <sup>64</sup> *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* [Barani] 162.
- <sup>65</sup> *Rehla* 1:697, 702-706. Ibn Battuta refers to the executions of Shaikh Shihabuddin, Shaikh Hud and Shaikh al-Haidari.
- <sup>66</sup> Nizami, *State and Culture* 113. See *Rehla* 1:702.
- <sup>67</sup> Burton-Page 262.
- <sup>68</sup> See discussion of the patronage of the Begampur Mosque in Welch and Crane 161, n. 45.
- <sup>69</sup> *Rehla* 1:758.
- <sup>70</sup> *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* [Barani] 194.
- <sup>71</sup> *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* [Afif, c. 1398, in Farsi] trans. H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, *The History of India as Told by its Own Historians*, 30 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952-60?) 15:109.
- <sup>72</sup> *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* [Afif] 15:38.
- <sup>73</sup> Welch and Crane 164.
- <sup>74</sup> For a detailed discussion of Firoz Shah's tomb and epigraphs see, Anthony Welch, "A Medieval Center of Learning in India: The *Hauz Khas Madrasa* in Delhi," *Muqarnas* 13:163-189.
- <sup>75</sup> Anthony Welch, "The Shrine of the *Qadam Sharif*," *Muqarnas* 14:125-156.
- <sup>76</sup> *Tuzuki-i-Timuri* [Timur, c. 1398, in Chagatai; trans. Abu Talib Husaini, 1628, in Farsi] trans. H.M. Elliot and J. Dawson, *The History of India as Told by its Own Historians*, 8 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, n.d.) 3:432.
- <sup>77</sup> *Tuzuk-i-Timuri* 446.

### Chapter 3: A Chronology of Construction Events at the Nizamuddin *Dargah*

#### Complex During the Delhi Sultanates

There are several popular and scholarly claims giving the impression that many of the buildings at Nizamuddin West were raised before Shaikh Nizamuddin's death and that the Shaikh himself was involved with their development. Alauddin Khalji's son, Khizr Khan, who died before the Shaikh, is thought to have commissioned the "Khizri" *Masjid* as an act of devotion to his *pir*, Shaikh Nizamuddin. One historical source suggests that the Shaikh himself commissioned the "Khizri" *Masjid* and prostrated himself on the marble slab that lies in front of the building's *mihrab*. Alternatively, the central chamber of the "Khizri" *Masjid* is proposed to have been commissioned by a wealthy *murid* as a tomb for the Shaikh, who rejected its monumental character. The side chambers are suggested to be later additions. Shaikh Nizamuddin is also thought to have commissioned the *baoli*, which drew him into a conflict over labourers with Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughluq, who demanded that all labourers work on the city of Tughluqabad.

This chapter develops a chronology of Delhi Sultanate Period construction events at the site of Nizamuddin's grave. Through the assessment of textual and architectural evidence, it shows that the early developments at Nizamuddin's gravesite took place after the Shaikh's death. The following paragraph summarizes the proposed chronology of construction events at the gravesite of Shaikh Nizamuddin.

Shaikh Nizamuddin lived on the banks of the Jumna River in the village of Ghiyaspur<sup>1</sup> near other houses in a modest *khanaqah* complex that included a communal residential hall (*jamatkhana*). A small building, near Humayun's tomb, now known as

Nizamuddin's *chillagah*, probably formed part of the *khanaqah* complex (Figures 20 and 21). The beloved Shaikh was buried at a distance from his *khanaqah* at the site of the present tomb, the *dargah* of Nizamuddin, after his death on the 18th of Rabia II in 725 AH (April 3, 1325 AD). The site was probably an uninhabited jungle or garden with orange trees between the town of Ghiyaspur and the former royal enclave Kilugarhi.<sup>2</sup> Upon burial, the Shaikh's body was, no doubt, oriented lengthwise along the north/south axis and his face turned towards Mecca in keeping with Muslim burial practices. The grave would have likely been covered with rubble and plastered over with modest ornament. Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq commissioned a structure with a dome over the grave, presumably supported on columns. The building, which is no longer extant, included sandalwood doors and lattice screens. *Murids* of the Shaikh, like his close friend the famous poet Amir Khusrau (d. 725/1325), were buried near the Shaikh's grave. Some square-plan tombs with a single dome and some structures similar to the *chillagah* (Figures 22 and 23) that were possibly residences for Nizamuddin's dependents were also built around the Shaikh's covered grave. Between 751/1351 AD and 754/1354,<sup>3</sup> Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq (r. 752/1351 – 790/1388 AD) had the doors and screens to the domed tomb repaired, installed hanging lamps in the four corners of the tomb and commissioned the large, red, sandstone building adjacent to the grave (Figure 3), which he referred to as a *jamatkhana*.<sup>4</sup> Nearby, Firoz Shah's chief administrator, *Khan-i Jahan* Junan Shah Maqbul, probably commissioned a large multi-domed octagonal tomb over the grave of his father *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani (d. 770/1368-9) like the adjacent multi-domed "Kali" *Masjid* (built 772/1370-71) (Figure 24) that Junan Shah commissioned in the general vicinity of the Shaikh's grave (Figure 17). *Malik Sayyid-ul-Hujjab* Maruf,

another noble in the court of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq, commissioned the vaulted roof on the passage south of the *baoli* and the rubble structure immediately adjacent in 781/1379-80 (Figure 25). He quite possibly commissioned the entire *baoli*. The identity of the patron and dates of commission of the following pre-Mughal structures, the “*Lal Mahal*” (Figure 26), the *baoli* (Figure 19), the “*langarkhana*” (Figure 22), various tombs and graves and the “*Bara Khambha*” tomb (Figure 27) remain uncertain and no development at the site is known to have occurred during the Lodi and Sayyid dynasties.<sup>5</sup>

### Textual Evidence

The earliest historical texts supporting the view that some of the buildings at Nizamuddin West were commissioned before the Shaikh’s death are the *Siyar-ul-arifin* (931/1525) by Jamaluddin Kanboh (“Jamali”) (d. 942/1536), the *Thamarat-ul-quds* (c. 1006/1598) by Lal Bakshi, and the *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* (c. 1018/1610) by Ferishta. Since these sources were written over 200 years after Shaikh Nizamuddin’s death and none of the authors seem to have had a direct connection to people who would have been well-informed, these accounts should be treated with some skepticism.

Written 200 years after the death of Shaikh Nizamuddin, the *Siyar-ul-arifin* claims Prince Khizr Khan, a disciple who died before Nizamuddin, commissioned the red sandstone building.<sup>6</sup> The author Jamali, a disciple of Samauddin Dihlawi (d. 901/1496) of the Suhrawardi tradition, begins his collection of the stories (biographies/hagiographies) at the beginning of the Lodi period and completes it during the reign of Humayun.<sup>7</sup> His work is the first to integrate the stories of various saints from different silsilahs. Assessing the work for historical information, Habib criticizes the

work for its reliance on oral accounts for historical information while Lawrence, assessing the work for the information it yields on Sufi thought, believes Jamali makes objective statements about saints from different silsilahs.<sup>8</sup> Nizami allows that the work has inaccuracies about the early Chishtis but generally considers the work to be accurate even though he disputes its claim that Khizr Khan commissioned the red sandstone building.<sup>9</sup>

The *Thamarat-ul-quds* contradicts the *Siyar-ul-arifin* but still encourages the view that development occurred at Shaikh Nizamuddin's gravesite before his death. The text was written by Lal Bakshi, the paymaster of Prince Murad, the second son of the Mughal emperor Akbar, 1006/1598 nearly 275 years after the death of Shaikh Nizamuddin.<sup>10</sup> It claims that Shaikh Nizamuddin himself built the "Khizri" *Masjid*.

Like the *Siyar-ul-arifin*, Ferishta also claims that the "Khizri" *Masjid* was commissioned by Khizr Khan. Ferishta's account of the Delhi Sultanate is considered to be highly dependent on Barani's history and prone to errors.<sup>11</sup> It is quite possible that he depended on the *Siyar-ul-arifin* for his information regarding the patronage of the "Khizri" *Masjid*.

There are earlier historical texts referring to the early development of Nizamuddin West that indicate the buildings were commissioned after the Shaikh's death. These include the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*, the *Qiwam-ul-aqaid* and the *Siyar-ul-auliya*.<sup>12</sup> These texts are likely to have been based on first-hand experiences of the events following the Shaikh's death.

Unfortunately, the earliest reference to the location of Shaikh Nizamuddin's principal *khanqah*, which would help to establish if the *khanqah* and *dargah* site are

the one and the same, is too general. The *Fawaid-ul-fuad* compiled by a *murid* of the Shaikh, records Nizamuddin as saying,

...I went to Ghiyaspur and in those days that place was not so inhabited. It was a neglected spot, with few people living there. I went and took up residence there. But then [some time later] Kaiqubad moved to Kilokhiri and people began to crowd Ghiyaspur.<sup>13</sup>

The precise location of Ghiyaspur is not clear. Barani writes, "In Ghiyas pur, Indarpat, Kilughari, and towns four or five *kos* from Dehli, wine could not be sold or drunk publicly."<sup>14</sup> A village named Ghiyaspur is recorded in British Colonial documents from the Deputy Commissioner's Office in 1858-59 which list *Maafi* plot confiscations in the Delhi City and district. "Giaspur" is one of several areas listed as part of the Delhi district.<sup>15</sup> In 1919, Hasan writes, "Ghiyathpur, the original name of the village still survives, but has been given to a *patti* or subdivision of Nizampur."<sup>16</sup>

The twentieth century historian, K.A. Nizami, challenges the idea that the "Khizri" *Masjid* was built during the Shaikh's lifetime. A key part of Nizami's argument is the idea that the *khanqah*, inhabited by Shaikh Nizamuddin during his lifetime, and the location of his grave were two different sites. Nizami relies on the *Qiwam-ul-aqaid* and the *Siyar-ul-auliya*, two texts that indicate Shaikh Nizamuddin was buried in a garden or a "*sahra*" (jungle or desert) away from his *khanqah*.<sup>17</sup> No nearby structures are noted in the two texts.

Nizami summarizes the selection of Nizamuddin's grave site as reported in the *Qiwam-ul-aqaid* as follows:

It is reported that Shaikh Rukn-u'd'din Multani enquired from Iqbal: "Did the Shaikh fix any place (for his burial)?" "Yes," replied Iqbal, "in this garden." "If the Shaikh came to this place, where did he sit?" enquired Shaikh Rukn-u'd-din. Iqbal pointed to an orange tree under which, he said, the Shaikh used to sit.

Shaikh Rukn-u'd-din offered two genuflexions of prayer there and exactly at that spot his grave was dug.<sup>18</sup>

The *Qiwam-ul-aqaid* is written by Muhammad Jamal Qiwamuddin and is a collection of memories of the author's grandfather, a disciple of Nizamuddin.<sup>19</sup> Compiled in the Deccan, and it is assigned the date 755/1354, making it one of the earliest sources of information on the life of Shaikh Nizamuddin written just 29 years after the Shaikh's death.

In addition to indicating that Shaikh Nizamuddin was buried away from his *khanqah*, the *Siyar-ul-auliya*, completed in 790/1382, vaguely describes the development surrounding the Shaikh's gravesite after his death. Sayyid Muhammad bin Mubarak Kirmani ("Amir Khvurd") writes,

... God Almighty made mysterious arrangement for lofty buildings and imposing structures [domes/tombs], unrivalled for their beauty and elegance in the whole world, to come up there [at the grave of Shaikh Nizamuddin].<sup>20</sup>

Amir Khvurd was a disciple in the Chishti tradition and had contact with the principal *khalifas* and relatives of the Shaikh.<sup>21</sup> His objective was to create a pious biography of the Shaikh and a record of his life for others to follow. Nizami views the work as the primary source of reliable information on the Shaikh's life despite showing signs of hagiographic embroidery. Lawrence sees the *Siyar-ul-auliya* as more flawed, providing kernels of truth about the sayings and life of the Shaikh within a hagiographic shell.<sup>22</sup>

Nizami's argument that there were no pre-existing structures at Nizamuddin's gravesite is likely to be valid since his sources of information are more closely related in terms of time and place to the events that followed the Shaikh's death. In addition, the authors of the *Qiwam-ul-aqaid* and the *Siyar-ul-auliya* are more likely to have accurate

information about the *dargah* of Nizamuddin than the authors of the *Siyar-ul-arifin* and the *Thamarat-ul-quds*, since the former two are the earliest written accounts of the Shaikh's life derived from people with first hand knowledge of the Shaikh and the Chishti tradition. They are also compiled separately in different locations and corroborate each other.

Since it is not outside the realm of possibility that later sources can be more accurate than earlier sources, it is important to pursue alternative assessments of the evidence. If all sources are given equal credence, the consistency of their claims with the historical knowledge of the period can be tested. The results of this approach suggest that Khizr Khan could have indeed been a patron of the "Khizri" *Masjid* since he is recorded as bestowing generous gifts at the *khanqah* of Shaikh Nizamuddin. However, this is unlikely because the same sources that reveal his benevolence are the same sources that indicate there were no pre-existing structures at Shaikh Nizamuddin's gravesite. The case of Shaikh Nizamuddin being a patron of either the "Khizri" *Masjid* or the *baoli* is also unlikely given his fiscal policies and the inconsistency of such patronage with Chishti values and precedents.

Khizr Khan and his relationship with Shaikh Nizamuddin can be learned about in the *Qiwam-ul-aqaid*, Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi*, and in Ferishta's *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*. The relationship between Shaikh Nizamuddin and Khizr Khan suggests that it is possible Khizr Khan was a patron of buildings associated with the Shaikh's *khanqah*. The *Qiwam-ul-aqaid* says Khizr Khan and his brother were sent to the Shaikh for blessings by their mother.<sup>23</sup> Their father Allaudin Khalji also encouraged them to become disciples of the Shaikh after which Khizr Khan arranged a major feast in Ghiyaspur. Later, Khizr

Khan is said to have presented a jeweled rosary to the Shaikh who rejected the gift.<sup>24</sup> Barani describes Khizr Khan as receiving political power at too young an age and becoming enmeshed in hedonistic pursuits.<sup>25</sup> Ferishta relates that Allaudin Khalji neglected Khizr Khan's education and installed him at a young age as viceroy of Chitoor, which had been conquered by Alauddin in 703/1303 and renamed Khizrabad in honour of Khizr Khan.<sup>26</sup> Not only do these accounts describe Khizr Khan as a disciple or *murid* of the Shaikh, who attempted in vain to give lavish gifts to the Shaikh, but he is also shown to have been in a position of independent power and wealth for over a decade, albeit located away from the Delhi environs.<sup>27</sup> However, it should be noted that the *Qiwam-ul-aqaid*, which provides the earliest and strongest evidence of a relationship between the Shaikh and Prince Khizr Khan, makes no mention of the prince commissioning a building for the Shaikh's *khanaqah*, leaving such a possibility in serious doubt.

Assuming the actions and outlook of the Chishti shaikhs are consistent, the likelihood that Nizamuddin commissioned either the red sandstone building or the *baoli* himself can be checked against the pattern of *khanaqah* development in the Chishti *silsilah*. Shaikh Nizamuddin is unlikely to have commissioned these structures since the other Chishti shaikhs, like his spiritual mentor Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shakar ("Baba Farid"), did not commission large structures. Such an effort would contradict the ethics of simplicity and poverty as well as the fiscal policies of the early Chishtis.

Baba Farid, attained prominent public recognition and received generous donations but is not known to have expanded his *khanaqah* beyond a basic communal hall;<sup>28</sup> the same is true for Nizamuddin's successor Nasiruddin.<sup>29</sup> An example of the

Chishti distrust of architectural ostentation is related in the following anecdote from the

*Siyar-ul-auliya*:

Nizamuddin [Awliya] said that when Shaykh Muin al-din came from Ajmer to Delhi, Shaykh Najm al-din Sughra was Shaykh al-Islam of Delhi. There was a bond of friendship between them, so Muin al-din went to meet Najm al-din Sughra. He saw that a platform was being built by the house of Najm al-din. He approached closer and said, 'Perhaps the pride of becoming Shaykh al-Islam has overcome you.'<sup>30</sup>

Furthermore, Baba Farid had established the practice of quickly redistributing incoming wealth, guarding against the accumulation of wealth that could fund large projects.<sup>31</sup>

Shaikh Nizamuddin not only lived at Baba Farid's *khanaqah* where this policy was in place but followed the policy himself.<sup>32</sup>

The general practice for the burial of Chishti khalifas seems to have been to bury them at the *khanaqahs* in which they lived, although alternate gravesites were considered as options. Shaikh Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar "Kaki" is said to have been buried away from his home in a spot he encountered while travelling home from *Idd* prayers.<sup>33</sup> Baba Farid's sons initially planned to bury him with several martyrs in a graveyard outside Ajodhan where he often prayed. Instead, they buried him at his home in his *khanaqah*.<sup>34</sup> Shaikh Nasiruddin chose to be buried in his own house.<sup>35</sup> Although the trend was to bury the Chishti shaikhs in their own homes, it should be noted that the location of the graves of Shaikh Nizamuddin and the other Chishti shaikhs comes from the same historical source, the *Siyar-ul-auliya*. If Shaikh Nizamuddin was buried at his own *khanaqah*, then the *Siyar-ul-auliya* most likely would have indicated this.

Yet another way to test Nizami's argument is to compare the verbal descriptions of the *khanaqah* inhabited by Shaikh Nizamuddin, as found in the *Fawaid-ul-fuad* and

the *Siyar-ul-auliya*, with the buildings extant at the *dargah*. According to these two texts the *khanaqah* of Nizamuddin does not resemble the extant structures at the *dargah*, further supporting Nizami's hypothesis. Both documents clearly show that Nizamuddin's *khanaqah* consists of two stories that are both used, unlike the red sandstone *jamatkhana* at the *dargah*. In the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*, Amir Hasan mentions the existence of a public audience hall at Nizamuddin's *khanaqah*.<sup>36</sup> Hasan also writes,

I obtained the blessing of kissing the master's feet. He conferred this blessing while seated on the second floor balcony of his *khanaqah*. There was a staircase nearby. When I prostrated myself before him, he indicated that I should go sit at the head of the stairs. I did. The wind was constantly blowing the door shut, and so I held it open with one hand.<sup>37</sup>

Nizami's reading of the historical sources, which in this case relies largely on the *Siyar-ul-auliya*, yields the following portrait of Shaikh Nizamuddin's *khanaqah*:

The *khanaqah* of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya stood by the side of the river Jumna whose cool refreshing breeze added to the serenity of its atmosphere. Initially it comprised a thatched structure of mud, but later a disciple, Zia-ud-din, a clerk (*nawisinda* of Malik Imad-ul-Mulk), succeeded in obtaining the Shaikh's permission for constructing a structure of brick and mortar. The remnants of this building may be seen near the tomb of Humayun.

The *khanaqah* comprised a big hall (*Jamaat Khana*) in the centre, with a series of pillars, on its two sides. An old banyan tree stood in the courtyard, somewhat away from the centre, but its branches provided shade to a part of the roof also. A veranda surrounded the courtyard, but in order to provide separate rooms for some senior inmates, the parts of the veranda adjoining the hall were walled up. Opposite to the main gate was the gate-room (*dihliz*) with a door on either side. This was a large room and a few men could sit there comfortably without obstructing the passage of others. Adjoining the *dihliz* was a kitchen.

The Shaikh lived in a small room of wooden walls on the roof of the hall. During the day he had his rest in one of the small rooms in the main building. A low wall ran round the roof, but on the side of the courtyard the wall was raised higher to provide shade for the Shaikh and his visitors when they sat talking in the morning hours. Sometimes he had to appeal to them to sit closer so that all might find place in the shade provided by the branches of the banyan tree.<sup>38</sup>

The red sandstone building has no stairs or access to its roof nor is the roof designed to be used as a meeting place (Figure 3). It is unlikely that the building replaced an earlier *jamatkhana* or *khanaqah* in the same location, since the *Futuhāt-i-Firoz Shah* explicitly says that the *dargah jamatkhana* was built where no structure like it existed before.

Finally, if the building remembered locally as Nizamuddin's *chillagah* or *chillakhana* (Figure 21), which is located near the northeast corner of the enclosure surrounding Humayun's tomb, can be definitively determined to be the site of Nizamuddin's residence, then further credence will be given to Nizami's argument. Although the identification of the *chillagah* as Shaikh Nizamuddin's *khanaqah* is compelling, the evidence is not conclusive.

Nizami identifies the *chillagah* as the Shaikh's residence and *khanaqah* on the authority of the *Tadkhirat-i-Humayun wa Akbar*. Completed in 999/1591 by Bayazid Biyat, the text is a contemporary account of the early Mughal rulers Humayun and Akbar from 949/1542 to 999/1590. The text refers to a *dervish* named Bahram Saqqa that spent hours in the *chillakhana* of Shaikh Nizamuddin located in close proximity to Humayun's tomb.<sup>39</sup> In the nineteenth and twentieth century, both Carr Stephen and Zafar Hasan recount local belief that the *chillagah* was Nizamuddin's house.<sup>40</sup>

Textual evidence indicates that Nizamuddin's residence was near the River Jumna, which is consistent with the location of the *chillagah*. The *Qiwam-ul-aqaid* indicates the Shaikh's home was near the river. It states, "The house of the Shaikh had two doors, both on the river-side."<sup>41</sup> According to Nizami, the *Siyar-ul-auliya* and the

*Jawami-ul-kalim* also indicate Shaikh Nizamuddin's *khanaqah* was located close to the Jumna River.<sup>42</sup> The *chillagah* is located closer to the current path of the River Jumna than any of the *dargah* complex buildings. Faiz Habib's map reconstructs fourteenth century Delhi and indicates that the old course of the river would have brought it even closer to the site of the *chillagah* (Figure 7). The design of the *chillagah* incorporates a flat roof that could be used as described in the *Fawaid-ul-fuad* but no stairs are extant at the heavily modified site (Figure 21). However, similar structures at the *dargah* (Figures 22, 23 and 17) and in Mahihpalpur all incorporate stairwells into their design.<sup>43</sup> The *chillagah*'s construction system, using rubble masonry, sloped walls, groin vaulting and stone block pillars, strongly suggests that it is an old structure dating to Nizamuddin's life and the rule of the Tughluqs if not earlier. Similar construction methods are used in buildings attributed to Sultans Ghiyasuddin,<sup>44</sup> Muhammad (Figure 29), Firoz Shah and *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah (Figure 30).

In summation, it is probable that Nizamuddin did not inhabit or use the buildings that developed around his gravesite for the following reasons. Near contemporary historical sources say the Shaikh was buried away from the *khanaqah* where he lived and it appears that the *chillagah* located next to Humayun's tomb may have been part of the Shaikh's residence. Although Shaikh Nizamuddin's residence attracted numerous financial contributions and wealthy disciples, Chishti values and precedents suggest it is unlikely that the Shaikh commissioned structures like the red sandstone building or the *baoli* at the *dargah*. Finally, descriptions of the Shaikh's primary residence in historical texts do not correspond to the red sandstone building at the *dargah*.

### **Nizamuddin's grave and Muhammad bin Tughluq's tomb for the Shaikh**

Nizamuddin's grave-marker was probably a rectangular slab made of stones or brick and made smooth with plaster that may have been simply decorated. Baba Farid's grave was made from bricks.<sup>45</sup> Speaking about the Delhi cemeteries, Ibn Battuta relates, "every grave must have a *mihrab* beside it, even if there is no dome over it." The grave-marker of *Khan-i-Jahan* Tilangani, with its lotus bud arch and candle, gives a good idea of what Nizamuddin's grave-marker may have looked like (Figure 31). There are also plain grave-markers located near the *chillagah*.

Zafar Hasan of the Archaeological Survey of India points out that Muhammad bin Tughluq built the first structure over the grave of the Shaikh citing the *Siyar-ul-auliya*, which states:

After the death of *Sultan-u'l-Mashaikh*, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq constructed a dome over his sanctified grave and God Almighty made mysterious arrangement for lofty buildings and imposing structures [domes or tombs], unrivalled for their beauty and elegance in the whole world, to come up there.<sup>46</sup>

Since Muhammad bin Tughluq participated in the funeral of the Shaikh,<sup>47</sup> it is likely that the structure was commissioned fairly shortly after the Shaikh's death in 725/1325.

A textual source and archaeological evidence from Firoz Shah's *madrasah* complex at the *Hauz Khas* and the *dargah* of Shaikh Nasiruddin, suggest that the structure was probably built on a small platform and consisted of a masonry dome with four recesses resting upon an octagonal beam structure supported on at least four stone pillars bracketing sandalwood screens and doors. Firoz Shah describes Muhammad's

tomb for Nizamuddin as part of his restoration program in the *Futuhāt-i-Fīroz Shāh*, which states:

I also repaired the doors of the dome, and the lattice work of the tomb of Shaikhu-l Islam Nizamul hakk wau-d din, which were made of sandal-wood. I hung up the golden chandeliers with chains of gold in the four recesses of the dome, and I built a meeting room [*jamatkhana*], for before this there was none.<sup>48</sup>

Some examples of small domed tombs from the Tughluq era can be found on the grounds of Firoz Shah's *madrasah* (Figure 32) and the *dargah* of Shaikh Nasiruddin (Figure 33).

Unfortunately, Muhammad's structure no longer exists since the epigraphs on the present tomb record a Mughal patron and date.<sup>49</sup>

### **Early development around Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb**

People associated with the Shaikh seem to have been buried around his tomb. The clearest example is perhaps, the case of Amir Khusrau (651/1253-725/1325), the famous poet and *murid* of Shaikh Nizamuddin who died in the same year as the Shaikh. The earliest textual evidence of Amir Khusrau's burial at the site is found surprisingly late in a Mughal document, the *Thamarat-ul-quds*. The text informs us that a member of the royal family built a domed tomb for himself near the Shaikh's gravesite. The tomb was never used and the emperor Humayun ordered the tomb demolished. There is no way to verify the story and it should be noted that the *Thamarat-ul-quds*' version of the *jamatkhana*'s patronage is rejected later in this chapter. However, the Mughal tomb constructions intending to honour Amir Khusrau and his gravesite seem to confirm his early burial south of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin. Prior to the Mughal development of

Khusrau's gravesite, it was probably covered with a simple grave-marker until the time of Babur, when an inscribed marble slab and structure were erected.<sup>50</sup>

Local tradition asserts that the historian Ziauddin Barani (d. after 751/1351), a government official and disciple of the Shaikh, was also buried under a stone grave-marker near the tomb of the Shaikh but there is no other supporting evidence.<sup>51</sup> According to Ara, other uninscribed graves are also reputed to belong to contemporaries of the Shaikh.<sup>52</sup>

Nizami's reading of the *Siyar-ul-auliya* indicates that many of the Shaikh's extended family and disciples such as Khwaja Nuh (d. before 725/1325),<sup>53</sup> Khwaja Qazi,<sup>54</sup> Shaikhzada Kabiruddin,<sup>55</sup> Maulana Shamsuddin Yahya (d. during the reign of Muhammad b. Tughluq),<sup>56</sup> and Maulana Alauddin Nili<sup>57</sup> were buried at the *Chabutrah-i-Yaran* (Friends' Platform). It remains unclear where this platform is located, but Khan and Hasan identify an area near the *dargah* of Nizamuddin as the *Yarani Chabutra*.<sup>58</sup> This seems doubtful since the *Chabutrah-i-Yaran* existed before Nizamuddin's death and is not mentioned to be near the site of Shaikh Nizamuddin's grave, which was located by itself in a jungle or garden. Furthermore, the *Siyar-ul-auliya* states Khwaja Nuh was buried at the *Chabutrah-i-Yaran* before Shaikh Nizamuddin's death. It is more likely that the *Chabutrah-i-Yaran* was located near Nizamuddin's *khanaqah*. There are several graves located behind the *chillagah* that may be a part of the *Chabutrah-i-Yaran*.

Amir Khvurd's statement, quoted at beginning of this chapter, is the earliest textual evidence of architectural development around Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb, but only lofty buildings and domes are mentioned. Amir Khvurd also gives reason to believe that the gravesite of Nizamuddin would have been inhabited by the Shaikh's nephews,

the descendants of Baba Farid and others earning their livelihood from the contributions of visitors to the Shaikh's grave. The *Siyar-ul-auliya* says that Nizamuddin instructed his dependants to live near his gravesite and share the revenue generated by the inevitable stream of visitors to the grave.<sup>59</sup>

### **Who built the red sandstone building?**

For over 100 years, scholars have debated the question of who commissioned the red sandstone building located west of the Shaikh's tomb (Figure 3). Sayyid Ahmed Khan asserts Firoz Shah had the building constructed around 754/1353, based on the *Futuh-at-i-Firoz Shah*.<sup>60</sup> The relevant passage states, "I built a meeting room [*jamatkhana*], for before this there was none."<sup>61</sup> The red sandstone building is assumed to be the *jamatkhana* referred to by Firoz Shah. Hasan feels that the patron of the building can not be decisively resolved given the conflicting evidence, although he is of the opinion that Shaikh Nizamuddin built the structure himself favouring the *Thamarat-ul-quds*<sup>62</sup> over the *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, which says Prince Khizr Khan commissioned the building,<sup>63</sup> and the *Futuh-at-i-Firoz Shah*. Mahdi Husain hypothesizes that Alauddin Khalji commissioned the central section of the building and that Prince Khizr Khan completed the adjacent halls.<sup>64</sup> Ara thinks it is better to assume that the building belonged to the Khalji period.<sup>65</sup> R. Nath refutes Sayyid Ahmad's claim that Firoz Shah commissioned the building on the basis of stylistic evidence and suggests the building resembles those built during the Khalji period. He states:

If Firoz would have built it, it should have borne the stamp of his style, viz., the construction in rubble and mortar plastered over, and such features as batter on external walls, conical bastions at the corners and tapering turrets at the quoins.

This mosque which has finished stone work, beautiful carvings, fringe of spear-heads, typical squinches and other distinctive features, belongs to an altogether different style which was obviously in vogue during the Khalji period, as is testified by the *Alai-Darwaza*.<sup>66</sup>

Nath agrees with Husain that Allaudin Khalji probably commissioned the central square section of the building, speculating Shaikh Nizamuddin rejected it due to his abhorrence of ostentation.<sup>67</sup> Nath disagrees that Khizr Khan commissioned the adjacent halls since his reign was so brief and instead suggests that Qutubuddin Mubarak Shah Khalji completed the edifice. He supports his argument by using a reference in Amir Khusrau's *Nuh Sipahr*. It states:

When Mubarak Shah arrived at Delhi, he gave orders for the building of a *Jami Masjid* by the most skilful architects and when that was completed he gave orders for completing the city and fort of Delhi which his father Allaudin, had left in an unfinished state.<sup>68</sup>

Nizami argues for Firoz Shah's patronage of the building.<sup>69</sup> Nizami proceeds from the premise that the *khanaqah* Shaikh Nizamuddin inhabited and the location of his gravesite were two separate sites. Citing the *Siyar-ul-auliya* and the *Qiwam-ul-aqaid*, which say Shaikh Nizamuddin was buried away from his *khanaqah*, Nizami implies the lack of mention of the red sandstone building indicates that it did not exist at the time Shaikh Nizamuddin was buried. As a result, Khizr Khan, who died before the Shaikh, could not have been the building's patron. Finally, Nizami like Khan turns to the *Futuh-i-Firoz Shah* to confirm Firoz Shah's patronage of the building.

The identification of the patron of the red sandstone building depends on one's assesment of the content and credibility of the *Futuh-i-Firoz Shah* versus the *Siyar-ul-arifin*, subsequent Mughal histories and local memory. The *Futuh-i-Firoz Shah* should

be given greater faith than the other accounts since it is older and is a first hand account. It is thought to have been inscribed in the *masjid jami* of Firozabad, known to have been completed by Firoz Shah in 754/1354, and reiterated by the historian Shams-i Siraj Afif, who has provided one of the most informative accounts of Firoz Shah's reign.<sup>70</sup> In contrast, the *Siyar-ul-arifin* was composed before 942/1536 and the *Thamarat-ul-quds* was written between 1005-06/1597-98. Both authors had little direct connection with Chishti *silsilah*. Having accepted the *Futuh-i-Firoz Shah's* version there can be little doubt that Firoz Shah is referring to the building adjacent to the tomb as the *Jamatkhana* he built. The red sandstone building is the largest and most prominent monument at the site. No other structure would be worthy of the Sultan's boast.

The *Jamatkhana's* appearance has changed according to the *Thamarat-ul-quds* which states that a royal order issued in 979-80/1572-3 to have the exterior walls redressed by trimming the surface the width of two fingers. Some confidence can be placed in the text in this case since the author wrote between 1005-06/1597-98, just twenty-five years after the proposed restoration, and was in a position to gain accurate information. It seems that the exterior walls of Firoz Shah's *Jamatkhana* either had a rougher finish or used plaster to achieve a smooth finish that would have fallen away by the time of the restoration.

The interior of the two side chambers may have also been remodeled at this time. The ornament on the interior of the four domes, around the windows on the west wall is dissimilar to the ornament on the interior of Firoz Shah's tomb. The dome of Firoz Shah's tomb uses the tri-lobed lotus motif (Figure 34) used on the exterior of the dome of his tomb (Figure 14) and on the screens of the *Jamatkhana* side chambers

(Figure 51). In contrast, the interior domes of the side chambers use a rotating floral pattern (Figure 35) resembling early Mughal ornament on dome interiors such as the tomb of Rahim Khan located near Nizamuddin.

Despite the compelling textual evidence, the *Jamatkhana's* resemblance to the *Alai Darwaza* still leaves doubt about the age of the building. Although there are strong similarities between the two buildings there are also subtle but important differences. The large entrance arches of the *Alai Darwaza* are continuous openings without any dividing beams or decorative brackets (Figure 36). The squinch arches on the interior of the *Alai Darwaza* are narrower in proportion. At the base of the arch the curve continues past the vertical. No lotus buds appear on the squinches at the *Alai Darwaza* (Figure 37). The lotus buds on the exterior of the *Alai Darwaza* are modeled three dimensionally and consist of one central pointed bud with two adjacent round buds (Figure 10). At the *Jamatkhana*, a beam with decorative brackets divides the main entrance arch (Figure 38). The squinch arches in the central chamber are wider and do not curve past the vertical (Figure 39). They also incorporate lotus buds unlike the *Alai Darwaza*. The buds used at the *Jamatkhana* are not modeled three dimensionally and the buds adjacent to the central bud flare outwards (Figure 40). These differences show that, while the *Alai Darwaza* is probably an important influence in the design of the *Jamatkhana*, the two buildings are not necessarily from the same building tradition.

There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the *Jamatkhana* construction is consistent with the building tradition of the Tughluq era. Smoothly cut red sandstone is used at the tomb of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq near Tughluqabad (Figure 41) and the "*Lal Gumbad*" in present-day Malviya Nagar (Figure 42). The lotus bud motifs used in the

smaller arches of the *Jamatkhana* (Figure 43) also appear in these buildings as well as in Muhammad Tughluq's Jahanpanah *Masjid* in present-day Begampur (Figure 44), in the mezzanine *mihrab* of the "Lat ki" *Masjid* in present-day Hisar and on the grave-marker in the tomb of *Khan-i Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani at Nizamuddin (Figure 31).<sup>71</sup> The decorative brackets of the *Jamatkhana* (Figure 45) are similar to those found at Firoz Shah's tomb at *Hauz Khas* (Figure 15). The squinches in the central chamber of the *Jamatkhana* (Figure 39) resemble the squinches in the "Lal Gumbad" and Firoz Shah's tomb (Figure 46). The window screens (Figure 38) are similar to those found at the tomb of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq (Figure 41), the "Lal Gumbad," the Jahanpanah *Masjid*, the "Lat ki" *Masjid* and Firoz Shah's tomb (Figure 47). The large arches over the side chambers (Figure 48) resemble the arches used at the "Kali" *Masjid* at Nizamuddin. The smaller arches in the side chambers (Figure 49) resemble the arches in Firoz Shah's gate at the *dargah* of Nasiruddin (Figure 50) at present day Chiragh Delhi. The central dome's proportions are similar to the gateways of the Jahanpanah and Firozabad *Masjids* and Firoz Shah's own tomb. The finials on the exterior of the *Jamatkhana* domes are loosely similar to those used at Ghiyasuddin Tughluq's tomb.

One can argue that Firoz Shah's *Jamatkhana* includes an enclosure consisting of a series of carved stone posts, perforated stone screens and an entry gate. The enclosure begins in the side chambers of the *Jamatkhana* and surrounds the tomb of Shaikh Nizamuddin (Figure 18). The posts and screens in the side chamber (Figure 51) can be assumed to date to the construction of the *Jamatkhana* for the following reasons: they are well integrated into the *Jamatkhana*; they appear to use the same type of sandstone; and the design of the screens is similar to screens in the *Jamatkhana*'s dome (Figure 52),

the *Jahanpanah Masjid* (Figure 53) and an unidentified structure at Firoz Shah's *Hauz Khas madrasah*. The small arches inscribed with the word Allah and the lotus buds that border the top of the screen (Figure 51) are similar to those found around the exterior of the dome of Firoz Shah's tomb (Figure 14). The enclosure seems to have extended shortly on both sides of the *Jamatkhana* façade, although these sections no longer remain. On the north end of the court surrounding Nizamuddin's tomb, a section that still exists runs parallel to the north façade of the *Jamatkhana* between Amir Khusrau's tomb and the tombs of Jahanara and Mubarak Shah (Figure 54). On the east end of the court surrounding the Shaikh's tomb, there remain stone posts and beams that seem to have been part of the original enclosure (Figure 55).<sup>72</sup> The path of the enclosure on the south end is difficult to determine but it appears to have incorporated an entrance to the court of Nizamuddin's tomb.<sup>73</sup> There is some doubt that the enclosure dates to the construction of the *Jamatkhana* since the enclosure that surrounds Amir Khusrau's grave and incorporates the north end of the enclosure surrounding Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb bears an epigraph on the beam mentioning the Mughal emperor Humayun and the date 938/1531-2 (Figure 56). However, it is possible that the epigraph was inscribed into a pre-existing structure.

Assuming that Firoz Shah was the patron of the *Jamatkhana*, then it is possible to make a hypothesis regarding the architect and builder of the structure. Afif mentions that the Sultan commissioned 120 khanaqahs, which were realized by two individuals in particular. The text states,

One hundred and twenty khankahs were built in Delhi and Firozabad for the accommodation of the people of God, in which travelers from all directions were receivable as guests for three days. ... Malik Ghazi Shahna was the chief

architect, and was very efficient; he held the gold staff (of office). Abdu-l Hakk, otherwise Jahir Sundhar (was deputy, and) held the golden axe. A clever and qualified superintendent was appointed over every class of artisans ...<sup>74</sup>

Since Malik Ghazi Shahna and Abdul Hakk were responsible for the construction of many of Firoz Shah's khanaqahs, they probably also oversaw the design and construction of the *Jamatkhana*.<sup>75</sup>

### Structures of prominent devotees: Tilangani and Maruf

The next major development occurs a short distance south of the *dargah* and *Jamatkhana*. The medieval historian Shams Siraj Afif informs us that *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani, Sultan Firoz Shah's vizier, was buried at the feet of Shaikh Nizamuddin.<sup>76</sup> The large multi-domed octagonal tomb to the south of the *dargah* is identified as *Khan-i-Jahan* Tilangani's tomb (Figures 17 and 57) since the *masjid* ("*Kali*" *Masjid*)<sup>77</sup> located east of the tomb is known to have been commissioned by *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah Maqbul, the son of *Khan-i-Jahan* Tilangani, according to the inscription on a marble slab fixed on the eastern gateway (Figure 24). It reads:

By the favour and grace of God the most holy and omnipotent, during the reign of the king of kings of the age, strong by the help of the merciful, Abul Muzaffar Firoz Shah the king - may God perpetuate his kingdom and increase his command and dignity - this mosque was built by the son of the slave of the threshold [*dargah*] which is as exalted in dignity as the sky and is the sanctuary of the world, (named) Junan Shah Maqbul entitled *Khan-i Jahan* son of *Khan-i Jahan* in the year 772 from the flight of the Prophet (1370-71 A.D.), may God bless him and give him peace. May God have compassion on him who, offering prayer in this mosque, should remember this slave with *Fatiha* and prayers for his faith.<sup>78</sup>

Since Maqbul died in 770/1368-9, this date is assigned to the tomb. It can be assumed that the walled enclosure surrounding the tomb was constructed at the same time. It may

be the multiple domes of this tomb and *masjid* that Amir Khvurd is referring to in the passage “lofty buildings and imposing structures [domes/tombs],” which is from the *Siyar-ul-auliya*.

According to an inscription in red sandstone on the southern archway leading into the enclosure of the tomb of Nizamuddin, *Malik Sayyid-ul-Hujjab* Maruf, a noble of Firoz Shah, commissioned some buildings on the *baoli* in 781/1379-80.<sup>79</sup> It reads:

With the name of God who is merciful and clement.

In the reign of the great king, the fortunate monarch and the descendant of Adam,  
The support of the religion of Ahmad (i.e., the Prophet), (named) Firoz Shah, who  
is king, Lord of the happy constellation and the greatest sovereign,  
The slave Maruf was assisted by God, and he made firm the foundation of this  
building

In the neighbourhood of the tomb [*ruseh*] of *Shaikhu-l Mashaikh* Nizamu-l Haq  
Waddin, the polar star of the world.

Wahidu-d Din Quraishi, my father, who was a companion of the devotees (of  
Shaikh Nizamu-d Din),

And who was confident in the secrets of the friend of God (Nizamu-d Din) with  
good faith and sincerity,

When he brought me before the chief of the world (Nizamu-d Din), he (the latter)  
took me in his arms and named me.

And the Shaikh with the breath of Jesus named me Maruf in his own utterance, in  
this world.

I hope through that auspicious utterance to attain to fame in the next world also.  
Read the date of the completion of this building as welcome when you visit this  
place.

It was seven hundred and eighty one from *Hijrat* when this building was erected;  
God knows best.<sup>80</sup>

Although Hasan identifies the covered passages on the east and south sides of the *baoli* (Figure 19) and the structure adjacent to the south passage as Maruf's buildings, the eastern passageway should be treated with some suspicion. The small round arch windows built with thin bricks and the shallow barrel vault covering the passage are unusual for Tughluq era buildings (Figure 58). The roof of the building has been used for

drawing water as indicated by the protruding brackets with holes and Daniell's sketch of the *baoli* (Figure 59). However, this function is practical only for people inhabiting the upper levels of the residential quarters around the *baoli* but these are unlikely to have existed at the time of Maruf's buildings. In contrast, the southern passageway and attached buildings appear to use Tughluq era construction methods. The passageway uses a system of arches (Figure 25) similar to the ones found at the "*Kali*" *Masjid* at Nizamuddin and Firoz Shah's *masjid* at present-day Khirki in New Delhi. Some of the adjacent buildings appear to use groin vaults like those used at the "*langarkhana*" and at the *chillagah*.

### Undated structures

There are certain structures at the site that have no specific dates associated with them but use Delhi Sultanate construction techniques. These include the "*Lal Mahall*" (Figure 26), the *baoli*, the "*langarkhana*," an unidentified building south of the Shaikh's tomb (Figure 23), various tombs and graves and the "*Bara Khambha*" tomb (Figure 27).

Approximately 100 metres northeast of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin lies a puzzling structure known as the "*Lal Mahall*." Both Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Carr Stephen agree that the structure predates any of the other buildings at the Nizamuddin *dargah* complex. Khan believes the building to be part of the *Kushk Lal* built by Balban before he ascended the throne.<sup>81</sup> Citing Cunningham, Stephen asserts Alauddin Khalji built the structure on the basis of the similarity in the style of the battlements and mouldings between the "*Lal Mahall*" and the *Alai Darwaza*. Both of these views are highly speculative. In the absence of literary evidence, the "*Lal Mahall*" can be suggested to

have been built before the death of the Shaikh in 725/1325 on the basis of stylistic details, the columns and the structure's orientation. The columns of the "*Lal Mahall*" resemble those found at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex. The building is also the only structure on the site that is not oriented towards Mecca in conformity with the grave of Nizamuddin (Figure 17). This suggests that the structure had no overt religious associations like that of a tomb or *masjid* and could have existed before the Shaikh was buried in the vicinity. The "*Lal Mahall*" is located far enough from the Shaikh's grave to not be considered a geographical locator in the historical sources. However, the structure could have been built after the Shaikh's death without any funerary or religious intent, although this would seem unlikely given the fame and popularity of the Shaikh.

The *baoli* consists of two levels. The first level is built with dressed stones (Figure 58) while the second level consists of a variety of Tughluq and Mughal era rubble masonry structures. The pre-Mughal *baoli* probably consisted of the first level with the stairs extending to the eastern and western ends and Maruf's passageway and adjacent buildings on the south end of the second level. The design of early *baolis* like the "*Gandak ki*" *baoli* in present-day Mehrauli (Figure 60) and the "*Ugrassan*" *baoli* suggest that the stairs at Nizamuddin *baoli* initially extended to the ends of the tank, although the platforms and tombs on the northeast and northwest corners may have been added soon after the construction of the first level. On the west side of the *baoli*, the two-story *masjid* and tomb known as the "*Chini ka buruj*" (Figure 61) and tomb of Bai Kokaldi are clearly later additions to the original structure since they are inscribed with dates from the sixteenth century.

The date and patron of the original *baoli* is surprisingly unclear. Sayyid Ahmad Khan reports that the *baoli* is believed to have been built in 721/1321 during Nizamuddin's lifetime. Carr Stephen relates a story, presumably local in origin that Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughluq Shah, who was busy building Tughluqabad, quarreled with the Shaikh over labourers working on the *baoli*. Like Khan, Stephen cites 721/1321 as the completion date. Ara believes the *baoli* was built between the Khalji era and the early Tughluq period but definitely before 781/1379-80.

It is highly unlikely that Nizamuddin commissioned the *baoli* for himself or for his neighbours. According to the *Qiwam-ul-aqaid* his *khanaqah* was located close to the river, making a step-well unnecessary. The site of Nizamuddin's grave and consequently the *baoli* is indicated to have been uninhabited, again making the *baoli* unnecessary. Furthermore, as in the case of the *Jamatkhana*, monumental constructions go against the early Chishti building trends and Nizamuddin's avoidance of amassing wealth based on his *khanaqah's* income.

The *baoli* can be assumed to have been constructed after the Shaikh's death in 725/1325 but before the completion of Malik Sayyid-ul-Hujjab Maruf's buildings in 781/1379-80. Since both the *Jamatkhana* and the *baoli* are not mentioned in the passages relating to the selection of Shaikh Nizamuddin's gravesite in the *Siyar-ul-auliya* and the *Qiwam-ul-aqaid*, both structures can be assumed to have been built after the Shaikh's death (725/1325). Also, like Nizamuddin's grave, the *baoli* is oriented towards Mecca, which suggests that its design complements that of the *dargah* (Figure 18). If the *baoli* had existed before the construction of Nizamuddin's grave then there would be no reason to orient it towards Mecca because it is not a place of worship. Since Maruf's buildings

rest on top of the *baoli* and conform to its design, the *baoli* must have existed before Maruf's structures were built in 781/1380.<sup>82</sup>

Given that the construction of a *baoli* represents a major effort and financial expense, only the wealthy could have financed its construction. The possible patrons within the proposed period of construction include Muhammad Tughluq, Firoz Shah, Maruf or an unknown individual. It is worth noting that there is a contemporary pattern of senior officials commissioning *baolis*, which suggests Maruf may have been the patron of the *baoli*.<sup>83</sup>

The existence of some buildings using Tughluq era construction methods and graves locally remembered to be those of Nizamuddin's companions are probably evidence of the site's early development. It may be in these buildings that the extended family of Nizamuddin resided after his death. The building referred to as a "*langarkhana*" (Figure 22) and the building south of Amir Khusrau's tomb (Figure 23) are similar to the *chillagah* (Figure 21), the building at Mahihpalpur (Figure 28) and other Tughluq era buildings in their proportions, design and use of rubble masonry and groin vaults. There are several unidentified tombs mentioned by Zafar Hasan as belonging to the "Afghan" style. One in particular consists of four walls supporting a dome and survives in good condition behind the screens east of the Shaikh's tomb (Figure 62).<sup>84</sup> A similar tomb seems to have existed on a platform east of the *baoli* entrance, but has disappeared under modern development. The "*Bara Khamba*" is an impressive tomb structure located near the "*Lal Mahall*" and present day Lodi Road. Similar to the Jahanpanah and Khirki *Masjids* and Maqbul's tomb, its construction includes dressed stone columns, rubble masonry walls, arches and domes.

To conclude, the chronology reveals two major categories of contributors to the architectural development of the site. There are the associates and dependents of the Shaikh and members of the ruling establishment. Large-scale development occurs two decades after the death of the Shaikh in the reign of Sultan Firoz Shah. These developments include a variety of types of structures: tombs, possible residential structures, a *jamatkhana*, a *baoli*, and a *masjid*. This suggests that the *dargah* served as a catalyst for architectural development facilitating an active human settlement as opposed to simply attracting additional funerary developments.

---

<sup>1</sup> The village's name is also transliterated as Ghiyathpur Ghiyas pur and Giaspur.

<sup>2</sup> The city's name is also transliterated as Kilugari, Kilughari, Gilu-Khari, Kilokhri and Kilokhiri.

<sup>3</sup> See J. A. Page, A Memoir on Kotla Firoz Shah (Delhi, 1937). 1354 is the date attributed to the *masjid jami* in Firozabad where the *Futuh-i-Firoz Shah*, which informs us of Firoz Shah's architectural endeavours, was inscribed.

<sup>4</sup> This is not to be confused with the *jamatkhana* in Nizamuddin's *khanqah* where Nizamuddin resided.

<sup>5</sup> This summary is based on the following scholarly studies: Sayyid A. Khan, *Asar al-sanadid* [1854 edition, in Urdu] trans. R. Nath as Monuments of Delhi: Historical Study (New Delhi: Ambika, 1978) 35-36; J.A. Page, ed. Monuments of Delhi: Lasting Splendour of the Great Mughals and Others, Maulvi Zafar Hasan, compiler, 4 vols. in 3 bindings (1917; reprint ed. New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 1997) 3:125, 137-181; Zafar Hasan, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10 A Guide to Nizamuddin [hereafter A Guide to Nizamuddin] (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922); Matsuo Ara, Dargahs in Medieval India: A Historical Study on the Shrines of Sufi Saints in Delhi with Reference to the Relationship between the Religious Authority and the Ruling Power (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1977 [in Japanese]) 282-289 ; and K. A Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya [hereafter Life of Nizamuddin] (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991) 197-201.

<sup>6</sup> *Siyar-ul-arifin* [Jamaluddin Kanboh, c. 1525 in Farsi] excerpt cited and trans. in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 198.

- 
- <sup>7</sup> Bruce Lawrence, Notes from a Distant Flute: The Extant Literature of pre-Mughal Indian Sufism (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1978) 71.
- <sup>8</sup> Lawrence, Notes from a Distant Flute 71.
- <sup>9</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 11.
- <sup>10</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 11.
- <sup>11</sup> Anthony Welch and Howard Crane, "The Tughluqs: Master Builders of the Delhi Sultanate." Muqarnas (1983) 1:163.
- <sup>12</sup> Nizami points out the usefulness of these texts in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin.
- <sup>13</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad [Amir Hasan, 1308-1322, in Farsi] trans. Bruce Lawrence as Morals for the Heart: Conversations of Shaykh Nizam ad-din Awliya recorded by Amir Hasan (New York: Paulist Press, 1992) 244.
- <sup>14</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani, 1359, in Farsi] trans. H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, The History of India as Told by its Own Historians, 30 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952-60?) 14:98.
- <sup>15</sup> Naryani Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires 1803-1931: Society, Government and Urban Growth (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981) 31.
- <sup>16</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 3.
- <sup>17</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 198.
- <sup>18</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 89.
- <sup>19</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 8.
- <sup>20</sup> Siyar-ul-auliya [Amir Khvurd, 1351-1382, in Farsi] excerpt cited and translated in K. A Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991) 197.
- <sup>21</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 8.
- <sup>22</sup> Lawrence, Notes from a Distant Flute 31.
- <sup>23</sup> Qiwam-ul-aqaid [Muhammad Jamal Qiwamuddin, 1354, in Farsi] cited in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 68.
- <sup>24</sup> Qiwam-ul-aqaid cited in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 108.
- <sup>25</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 128.

<sup>26</sup> Tarikh-i-Ferishta [Muhammad Qasim Ferishta, c. 1610, in Farsi] trans. J. Briggs as History of the Rise of the Mohammedan Power in India, 4 vols. (1829; reprint ed. Calcutta: 1909, 1966-71) 1:201, 216.

<sup>27</sup> To become a murid is a life-long commitment unless formally ended. Nath rules out the possibility of Khizr Khan as a patron because of his adolescence and lack of time on the throne.

<sup>28</sup> See K. A. Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar [hereafter Life of Fariduddin] (1955; reprint ed. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1973).

<sup>29</sup> See K. A. Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh-i-Dehli [hereafter Life of Nasiruddin] (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991).

<sup>30</sup> Siyar-ul-auliya cited and translated in P. M. Currie, The Shrine and Cult of Muin al-din Chishti of Ajmer (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989) 30-31.

<sup>31</sup> Nizami, Life of Fariduddin 54.

<sup>32</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 195. The text relates that a local ruler wishing to donate two gardens and some land to the Shaikh was refused. The Shaikh explains his position by saying that accepting the gift would undermine his credibility and be out of step with the conduct of earlier Chishti masters.

<sup>33</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 360.

<sup>34</sup> Siyar-ul-auliya cited in Nizami, Life of Fariduddin 58.

<sup>35</sup> Siyar-ul-auliya cited in Nizami, Life of Nasiruddin 86.

<sup>36</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 256.

<sup>37</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 111.

<sup>38</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 57.

<sup>39</sup> The structure is attributed to the patronage of a clerk (*naswinda*) named Ziauddin in the service of Malik Imad-ul-Mulk on the basis of the Jawami-ul-kalim in Nizami Life of Nizamuddin 57.

<sup>40</sup> Carr Stephen, Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi (1876; reprint ed. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1967) 104. Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 3.

<sup>41</sup> Qiwam-ul-aqaid cited and translated in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 78.

<sup>42</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 57 n.1.

- <sup>43</sup> Its worth noting that the buildings at the dargah of Nizamuddin that are similar to the *chillagah* may also be considered as possible residences for the Shaikh. However, they are still unlikely to be his residence for the same reasons argued above.
- <sup>44</sup> Similar vaulting systems are evident at Tughluqabad.
- <sup>45</sup> *Fawaid-ul-fuad* cited in Nizami, Life of Fariduddin 58.
- <sup>46</sup> *Siyar-ul-auliya* excerpt cited and translated in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 197.
- <sup>47</sup> *Masalik al-absar fi-mamalik al-amsar* [Shihab al-Din al-Umari, c.1344, in Arabic] trans. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi and Qazi Mohammad Ahmad, A Fourteenth Century Arab Account of India under Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq (Aligarh: Siddiqi Publishing House, 1971) 45. *Rehla* [Ibn Battuta, 1325-1354, in Arabic] trans. H. A. R. Gibb, The Travels of Ibn Battuta, 4 vols. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971) 3:654.
- <sup>48</sup> *Futuh-at-i-Firoz Shah* [c.1354, in Farsi] trans. as “Futuh-at-i Firoz Shah of Sultan Firoz Shah,” The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians, 8 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1963-) 3:384. See Nath, Monuments of Delhi 33 n. 38, for discussion of erroneous translation door or “chhaparkhat.” Nath is wrong since the Persian text unambiguously mentions doors.
- <sup>49</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 1.
- <sup>50</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 22.
- <sup>51</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 30.
- <sup>52</sup> These include Khwaja Rafiuddin, Mubasshir, Khwaja Iqbal, Khwaja Abu Bakr and Khwaja Abu Bakr Musara Buldal.
- <sup>53</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 154.
- <sup>54</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 156.
- <sup>55</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 156.
- <sup>56</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 159.
- <sup>57</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 162.
- <sup>58</sup> Khan 54. Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 7.
- <sup>59</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 88.
- <sup>60</sup> Khan 37. See passage quoted above. Strangely, Zafar Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 14, represents Khan’s views as follows. “On the authority of the *Tarikh-i-Farishta*, Syed

Ahmad Khan held that Prince Khizr Khan built the centre section of the Jamat Khana. Khan added that M. Tughluq built adjacent sections.”

<sup>61</sup> Futuh-at-i-Firoz Shah 384.

<sup>62</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 11, 14. This manuscript was in Hasan’s possession but appears to be unavailable.

<sup>63</sup> I have not been able to locate this comment, since Briggs has eliminated the discussion on saints in his translation. Nizami, A Guide to Nizamuddin 198, identifies the Siyar-ul-arifin, an earlier manuscript, as putting forward the same claim.

<sup>64</sup> Rehla [Ibn Battuta, 1325-1354, in Arabic] trans. Mahdi Husain, The Rehla of Ibn Battuta (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1976) 53.

<sup>65</sup> Ara 282-289. Ara gives a detailed discussion of the *Jamatkhana* in pages 651-656. Unfortunately I have not been able to translate this article.

<sup>66</sup> Nath, Monuments of Delhi 41 n. 10.

<sup>67</sup> The Siyar-ul-auliya does indicate several people had built tombs for the Shaikh hoping that he would choose to be buried there. See Nizami, The Life of Nizamuddin 88.

<sup>68</sup> Nuh Sipihir [Amir Khusrau] excerpt cited in R. Nath, History of Sultanate Architecture (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1978) 50.

<sup>69</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 197.

<sup>70</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Afif, c. 1398, in Farsi] trans. H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, The History of India as Told by its Own Historians, 30 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952-60?) 15:96-97.

<sup>71</sup> The central mihrabs at the Jahanpanah *Masjid* in present day Begampur and the *Lat ki masjid* in present day Hisar probably also had lotus bud but these have been broken. For the *Lat ki masjid*, see Mehrdad and Natalie Shokoohy, Hisar-i Firoza: Sultanate and early Mughal architecture in the district of Hisar, India (London: Monographs on Art Archaeology and Architecture, 1987) Plate VII a, b.

<sup>72</sup> The more intricate lattice-work suggests it was replaced during the Mughal period.

<sup>73</sup> See photograph (1:11aM.2) in T. Yamamoto, M. Ara, T. Tsukinowa, Delhi: Architectural Remains of the Sultanate Period, 3 vols. (Tokyo: 1978 [in Japanese]). The original entrance seems to have been replaced by later Mughal additions.

---

<sup>74</sup> *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* [Afif] 96. Welch also uses this reference to attribute the construction of the *Hauz Khas madrasah* to Malik Ghazi Shahna and Abdu-l Hakk in Welch, "A Medieval Centre of Learning in India" *Muqarnas* 13: 170

<sup>75</sup> Comment about possible Hindu labourers.

<sup>76</sup> Hasan, *A Guide to Nizamuddin* 37-38. I have not been able to locate this reference in my copy of Afif's text.

<sup>77</sup> There is also another *masjid* by the same name in Firozabad also commissioned by the *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah Maqbul. The term *kali* is derived either from the Urdu word for the colour black, *kala*, or the Farsi word for great, *kalan*. *Kali* was used to refer to both *masjids* by Khan (see Khan 38). Cunningham argues that the term *kala* came into use in recent times after the exterior plaster of the *masjid* in Firozabad deteriorated and accumulated black mold, a common condition in historic buildings in Delhi. See Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India: Four Reports Made During the Years 1862-63-64-65*. (reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1972) 220.

<sup>78</sup> Hasan, *A Guide to Nizamuddin* 36. Hasan provides the Persian text and a translation.

<sup>79</sup> See photograph of inscription (Fig. 80) in Ara 218.

<sup>80</sup> Hasan, *A Guide to Nizamuddin* 9. Hasan provides the Persian text and a translation.

<sup>81</sup> Khan 2-3.

<sup>82</sup> Should the *baoli* have already existed at the time of Nizamuddin's death its construction may have been related to the development of Kilughari.

<sup>83</sup> See Jennifer E. Lort, *Curious Seen: Baolis of the Delhi Sultanate* (Victoria, BC: University of Victoria, M.A. thesis, 1995) 103-123.

<sup>84</sup> Hasan, *List of Monuments* 159, No. 209.

## **Chapter 4 : Beliefs, Uses and Patrons - The Role of the Development of the *Dargah* and its Surrounding Buildings in Delhi Sultanate Society**

In Chapter 2, the following seven major themes of Delhi Sultanate history applicable to the Delhi region, were introduced: the relationship between Muslims, Hindus and other populations settled in the Indian subcontinent; the Mongol intrusions; economic prosperity; political and religious authority; Islamic faith and principles; and Delhi as an imperial capital . It is useful to view these themes as ongoing contests, or speaking more broadly, exchanges of ideas and concepts taking place between rulers, the *mashaikh*, the elite, Muslims and the non-Muslim public in a variety of media and influenced by the political and social structure of society in the Delhi region. An important aspect of this exchange is the development of the built environment, a process that inherently privileges those who command the resources to sponsor architectural commissions over other members of society. Through their commissions, patrons influence the patterns of human activity, settlement and public perception. This chapter attempts to show how the early construction events at the *dargah* of Nizamuddin are part of the exchange of ideas and concepts regarding political and religious authority and the beliefs and practices of Islamic faith in the capital region and Delhi Sultanate period. The key participants in this exchange include Shaikh Nizamuddin himself, the people who interact with the buildings including the Shaikh's dependents, disciples and *murids* and the patrons of the buildings.

In the case of the development of the *dargah*, popular beliefs in the spiritual status of the *mashaikh* in this life and the Islamic notion of the Hereafter, combined with the

Shaikh's actual popularity during his lifetime, provided the catalyst for more elaborate architectural development at the Shaikh's gravesite, encouraging its role as a centre for religious activity in ways that emphasize the relationship between patrons and the Shaikh, facilitating the state's increasing attempts to control the way Islamic faith was believed and practiced. The commissions affirm Shaikh Nizamuddin's popularity, religious authority and sanctity, his historical importance and the notion of his gravesite being a sanctified site, especially appropriate for religious activities, while establishing a role for Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq in the determination of these activities. In addition, the commissions facilitate the representations of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq, the *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani, the *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah Maqbul and the *Malik Sayyid-ul-Hujjab* Maruf's representation of themselves as pious individuals, upholding the Islamic tradition.

### **Beliefs**

People's beliefs shape the way they perceive and interact with their physical environment. Beliefs regarding Quranic notions of true believers and the afterlife, the efficacy of the *mashaikh* in spiritual and material matters, the spiritual accomplishments of Shaikh Nizamuddin and the properties of tombs and gravesites would have established the way people perceived and interacted with the *dargah* and its surrounding buildings.

The Quran introduces key concepts, which form the basis of beliefs in the Shaikh's continued existence and interaction with the living. The Quran maintains that true believers would be rewarded in the afterlife and that *jinn*s and angels can interact with both spiritual and material realms particularly at times of death.<sup>1</sup> Since Shaikh

Nizamuddin is considered an excellent example of a true believer, he would have been thought to have been highly rewarded in the afterlife and able to interact with both spiritual and material worlds.

Briefly, the Quran posits that following death there is another life and human beings are said to return to God and face judgement for their beliefs and actions.<sup>2</sup> Disbelievers will inhabit the fire while believers will inhabit gardens with water.<sup>3</sup> Belief is asserted through the constant remembrance of God who confers blessings, with angels and jinn that act as his agents.<sup>4</sup> The Quran also indicates that partial knowledge of an infinite, omnipresent, all-knowing, all-powerful God responsible for human existence is granted to the favoured such as the Prophets. This includes Prophet Muhammad, whose role as Messenger is consistently affirmed.<sup>5</sup> It is also within God's power to make the dead speak.<sup>6</sup>

The Quran also makes reference to the *auliya* (believers that are friends or allies of God), a reference that came to be used in Sufi literature to refer to one who had achieved closeness to God through complete absorption with thoughts of the Divine.<sup>7</sup> These ideas are most clearly stated in the *Kashf-ul-Mahjub* by al-Hujwiri, a text that was an important part of the discussions of *mashaikh* in South Asia and in the education of Shaikh Nizamuddin.<sup>8</sup> Amir Hasan, Nizamuddin's *murid* and recorder of his conversations, used the term *auliya* when referring to Shaikh Nizamuddin, calling him the *Sultan-ul-Auliya* (King of the Friends of God).<sup>9</sup>

The *mashaikh* were generally believed to be endowed with supernatural abilities. Isami believed the very existence of the world was maintained through the existence of spiritually endowed individuals and that each city had one of these individuals.<sup>10</sup>

Indifferent to materialist concerns, these individuals, by virtue of their presence, prevented calamities from occurring. Ibn Battuta visited several khanaqahs and tombs in his travels throughout India and believed that one could profit from an encounter with a blessed shaikh and that they could perform miracles.<sup>11</sup>

The *mashaikh* were also thought of as spiritual guides (*pirs* or *murshids*) to people that offered themselves as murids. In the fourteenth century, this relationship was documented in the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*, Ibn Battuta's own account of becoming a *murid* and other works like the *Siyar-ul-auliya*.<sup>12</sup> Late twentieth century scholar Desiderio Pinto published an anthropological study of the relationship between *pirs* and their murids in 1995. Pinto observed that oaths of allegiance (*bayat*) were taken by people seeking guidance from their *pir*. The *pir* would then take responsibility for the spiritual guidance and protection of the *murid*, having complete authority to instruct the *murid* in whatever way he saw fit.<sup>13</sup> The *Fawaid-ul-fuad* suggests that the relationship between *pir* and *murid* extended beyond death. For example, Shaikh Nizamuddin's regular visits to Baba Farid continued as visits to the grave of Baba Farid after he died.<sup>14</sup>

The following excerpt from a *farman* by Sultan Alauddin Khalji to Prince Farid Khan written by Shaikh Nizamuddin's close friend Amir Khusrau clearly shows that the *mashaikh* were highly respected and a potent political force that rulers aimed to control.

As for the missionary work carried on by the *mashaikh* (Sufi saints), it has merit, lasting till the day of resurrection and these saintly people become immortal due to their piety and righteousness. The *Mashaikh* actually serve as the foundations of the edifice of religion and pillars for the support of the palace of Truth. Nay, they are the pillars for the support of heaven because it has no pillars of its own. Their blessing and prayer increase the power and grandeur of the Empire and also strengthen its foundations. Verse:

The building crumbles that has no blessing of the pious.

The business of the world and the functioning of the state depends upon the work of the righteous people and they are to be trusted like the pillars of iron for the support of the curtains of royal edifice. Even those whose honesty is doubtful are not removed from the royal threshold like the moth eaten (wooden) pillars, in case they are helpful in the maintenance of royal authority. Verse:

As the pillars become rotten, the tent falls down.<sup>15</sup>

The death of any of the *mashaikh* was perceived to be a great calamity for society. Barani saw the death of a shaikh as a negative omen, causing ill events to take place. The execution of Sidi Maula, according to Barani, caused a storm and a drought.<sup>16</sup> Isami thought that the absence or death of these pious men indicated the advent of misfortune for a region. He interpreted the death of Nizamuddin as one of the causes of the debilitation of Delhi following Muhammad's transfer of the capital to Deogir.<sup>17</sup>

The *mashaikh* were criticized as well as adored. Baba Farid was accused of turning himself into an object of worship.<sup>18</sup> Shaikh Nizamuddin was physically attacked and had to defend the practices of his *murids* prostrating before him and of hosting *sama* sessions at his *khanaqah*.<sup>19</sup> One Shaikh was rumoured to have had immoral thoughts towards his own daughter.<sup>20</sup> The Chishtis sometimes disapproved of accepting government support like the Suhrawardis did. Furthermore, succession of khalifas was not without argument.<sup>21</sup> In the case of Baba Farid, his sons objected to Nizamuddin's succession as the principal *khalifa* of the Chishti order.<sup>22</sup> Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq punished and executed the *mashaikh* that did not adhere to his wishes.<sup>23</sup> Barani subtly criticized Shaikh Nizamuddin for accepting members of all classes as *murids*.

As a teacher and *pir* to the masses and the elite, Shaikh Nizamuddin himself helped create perceptions of the *mashaikh*. In the *khilafatnama* (succession document) which he gave to his disciple Shamsuddin Yahya, Nizamuddin wrote, "My own Shaikh

was known over the world for his saintliness and his miracles were known everywhere and in his meditations he reached the unseen world and was a lover of God.”<sup>24</sup>

Nizamuddin saw the *mashaikh* as beings, capable of transcending normal human limitations due to their spiritual purity. He discussed the concepts of sainthood (*wilayat* and *walayat*), indicating that only some of the *mashaikh* were favoured by God.<sup>25</sup> The Shaikh believed that these favourites of God were capable of miracles undecipherable by the intellect (*karamat*).<sup>26</sup> According to the Nizamuddin, some of the *mashaikh* experienced occasional moments of direct insight into the Divine.<sup>27</sup> As a result, the *mashaikh* were authorities on religious conduct. Capable of superhuman feats of prayer, they also had the ability to read minds and intuit the future.<sup>28</sup> They could interact with beings from the spiritual world and intercede from the spiritual world once they had passed away.<sup>29</sup> They could issue *tawiz*, protective amulets that provide blessings for the bearer.<sup>30</sup> Their very presence facilitated the abilities of others to sense the presence of the divine. They possessed intuitive knowledge of the true workings of the natural and social world and could surpass natural laws such as gravity.<sup>31</sup> They could also cure childlessness. Occasionally these diverse qualities and abilities would be compared with those of Hindus *yogins*.<sup>32</sup>

Shaikh Nizamuddin was viewed by the people of his community in terms of the Quran, the Prophets (Jesus and Muhammad) and popular notions of the *mashaikh*.<sup>33</sup> In keeping with the Chishti tradition, Shaikh Nizamuddin pursued a life devoted to prayer and kindness modeled on the Prophet’s life as it was remembered. He attained widespread recognition for his spiritual virtues and was sought out as a guide on this path. He was regarded as someone comparable to Prophet Muhammad in virtue and

spiritual greatness. Amir Hasan compares him to Prophet Muhammad and describes him using the Quranic phrase, “We have not sent you except as a mercy to the universe” (21:107).<sup>34</sup> The patron of the buildings on the *baoli*, Maruf, refers to Shaikh Nizamuddin in the building’s inscription as a “friend of God [*wali*],” the “chief [shaikh] of the world,” and “with the breath of Jesus.”<sup>35</sup> Isami comparing Nizamuddin to the Prophet Muhammad describes the Shaikh as the last of the spiritual guides, the chosen man of God and someone upon whom the region’s prosperity depended.<sup>36</sup> Barani credited Shaikh Nizamuddin with effecting a transformation in the morality and religious focus of the Delhi populace.<sup>37</sup>

Following Shaikh Nizamuddin’s death, people’s beliefs about his spiritual greatness no doubt influenced the way his tomb was perceived and interacted with. Beliefs about the abilities of the *mashaikh*, the extraordinary spirituality of Nizamuddin in particular, including his ability to benefit *murids* and the needy in this life and the next, were probably expressed at his grave. Since Muslim beliefs include the notion of a life in the Hereafter, Shaikh Nizamuddin would still have been considered alive in some sense, as suggested by a story the Shaikh himself told. The story asserts that the deceased never completely absent themselves from the material world.<sup>38</sup> Disciples and *murids* of the Shaikh who visited him regularly during his lifetime no doubt continued to visit his grave bringing their memories and perceptions of the Shaikh during his lifetime to the grave, where his spiritual presence would have been felt among the living.

Desiderio Pinto’s late twentieth century account of the practices at the *dargah* of Nizamuddin reveals that many of the historic perceptions of the *mashaikh* are currently still applied to the gravesite. This further strengthens the argument for having been the

case following the Shaikh's death. Many people at the *dargah* assert that the Shaikh is alive in a non-corporeal sense and pray to the Shaikh for his assistance.<sup>39</sup> He speaks and appears to people through their dreams. It is believed that blessings can be transferred from the grave of Nizamuddin to individuals via objects like the *chaddar* (cloth covering the grave-marker).<sup>40</sup> Similarly tawizes issued at the *dargah* are thought to be made effective by the Shaikh.<sup>41</sup> His spirit helps feed the thousands of people that visit the *dargah*.<sup>42</sup> Nizamuddin's presence is not the only one sensed since *pirs* at the *dargah* also appeal to *maukils*, spirits, *jinns*, *parits*, *hamzas*, ghosts, saints and *devas* (*Kali*, *Laksmi*, *Radha*, *Ganesh*, *Shankar*, *Hanuman*).<sup>43</sup>

In the same way that Shaikhs Baba Farid, Nizamuddin and Nasiruddin considered the practice of praying at tombs beneficial, Pinto observes that prayer at the tomb of Nizamuddin is clearly considered to lead to positive benefits. One *pir* prescribed daily prayers at the Shaikh's grave for forty days (*chilla*) for his *murid* in order to improve his circumstances.<sup>44</sup> People who have difficulty selecting a *pir* they trust, continue to make the Shaikh their *pir*, taking an oath of allegiance (*bayat*) at his grave. It is believed that *murids* should continue to visit the grave of their *pir* instead of seeking a new one.<sup>45</sup> It is also understood that after their *murids* die, *pirs* can protect their *murids* by saying prayers over their graves.<sup>46</sup>

Given the relative lack of evidence in contemporary historical sources, the interactions and perceptions of people with Hindu and other beliefs<sup>47</sup> with the *dargah* of Nizamuddin can only be speculated upon. However, there are several indications of physical and conceptual interactions between Hindus and Muslims of the period suggesting that the *dargah* may have been regarded in terms of a fusion of Hindu and

Muslim beliefs. Shaikh Nizamuddin is thought to have interacted with many Hindus on account of his *khanaqah* being located in the Delhi environs, which probably had a higher Hindu population than the cities.<sup>48</sup> Isami suggests that Delhi became populated with Hindus following the exodus of the Muslim elite to Deogir.<sup>49</sup> Amir Khusrau, the famed poet of India and Nizamuddin's friend, is believed to have written in Hindi a verse suggesting that Muslims study Hindu examples of worship.<sup>50</sup> Shaikh Nizamuddin tells a story about a Muslim convert who had a talent for singing Hindi songs. He eventually learned to recite the Quran beautifully. A *murid* at the Shaikh's *khanaqah* asked for his view on the occurrence of Hindus professing the Muslim *shahada* without practicing Muslim prayer rituals.<sup>51</sup> Sultan Firoz Shah mentions that many Hindus professed the *shahada*, following his offer to not assess the poll tax on Hindu converts.<sup>52</sup> Afif relates an incident involving a Brahmin in Delhi who persisted in "worshipping idols" attracting both Hindus and Muslims to his home.<sup>53</sup> A Sanskrit inscription dated 769/1368 on Firoz Shah's repair to the *Qutb Minar* refers to the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* as a temple of *Visvakarma*, the divine architect of the universe.<sup>54</sup> Reference is also made to an architect Nana Salha who was the son of Chahada Dera Pala.<sup>55</sup> The *Fawaid-ul-fuad* also mentions one instance where a Hindu accompanied a Muslim friend visiting Shaikh Nizamuddin's *khanaqah*.<sup>56</sup> If this occurred on a regular basis then Hindus would have been exposed to concepts of the *mashaikh* and tombs. If the *dargah* was a popular destination, then the local Hindus may have been attracted by the economic opportunity the flow of people presented. The *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani, who was a Hindu convert to Islam, was buried at the *dargah*. The venerative practices, which probably took place at Nizamuddin's gravesite, incorporated pre-Muslim rituals described in the *Puranas* and

the *Vedas*. If present-day beliefs are important to consider, then Hindus seem to adopt similar attitudes and perceptions towards tombs as their Muslim counterparts.

Shaikh Nizamuddin occasionally used Hindu religious ideas to communicate a point. He told a story of an exchange of religious ideas between a Hindu *yogi* and a Muslim shaikh to communicate a point about pursuing spirituality and controlling animal urges. The Brahmin concept of *zunnar* was used to teach Amir Hasan Sijzi not to worry about his financial circumstances.<sup>57</sup>

It has been suggested that the *mashaikh* and their khanaqahs occupied similar roles in Hindu society as the yogis and ashrams, one reason being that the *mashaikh* seem to have adopted some of the ascetic practices of the yogis.<sup>58</sup> For example, one Shaikh mentioned in the *Fawaid-ul-fuad* suspended himself upside down and performed *namaz*, believing that Prophet Muhammad had done so.<sup>59</sup>

While he was living, Shaikh Nizamuddin communicated to his murids ideas about graves and tombs in general that were most likely applied to his own tomb. He taught that graves were sites of spiritual activity, where the events of the spiritual world could interact with the events of the material world. Graves were sites for miraculous happenings. Tombs were sites where the soul of the deceased could communicate with the pious and faithful and exert changes over the material world.<sup>60</sup> The graves of those inclined to learn the Quran were visited by angels bestowing this knowledge.<sup>61</sup> Angels also moved the graves of the pious to more sacred locations such as Mecca.<sup>62</sup> In contrast, the graves of sinners were engulfed in flames.

There is little evidence clearly indicating how the Shaikh's tomb was actually regarded. The ambiguous inscription in the "*Kali*" *Masjid* states, "[T]his mosque was

built by the son of the slave [*bandeh zadeh*] of the threshold [*dargah*] which is as exalted in dignity as the sky and is the sanctuary of the world.”<sup>63</sup> If the *dargah* referred to here is the Shaikh’s tomb and not the tomb of *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani, then the Shaikh’s tomb was regarded as a spiritual refuge. One grave near the *dargah* is reputed to belong to Khwaja Abdurrahman a resident of the Shaikh’s *khanaqah*.<sup>64</sup> It is oriented towards the Shaikh’s tomb as opposed to towards Mecca, suggesting that the Shaikh’s tomb be regarded almost as sanctified as the Kaba. Little can be said about the perception of the buildings around the *dargah*. The only clue lies in the *Siyar-ul-auliya*, which suggests that the buildings were raised through divine blessing and favour for Nizamuddin. It states,

... God Almighty made mysterious arrangement for lofty buildings and imposing structures [domes/tombs], unrivalled for their beauty and elegance in the whole world, to come up there [at the grave of Shaikh Nizamuddin].<sup>65</sup>

### **Rituals and Uses**

It is through the use and rituals conducted at the site that the importance of the Shaikh was sustained in the memory of Delhi Sultanate society. Unfortunately, there is relatively little data that directly describes how the site and buildings surrounding the gravesite of Shaikh Nizamuddin were used. However, there is data available on contemporary rituals and the use of building types, allowing the formation of useful hypotheses about the uses of the buildings at the site.

Clearly, the gravesite of Shaikh Nizamuddin was first used to conduct his funeral. The following describes the conventional burial rituals for Muslims that probably took place at the funeral:<sup>66</sup> Those nearest the deceased wash the body, which is dressed and wrapped in a white sheet. A procession follows and the funerary bier is taken to the

gravesite. The body is placed next to a grave oriented parallel to the *qiblah* so that the face of the deceased can be turned to Mecca. The *Salat Alal-mayyit* (funeral prayer) is recited only at the time of death by an *imam* or relative facing Mecca with the body laid crosswise in front of him and with the assembly behind him. After declaring *Allahu Akbar* (God is Great), either the opening chapter of the Quran (*Surah-al-Fatiha*) or praises to God according to Hanafi and Maliki schools of thought is recited. *Allahu Akbar* is recited again as well as the *Al-salawat Al-ibrahimiyya*, which is based on *Surahs* 33:56 and 11:73. A third recital of *Allahu Akbar* is followed by locally chosen prayers (*dua*) for the deceased. The fourth and final repetitions of *Allahu Akbar* conclude with a final salutation. The body is lowered into the grave. An old custom is to recite *Ayat* 20:55 while throwing dirt into the grave.<sup>67</sup> It is customary to return to the grave of family members or respected people on the anniversary of the death (*urs*), *Milad-i-nabi* (Prophet Muhammad's birthday), *Idd-ul-fitr* (Festival of Charity), *Idd-ul-azhar* (Festival of Sacrifice) and during times of personal need or contemplation.

Ibn Battuta observed and wrote about additions to the burial ceremonies unique to India based on the ceremony held for his own infant daughter who passed away. Ibn Battuta noted, "It is their custom for the people of India to observe in regard to their dead a ceremonial similar to that observed in their lifetime."<sup>68</sup> A senior official in Sultan Muhammad's court arranged the funeral ceremony for Ibn Battuta's daughter. On the morning of the third day following the burial, family members, friends and members of the religious classes attended the grave. A temporary structure (*saracha*) was erected over the grave and carpets and silk fabrics were laid out around the grave. Yellow and white flowers, branches of orange and lemon trees with their fruits intact or tied, dried

fruits and coconut were heaped on the grave.<sup>69</sup> The people who had gathered sat near the grave and professional Quran readers recited the sacred text. A *qazi* stood up to speak about the deceased and blessed the Sultan to which the assembly rose, prostrated and sat down. A prayer by the *qazi* followed. Rose-water was sprayed over the assembly and sherbet and betel were distributed followed by the presentation of robes of honour to Ibn Battuta from the Sultan. It is worth noting that Sultan Bahlul Lodi prohibited the ritual of returning to the grave three days following a death, thinking that such practices were too expensive since Afghan families were very large.<sup>70</sup>

Some aspects of the burial rituals recorded by Ibn Battuta in the fourteenth century resemble the pre-Islamic Hindu venerative practices recorded by al-Biruni in the eleventh century. Referring to the temple at Somanath in southwestern Sindh, he wrote, "Every day they brought there a jug of Ganges water and a basket of flowers from Kashmir. They believed that the *linga* of Somanath would cure persons of every inveterate illness and heal every desperate and incurable disease."<sup>71</sup> He noted that religious texts like the *Samhita* instructed the faithful to,

...offer sacrifice called *argha* and spread on the earth what you happen to have, roses and fragrant flowers as they grow in the country. Put on them what you think fit, gold, garments, jewels of the sea, and offer incense, saffron, and sandalwood, musk and camphor, together with an ox and a cow, and many dishes and sweetmeats.<sup>72</sup>

Al-Biruni also noted that the *Visnu Dharma* said, "Worship God, him alone, and venerate him, approach him in the place of worship with presents like perfume and flowers."<sup>73</sup>

A combination of burial rituals common across Muslim societies and those unique to South Asia probably took place at Shaikh Nizamuddin's funeral. The *Siyar-ul-auliya* indicates that Shaikh Nizamuddin died at his *khanaqah*, where his body was probably

prepared for burial. A procession, probably from the *khanaqah* to the current gravesite, took place since eyewitnesses report Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq helped carry the funerary bier of the Shaikh.<sup>74</sup> Shaikh Ruknuddin Multani probably performed the funeral prayers.<sup>75</sup> Although there is no direct evidence, people would have returned to the Shaikh's grave three days after his burial and spread flowers over the Shaikh's grave in the manner that Ibn Battuta describes. If current practices are an indication, this was probably part of the ritual of visiting Shaikh Nizamuddin's *dargah* on other occasions as well.<sup>76</sup> People today purchase and spread flowers and other objects (*nazrana*) over the Shaikh's grave to express their devotion (Figure 63).

In addition to the rituals that took place at Shaikh Nizamuddin's grave, the area surrounding the tomb was used as a burial ground for some of Shaikh Nizamuddin's closest associates, followers and perhaps admirers. Amir Khusrau was apparently buried near the Shaikh and *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani was buried somewhat further. The *Thamarat-ul-quds* suggests that a member of the royal family built a tomb near the Shaikh's tomb that was never used.<sup>77</sup> Several other close associates of the Shaikh are reputed to be buried there as well.

Curiously, Ibn Battuta, who stayed in the capital shortly after the repopulating of Delhi following Sultan Muhammad's attempt to relocate the Muslim elite to Deogir, did not indicate that Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb was heavily visited. This is surprising since Ibn Battuta recorded in detail his visit to the *dargah* of Baba Farid in Ajodhan and noted that the tomb of Qutbuddin Bhaktiyar Kaki was well visited.<sup>78</sup> It is possible that the population movements of Muslims between Delhi and Deogir disrupted visits to Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb. However, Shaikh Gesu Daraz informs us that Nizamuddin's

*dargah*, in addition to the *dargah* of Shaikh Qutbuddin Bhaktiyar Kaki, continued to be looked after following the exodus to Deogir.<sup>79</sup>

The established social practice of visiting tombs (*ziyarat*) probably applied to the Shaikh's tomb. The tomb was most likely used by men and groups of women to complete their observance of holy days and for social outings. Speaking about the inhabitants of the capital, Firoz Shah wrote, "On holy days women riding in *palankins*, or carts, or litters, or mounted horses or mules, or in large parties on foot, went out of the city to the tombs."<sup>80</sup> Firoz Shah prohibited groups of women from visiting the tombs, concerned that men making promiscuous advances were compromising the women's honour.

The occasions regarded as holy days are mentioned in Ibn Battuta's account of his administration of the tomb of Sultan Qutbuddin. The occasions mentioned include *Idd-ul-Fitr*, *Idd-ul-Azhar*, the Prophet Muhammad's birthday, the feast of the pilgrimage, the day of the *Ashura*, the night of mid-*Shaban* and the death anniversary or (*urs*) of the deceased. Nizamuddin's successor, Shaikh Nasiruddin, appears to have assumed the responsibility for organizing celebrations at Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb.<sup>81</sup>

Since Shaikh Nizamuddin guided large numbers of people in their religious practice, it is likely that his *murids* and followers also used his tomb in the way he describes tombs being used in the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*. The Shaikh believed that people could have their needs addressed by turning to the graves of holy men. Like the Hindus who turned to the *linga* at Somanath, the Shaikh believed that visiting tombs could help improve the health of a sick individual. He himself was instructed to visit tombs by his mother and Baba Farid during their illnesses.<sup>82</sup>

The tomb of Shaikh Nizamuddin was probably used as a destination for pilgrimage as it is today. Ibn Battuta's travels across India indicate how the religious classes traveled the network of khanaqahs and tombs of the *mashaikh* paying their respects along the way. Nizamuddin saw tombs of the eminent as a substitute for the Kaba. He found his desire to make pilgrimage to Mecca disappeared once he visited the grave of Baba Farid, implying that the spiritual benefit to be obtained from the visiting the Kaba was the same as visiting the grave of a spiritually enlightened individual like Baba Farid.<sup>83</sup> Shaikh Nizamuddin continued his visits to Baba Farid after his death by visiting his grave, maintaining that the *pir-murid* relationship continued beyond death. Like Shaikhs Baba Farid and Nasiruddin, Nizamuddin also viewed gravesites as sites conducive for prayer. Zaynuddin Shirazi was a disciple of one of Nizamuddin's khalifas, Shaikh Burhanuddin Gharib, and visited the Nizamuddin's tomb, having come from the Deccan.<sup>84</sup> Every morning for two months, Zaynuddin went to the Shaikh's tomb to recite prayers. This was in keeping with the Chishti tendency to view gravesites, particularly those of the *mashaikh*, as being especially suitable for supererogatory prayers.

A variety of other activities may have also taken place at the *dargah*. A disciple of Shaikh Nasiruddin confessed that he tied strings (*mannat*) to the tomb of Alauddin Khalji, hoping his wishes would come true.<sup>85</sup> This practice takes place today at the tombs of Nizamuddin and Amir Khusrau. Some people gave *bayat* at the grave of a shaikh. Like Baba Farid, Shaikh Nizamuddin disapproved of this practice indicating that it was known to occur.<sup>86</sup> According to Pinto, people today take *bayat* at the grave of the Shaikh since they can not find a *pir* that they respect or because they are uneasy with the authority a living *pir* would have over their lives.<sup>87</sup>

Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq seems to have used the *dargah* of Nizamuddin for his own purposes. He was in the habit of visiting various tombs around Delhi as the following passage from Afif suggests:

Before the Sultan departed on his expedition he made pilgrimages to the saints and holy men who were buried near Dehli, as other great kings had done before him, to invoke the assistance of their prayers. This was the usual practice of the Sultan. Whenever he was about to make a journey for a month or two, he used to visit the shrines of holy men and famous kings, to invoke their aid and to cast himself on their protection, not trusting to his own power and greatness.<sup>88</sup>

Afif also relates an incident where the soon to be appointed Governor of Gujerat, Shamsuddin Damghani, proved his allegiance to Firoz Shah by lifting the *chaddar* at Shaikh Nizamuddin's grave.<sup>89</sup>

The tomb of Shaikh Nizamuddin and its surrounding court was probably used for *sama* gatherings. *Sama* gatherings were an important part of Chishti gatherings and took place regularly at the Shaikh's *khanaqah* while he was alive despite criticism from the *ulama*. Shaikh Shamsuddin Yahya, a *muhadith* and *khalifa* of Shaikh Nizamuddin attended a *sama* held at the domed tomb and perhaps under the "great arch" of the "Khizri" *Masjid (Jamatkhana)* some time after the Shaikh's death.<sup>90</sup> Mian Zabaruddin, the brother of Mian Zainuddin, the senior administrator of Sultan Sikander Lodi, visited the shrine every Wednesday and held a *sama* party, presumably with scholars, shaikhs, Sufis, poets, scientists, *Qawals* (singers) and musicians.<sup>91</sup> Today *sama* takes place at the *dargah* nearly evening and always on Thursdays.

Like the Shaikh's *khanaqah*, the tomb of Shaikh Nizamuddin was used to gather and distribute donations. Shaikh Nizamuddin instructed his dependents, who were concerned about their economic survival, to live at his tomb following his death. He

anticipated that the continuous stream of donations received by his *khanaqah* would continue to be received at his gravesite following his death.<sup>92</sup> Nizamuddin's prediction was not without foundation since Baba Farid's sons deliberately chose to bury their father at their family's residence instead of the local cemetery so that they could benefit economically from the numerous visitors that were anticipated.<sup>93</sup> There is one clear case of a donation being made at the *dargah* of Nizamuddin. Shaikh Qutbuddin Munnawar from Hansi distributed 1000 *tankas* given to him by Firoz Shah, on behalf of Sultan Muhammad, at the tombs of Shaikhs Nizamuddin and Qutbuddin Bhaktiyar Kaki and to Shaikh Nasiruddin.<sup>94</sup>

The activities of the *jamatkhana*s in the *khanaqah*s of Shaikhs Baba Farid, Nizamuddin and Nasiruddin probably inspired the activities in Firoz Shah's *Jamatkhana*. Texts indicate that travelers and junior residents of the *khanaqah*s of the three Chishti shaikhs slept in the multipurpose *jamatkhana*s and conducted Islamic ritual prayers there. Firoz Shah's *Jamatkhana* divides these activities into three distinct chambers (Figure 18). The Quranic epigraphs and *mihrab* indicate that the central chamber was considered a more sanctified area where ritual prayers were to be conducted. The north and south side-chambers were probably intended as a place for visitors and residents to sleep (Figure 48). People at the *dargah* today refer to the side chambers as *musafirkhanas*, which translates as "rooms for travelers" and the neighbourhood west of the north chamber is also referred to as *Musafirkhana*. Residents near the *dargah* suggest that the north and south chambers may have been designated for men and women respectively. Today, the chambers are generally empty during the day and used occasionally for meals.

Whoever commissioned the *baoli* near the Shaikh's tomb provided a strong catalyst for human settlement, tomb pilgrimage and Islamic ritual prayer around the *dargah*. The tomb site was located far enough from the River Jumna to necessitate a new water supply for people wanting to live near the tomb. The development of the large *baoli* meant that a community could be sustained at the site. Stepwells in the subcontinent were largely multipurpose and used for bathing, laundry, gathering drinking water and cooking. For visiting Muslims and nearby residents who used the *Jamatkhana* for their ritual prayers, the *baoli* was probably used for *wuzu*, ritual washing before the obligatory prayers. At some point in time, the water at the *baoli* began to be used for its reputed healing powers or spiritual benefit on account of its closeness to the *dargah* but it is unclear when this begins.<sup>95</sup>

The “*Kali*” *Masjid* commissioned by *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah Maqbul was no doubt used by a local Muslim population primarily for Friday prayers. The nearby tomb of his father may have been the site of great activity and funded by considerable endowments. The court of the tomb (Figure 17) was very large and must have been developed to enclose some type of activities. These may have resembled Ibn Battuta's description of the activities at Sultan Qutbuddin's tomb that were financed by Sultan Muhammad.<sup>96</sup> A staff of Quran readers and other tomb attendants (*arbab*) was employed by Ibn Battuta to care for Sultan Qutbuddin's tomb.

### **Patrons**

The architectural commissions of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq, *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah Maqbul and *Malik Sayyid-ul-Hujab* Maruf at

the Nizamuddin *dargah* complex are part of Delhi Sultanate social exchange of ideas and concepts regarding Islamic beliefs and political and religious authority. The tomb commission supports pilgrimage to Nizamuddin's grave. Human settlement in the area is encouraged with the development of a convenient water supply (the *baoli*) and prayer facilities (the "*Kali*" *Masjid* and *Jamatkhana*). In addition to enhancing the social memory of Shaikh Nizamuddin, the commissions facilitate the elite's desire to secure spiritual rewards for themselves, lend political sanction to the religious activities of pilgrims, the custodians of the tomb and the Chishti tradition while restructuring Chishti principles and *khanaqah* activities.

Rooted in the tomb building traditions of Delhi Sultanate society, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq's commission of Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb contributes to the definition of the role of the *mashaikh* in Delhi Sultanate society. Legitimizing the importance of Shaikh Nizamuddin's life and teachings, the state-sponsored commission is a basic encouragement of his perpetual memory but is also a means for the Sultan to represent himself as a religiously inclined ruler.

Delhi Sultanate society had a long-standing tradition of erecting gravesites and tombs. Tombs were built for rulers such as Sultans Altamsh and Ghiyasuddin Tughluq, consisting of a square planned chamber supporting a dome. Ibn Batutta described the cemeteries of Delhi as consisting of grave-markers with *qiblah* niches and domed structures.<sup>97</sup> He also mentioned the erection of a large royal tomb and the resources spent on staffing the tomb as well as a small tomb commissioned for his infant daughter by an official in Sultan Muhammad's court. The *Rehla*, the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*, the *Siyar-ul-auliya* and the *Futuh-i-Firoz Shah* all indicate that tombs were heavily used.

Sultan Muhammad's commission encourages Delhi Sultanate traditions of using tombs, particularly those of rulers and the *mashaikh*, as active sites for prayer and ritual. By creating a focal point in the landscape, Sultan Muhammad's tomb for Shaikh Nizamuddin facilitates subsequent pilgrimages to the tomb and further encourages the fusion of religious worship and tomb visitation. The absence of any further commissions at the site suggests that additional activities were not actively encouraged at the tomb site. Aside from the addition of the grave of Amir Khusrau, there is no further construction activity at the site for over twenty-five years until Firoz Shah becomes Sultan. Part of this lapse is explained by the exodus of possible patrons to Deogir three years after the Shaikh's death. Sultan Muhammad had compelled the Muslim elite to relocate to Deogir between 729/1328 and 735-7/1334-6.

Given the tomb building tradition in the Delhi Sultanate period and the popularity of Shaikh Nizamuddin, the Muslim public would have expected a structure to adorn the Shaikh's grave. Shaikh Nizamuddin was a major presence in Delhi Sultanate society. He initiated an unprecedented numbers of murids and stimulated religious inquiry and practice on a large scale in the Delhi area.<sup>98</sup> He not only attracted the masses but the elites as well, including Sultans and their families. In receipt of a continuous stream of donations, his *khanaqah* became a major centre for the redistribution of wealth. Responding to public expectation, Sultan Muhammad's commission can be seen as a self-perceived fulfillment of royal responsibility to uphold Islam through the recognition of the men of God like Shaikh Nizamuddin. It is a public acknowledgement of the Shaikh's spiritual attainments and popular appeal.

Sultan Muhammad's commission initially resembles a *murid's* devotion to his *pir*. Wealthy *murids* were often patrons for facilities assisting the *mashaikh* in their religious and humanitarian activities during their lives and tombs to articulate their social and spiritual importance, presumably winning social respect and blessings for the patron for having acted on a public sentiment. For example, a *murid* of Baba Farid offered to have a "*pucca khana*" (large house) built for him but was refused.<sup>99</sup> The same *murid* later commissioned a domed structure over the Shaikh's grave.<sup>100</sup> Various *murids* of Shaikh Nizamuddin offered to build a masonry structure to replace his original mud structure.<sup>101</sup> Although Muhammad bin Tughluq was not a *murid* of the Shaikh, he occasionally visited Shaikh Nizamuddin as a prince and sought the Shaikh's blessings.<sup>102</sup> Eyewitnesses say that Muhammad, who had become Sultan a few months before the Shaikh's death, helped carry the funerary bier of the Shaikh. Furthermore, the Sultan built a domed tomb for his *pir*, Shaikh Alauddin of Ajodhan, at the *dargah* of his grandfather Baba Farid, Shaikh Nizamuddin's spiritual mentor.<sup>103</sup>

However, there were credibility issues surrounding the legality of the Sultan's succession. In this context, the tomb commission should also be seen as an effort to win popular support by honouring a beloved public figure. According to Isami, the Sultan actively sought support upon gaining the throne by spreading wealth. Such support may have been especially necessary in the Sultan's first year on the throne, which coincides with Nizamuddin's death, since both Isami and Ibn Battuta report that the Sultan was rumoured to have arranged the death of his father.<sup>104</sup>

The commissioning of Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb may also be seen as an early attempt to lay greater claim to religious authority and sanctity from Islamic institutions

and the *mashaikh*. Barani reveals that Sultan Muhammad later sought affirmation of his right to rule from the *Khalif* of Islam and stopped all Friday and *Idd* prayers until he received the *Khalif's* sanction to rule.<sup>105</sup> Amir Khvurd documents the Sultan's philosophy that state and religion were twins, representing his efforts to emulate the early *Khalifs* of Islam.<sup>106</sup> Isami says Muhammad compelled the *mashaikh* to leave Delhi for Deogir. Amir Khvurd documents the Sultan's efforts to conscript nine Shaikhs into government service, forbidden in the Chishti tradition.<sup>107</sup> Although these events generally take place after the Sultan's commission of Nizamuddin's tomb, they establish a pattern of attempts to increasingly secure religious authority, particularly from the *mashaikh*.

It might appear that Sultan Muhammad endorsed the Chishti *mashaikh* over other Sufi traditions. He commissioned the tombs of Baba Farid's disciples, Shaikhs Alauddin and Nizamuddin and made pilgrimage to Muinuddin's Chishti's grave in Ajmer,<sup>108</sup> but the Sultan had tombs built for Shaikhs from other Sufi traditions, who were contemporaries of Nizamuddin. Sultan Muhammad commissioned tombs for Shaikh Miram Mulhi in Badaun and Shaikh Ruknuddin Abul Fath, in Multan.<sup>109</sup> The latter was the grandson of the Suhrawardi Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya and friend of Shaikh Nizamuddin, who helped select Nizamuddin's gravesite and led the prayers at his burial ceremony.

Sultan Firoz Shah's restoration of Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb and the *Jamatkhana* commission play a role in the exchange of notions of political and religious authority and appropriate *dargah* activities. The commissions not only sustain Nizamuddin's memory, but they facilitate Sultan Firoz Shah's claims to political

legitimacy and his desire for greater religious authority and influence over the *mashaikh* and the activities that surrounded their khanaqahs and tombs.

Firoz Shah needed to justify his leadership and used his architectural commissions as evidence of his righteous and divinely sanctioned leadership. Like Sultan Muhammad, Firoz Shah's contributions to the *dargah* took place early in his reign when the legitimacy of his succession was still in question. Muhammad bin Tughluq had not declared Firoz Shah as his successor and Muhammad's sister, who wanted her son to take the throne, disputed Firoz Shah's ascension. Furthermore, the nobles of Muhammad's court began to exert their influence by lobbying for the execution of a rebellious senior official, the *Khwaja-i-Jahan*.

In the *Futuh-at-i-Firoz Shah*, Firoz Shah's architectural commissions along with his policies of the first few years of his reign are represented both as an act of repayment to God in thanks for his blessings and as a product of divine guidance. By elaborating upon Sultan Muhammad's tomb for Shaikh Nizamuddin, Firoz Shah implies that he is carrying on the former Sultan's patronage, perhaps deliberately surpassing it with the *Jamatkhana* and court addition. There is also a possibility that Firoz Shah's commissions were a means of reciprocating appreciation for Shaikh Nasiruddin, the spiritual successor to Nizamuddin, since Shaikh Nasiruddin was instrumental in Firoz Shah's appointment to the throne.

Firoz Shah's commissions can also be seen as part of his continuing efforts to control and influence religious discourse. He privileged the tradition of *Sunni* Islam and the *Hanafi* School of jurisprudence by persecuting other Islamic traditions and sects. He devoted state funds for the upkeep and maintenance of selected tombs for the benefit of

pilgrims and travelers, thereby encouraging tomb visitation and *khanaqah* activities at these sites as well as ensuring the financial dependence of these activities on the state, instead of the pilgrims. This is most clearly indicated by Afif, who writes,

One hundred and twenty khankahs were built in Delhi and Firozabad for the accommodation of the people of God, in which travelers from all directions were receivable as guests for three days. These one hundred and twenty buildings were full of guests on all the three hundred and sixty days of the year. Superintendents and officers of the Sunni persuasion were appointed to these khankahs, and the funds for their expenses were furnished from the public treasury. ... It is a custom among kings while they are on the throne to appropriate villages and lands to religious men in order to provide means for their maintenance and repair of their tombs. But these endowments had all been destroyed, and the grantees being divested of them, were reduced to distress ... The Sultan carefully repaired all the tombs and restored the lands and villages after bringing into cultivation such as had been laid waste. He also sought out and restored the superintendents and officers of these endowments who had been driven out of them ... <sup>110</sup>

It is worth noting that these practices diverge with Chishti ethics which maintain that true dervishes should never accept state support.

The commissions at the *dargah* of Nizamuddin are part of the Sultan's efforts to define himself as a ruler with religious as well as political authority. The Sultan appears to subscribe to the prophet-king model of kingship and seeks to represent himself as a pious ruler in the Sunni Islamic tradition, acting with divine sanction and perhaps possessing the same spiritual authority as the *mashaikh*. Like Muhammad, Firoz Shah also sought the title of *Khalif* to legitimate his rule.<sup>111</sup> In the *Futuh-i-Firoz Shah*, he writes, "[M]ost excellent is the king who comes to the door of a *faqir*."<sup>112</sup> Throughout the text he represents himself as a pious, divinely inspired ruler. Curiously, the text creates a social hierarchy that clearly subordinates the role of Shaikh to the role of Sultan when listing the tombs he has chosen to restore. Former Sultans are listed first, followed by Shaikh Nizamuddin, the only religious individual to be named in the text. A former

*wazir* and some unidentified distinguished men are also listed. Firoz Shah's court historian, Shams Siraj Afif, also seeks to represent him as a model of piety using the hagiographic literature of the disciples of the *mashaikh* as a model.<sup>113</sup>

Firoz Shah's commissions associated himself with the Chishti tradition and their popular religious authority, enhancing his claims to greater religious authority. Crowned in Thatta, Firoz Shah stopped at Ajodhan on his return march to Delhi to pay his respects at the *dargah* of Baba Farid.<sup>114</sup> Sometime during his reign, Firoz Shah apparently commissioned a tomb for Shaikh Fariduddin. On the same return march, Firoz Shah also paid his respects at Hansi to Shaikh Qutbuddin Munnawar, who was designated as a *khalifa* like Nasiruddin by Shaikh Nizamuddin. At the burial site of Shaikh Nasiruddin (d. 757/1356) in present-day Chiragh Delhi, Firoz Shah appears to have commissioned a gateway to the complex (775/1373) and possibly Nasiruddin's tomb.<sup>115</sup>

By calling his structure a *jamatkhana*, Firoz Shah modifies the notion of a *jamatkhana*. While little is known about the term, it seems clear that the *Awarif-ul-maruf* and its definition of *khanaqah* practices seems to have initially introduced the notion.<sup>116</sup> The *Siyar-ul-auliya* indicates that the *khanaqahs* of Baba Farid and Shaikh Nizamuddin both had *jamatkhanas*. In these cases, a *jamatkhana* is a relatively large multipurpose hall within a group of small structures that comprise the *khanaqah* of a living shaikh and could be used for sleep, ritual and supererogatory prayers and discussion. Sultan Firoz Shah's *Jamatkhana* was probably instituted at the grave of Shaikh Nizamuddin to encourage the transfer of *jamatkhana* activities from the Shaikh's original residence to his gravesite.

The design of Firoz Shah's *Jamatkhana* varies from earlier models, changing the way a *jamatkhana* can be used. While the ones at Baba Farid and Shaikh Nizamuddin's *khanaqah* seem to consist of one hall with stairs accessing the roof, Firoz Shah's building has no roof access and consists of three distinct chambers. The *mihrab* and Quranic epigraphs of the central chamber of the *Jamatkhana* clearly show that it was intended to be a sanctified place primarily for prayer, while the activities of the side chambers are most likely multipurpose spaces like the original single hall *jamatkhanas*. Firoz Shah's unique design directly alters the spatial dynamics of preceding Chishti *jamatkhanas*. His commission not only indicates that Shaikh Nizamuddin's grave is the appropriate location for *jamatkhana* activities but the unique design adds structure to how those activities should take place by providing an area clearly designated for prayer. This feature suggests that the Sultan is sponsoring the development of a more appropriate setting for Islamic prayer.

The siting of the large tomb and court for *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani, the second most powerful person in the Sultanate, near Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb places more attention on the site and the memory of the Shaikh, while defining the *Khan-i-Jahan* Tilangani as an important figure in his own right. The tomb would have brought more people to the area drawing attention to the Shaikh's tomb. Afif informs us that the *Khan-i-Jahan* was a highly visible Hindu convert to Islam and a well known political personality of the age.<sup>117</sup> As the *Qiwam-ul-Mulk* of Muhammad bin Tughluq, he was instrumental in the succession of Firoz Shah. As *wazir* he was the second most powerful man in the state and ruled the capital in Firoz Shah's absence. He is known to have been incredibly wealthy, supporting many wives. His children received allowances from the

state. Afif reports that citizens of the capital publicly mourned the *Khan-i-Jahan's* death, indicating that his tomb would have been known to locals and perhaps visited by them. Construction workers would have been at the site until the tomb and court were finished and the tomb may also have had an endowment to support a staff of Quran readers and others, given the scale of the tomb and its court.

*Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani was a *murid* of Shaikh Nasiruddin yet he was buried near Shaikh Nizamuddin. The location of the tomb implies that the Shaikh's *dargah* had greater value as a burial site than that of Shaikh Nasiruddin, who had passed away before Maqbul. This may be because of the growth of the fame of Shaikh Nizamuddin as evidenced by the hagiographies, the numerous fake malfuzats and the architectural commissions at his tomb. The choice in siting indicates that, in this case, the tomb of Shaikh Nizamuddin was seen as a tool for enhancing the blessings and prestige of the Tilangani tomb. The inscription of Maqbul Tilangani's son, Junan Shah on the "*Kali*" *Masjid* refers to the "*dargah*," presumably the *dargah* of Nizamuddin and not the tomb of Maqbul, as "exalted in dignity as the sky and ... the sanctuary of the world." Similarly, the *Siyar-ul-auliya* also suggests that the Shaikh's gravesite was divinely blessed.

The Tilangani tomb commission is also a tool in representing self and family to Delhi Sultanate society and creates a lavish architectural setting for tomb visitation and rituals. The architectural project's large scale communicates the importance of the *Khan-i-Jahan* and his family, corresponding in scale to the *Khan-i-Jahan's* social stature and wealth. The Tilangani tomb and court is exceeded in scale only by Ghiyasuddin

Tughluq's tomb.<sup>118</sup> The importance of the *Khan-i-Jahan*'s tomb is enhanced by its general proximity to the Shaikh's tomb, a site that was probably visited regularly.

The interpretation of the Tilangani tomb commission depends on whether the *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani or his son commissioned the building. If Maqbul commissioned the tomb then the large and unique tomb is an attempt at self-glorification, whereas if his son commissioned the tomb, it can be interpreted as a son's statement of the importance of his father.

The "*Kali*" *Masjid* commission by *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah participates in the Islamic tradition of pious works. The tradition of pious works is based on Islamic principles of using additional wealth for the benefit of the community. *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah is known to have commissioned several *masjids* in the Delhi area.<sup>119</sup> By providing a setting for Friday prayer, the *masjid* commission probably provides an alternative to the Kilugarhi *Masjid* as the place to conduct Friday prayers. This would have concentrated greater human activity in the area generating significant economic activity. The "*Kali*" *Masjid* commission encourages Islamic ritual prayer, particularly the Friday assembly prayer in the Ghiyaspur area with the hope of spiritual benefit for the patron Junan Shah and probably his father, Maqbul. The *masjid* inscription indicates that Junan Shah hoped for people's prayers to sustain his faith. It states, "May God have compassion on him, who, offering prayer in this mosque, should remember this slave [Junan Shah] with Fatiha and prayers for his faith."<sup>120</sup>

The *masjid* also affects the perception of the tomb of Maqbul Tilangani and the *dargah* of Shaikh Nizamuddin. The *masjid's* close proximity to the tomb of Junan Shah's father indicates that Junan Shah wished his father to be remembered as well. The

large numbers of people visiting the *masjid* would have increased the numbers visiting and reciting prayers at his father's tomb. In the inscription of the "*Kali*" *Masjid*, Junan Shah characterizes himself as the offspring of the slave (*bandeh zadeh*) of the threshold (*dargah*), suggesting that his belief in the sanctity of Shaikh Nizamuddin's *dargah* plays a role in his commission of the *masjid*. The *masjid* commission becomes a devotional act to the *dargah* of Nizamuddin.

*Malik Sayyid-ul-Hujjab* Maruf's commission of the rooms and passageways near the *baoli* encourages activity and human settlement, on a smaller scale, near the *dargah* of Nizamuddin. The rooms were probably for residents of the tomb or travelers. The only other clear example of a series of small rooms is at Firoz Shah's *madrasah* at *Hauz Khas* (*Hauz Alai*), where students and scholars presumably lived. Some cells seem to have been added to the *khanaqah* of Nizamuddin for long-term residents.<sup>121</sup>

Maruf's commission also helps define his social and religious status. Maruf is indicated to be a pious benefactor to the *dargah* and its surrounding activities. He occupied the position of *Malik Sayyid-ul-Hujjab* (Chief of the Chamberlains) in Firoz Shah's administration and his commission indicates that he may have achieved some wealth. For Maruf, the commission is primarily an opportunity to stress his personal spiritual merit on account of his relationship with Shaikh Nizamuddin. His inscription and Afif's account of him reveal that his father was a *murid* of the Shaikh and Maruf was named by the Shaikh at birth.<sup>122</sup>

In conclusion, the activities surrounding Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb and the surrounding buildings can be inferred from data on contemporary beliefs and practices. The Shaikh himself played an important role in influencing and disseminating concepts

and practices that would be applied to his tomb. In addition to being a focal point for other graves and tombs, Shaikh Nizamuddin's *dargah* was probably a centre of pilgrimage, donations, diverse forms of worship and celebrations on regular occasions throughout the Muslim calendar. Dependents of the Shaikh were probably able to derive their living from the tomb's revenue. These activities and their supporting beliefs represent, to some degree, a continuation and affirmation of the activities and beliefs that surrounded the Shaikh during his lifetime at his *khanaqah*. Firoz Shah's *Jamatkhana*, an adaptation of smaller and more simple structures at early Chishti *khanaqahs*, was commissioned to encourage the transfer of Nizamuddin's *khanaqah* activities to the site of the Shaikh's tomb.

The fame and memory of the Shaikh were endorsed and encouraged by Sultan Muhammad, Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq and members of his court, increasing the role that the state was previously unable to play in the Chishti *khanaqahs* and amongst their followers and admirers. The development sponsored by these patrons provided a catalyst for lasting human settlement in the area. As a result, the development of the *dargah*, its surrounding buildings and their associated activities can be seen as a contribution to important aspects of Delhi Sultanate social exchange, in particular the debates over religious and political authority as well as the appropriate practices of Islam.

---

<sup>1</sup> For example, see the following: Quran 2:4; 2:248; 3:39; 3:124; 15:27; and 6:61.

<sup>2</sup> Quran 45:24-26

<sup>3</sup> Quran 16:27-32

<sup>4</sup> Quran 16:22, 32; 35:1

<sup>5</sup> Quran 34:28

<sup>6</sup> Quran 6:111.

<sup>7</sup> P.M. Currie, The Shrine and Cult of Muin al-din Chishti of Ajmer (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989) 2.

<sup>8</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad [Amir Hasan, 1308-1322, in Farsi] trans. Bruce Lawrence as Morals for the Heart: Conversations of Shaykh Nizam ad-din Awliya recorded by Amir Hasan (New York: Paulist Press, 1992) 132.

<sup>9</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad cited in K. A Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya [hereafter Life of Nizamuddin] (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991) 182.

<sup>10</sup> Futuhs-salatin [Abd-ul-Malik Isami, 1350, in Farsi] trans. Agha Mahdi Husain Shah namah-i Hind of Isami 3 vols. (Bombay, New York: Published for the Dept. of History, Aligarh Muslim University [by] Asia Pub. House, c1967-1977) 1:687.

<sup>11</sup> Rehla [Ibn Battuta, 1325-1354, in Arabic] trans. H. A. R. Gibb, The Travels of Ibn Battuta, 4 vols. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971) 3:626.

<sup>12</sup> For example, see Rehla 627.

<sup>13</sup> Pinto 102-103.

<sup>14</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad [707/1308-722/1322, in Farsi] trans. Bruce Lawrence as Morals for the Heart: Conversations of Shaykh Nizam ad-din Awliya recorded by Amir Hasan (New York: Paulist Press, 1992) 129.

<sup>15</sup> Farman of Allaudin Khalji [Amir Khusrau] cited and translated by Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, Perso-Arabic sources of information on the life and conditions in the Sultanate of Delhi (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1992) 178.

<sup>16</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani, 1359, in Farsi] trans. H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, The History of India as Told by its Own Historians, 30 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952-60?) 14:59.

<sup>17</sup> Futuhs-salatin 1:687.

<sup>18</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 136.

<sup>19</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 256, 262, 355.

<sup>20</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 100.

<sup>21</sup> Simon Digby, "Tabarukkat and Succession among the Great Chishti Shaykhs of the Delhi Sultanate," Delhi Through the Ages, ed. R.E. Frykenberg (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986) 79.

<sup>22</sup> Siyar-ul-auliya cited and excerpt trans. in Digby 76.

<sup>23</sup> Rehla 697, 702, 705.

<sup>24</sup> “Khilafatnama” [Shaikh Nizamuddin, 1323, in Arabic] in Siyar-ul-auliya [Amir Khvurd, in Persian] cited and translated in K. A. Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya [hereafter Life of Nizamuddin] (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991) 197. A *khilafatnama* is a document formerly designating its recipient as a leader within a Sufi tradition.

<sup>25</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 365.

<sup>26</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 86.

<sup>27</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 356.

<sup>28</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 86, 91, 347.

<sup>29</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 97, 135.

<sup>30</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 304-305.

<sup>31</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 151.

<sup>32</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 136, 138, 178.

<sup>33</sup> Lawrence, “The Earliest Chishtiyya and Shaikh Nizamuddin Awliya” Delhi Through the Ages 108.

<sup>34</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 81.

<sup>35</sup> Zafar Hasan, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10 A Guide to Nizamuddin [hereafter A Guide to Nizamuddin] (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922) 10.

<sup>36</sup> Futuhs-salatin 687.

<sup>37</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] cited and excerpt trans. in K.A. Nizami, State and Culture in Medieval India (New Delhi: Adam Publishers and Distributors,, 1985) 193-194.

<sup>38</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 135.

<sup>39</sup> Desiderio Pinto, Piri-Muridi Relationship: A Study of the Nizamuddin Dargah (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharial, 1995) 173.

<sup>40</sup> Pinto 37.

<sup>41</sup> Pinto 59.

---

<sup>42</sup> Pinto 185.

<sup>43</sup> Pinto 53. It is not known clear whether Hindu deities were thought to be accessible at the Shaikh's tomb following his death. Some of the beliefs in Pinto's account may have developed during Mughal and post-Mughal encounters with the site.

<sup>44</sup> Pinto 173. *Chillah* is discussed in the *Fawaid-ul-fuad* 108, 173, but not in relation to gravesites.

<sup>45</sup> Pinto 222, 255.

<sup>46</sup> Pinto 151.

<sup>47</sup> Little is known about the Jain community in the area. Timur notes that fire worshippers believing in Yazdan and Ahrimman inhabited Tughluqabad. *Tuzuki-i-Timuri* [Timur, c. 1398, in Chagatai; trans. Abu Talib Husaini, 1628, in Farsi] trans. H.M. Elliot and J. Dawson, *The History of India as Told by its Own Historians*, 8 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, n.d.) 3:431.

<sup>48</sup> Nizami, *Life of Nizamuddin* 124.

<sup>49</sup> *Futuhs-salatin* 684.

<sup>50</sup> Verse by Amir Khusrau, cited and trans. in Nizami, *Life of Nizamuddin* 124.

<sup>51</sup> *Fawaid-ul-fuad* 236.

<sup>52</sup> *Futuh-i-Firoz Shah* [c.1354, in Farsi] trans. as "Futuh-i Firoz Shah of Sultan Firoz Shah," *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians*, 8 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1963-) 3:387.

<sup>53</sup> *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* [Afif, c. 1398, in Farsi] trans. H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, *The History of India as Told by its Own Historians*, 30 vols. (London: 1867; reprint ed. Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952-60?) 15:108.

<sup>54</sup> Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India: Four Reports Made During the Years 1862-63-64-65*. (reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1972) 201.

<sup>55</sup> Carl W. Ernst, *Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992) 32. Cunningham 201.

<sup>56</sup> *Fawaid-ul-fuad* 285-286.

<sup>57</sup> *Fawaid-ul-fuad* 145.

<sup>58</sup> Bruce Lawrence, "Early Indo-Muslim Saints and Conversion," *Islam in Asia*, ed. Yohanan Friedmann, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1984) 1:109-145.

- <sup>59</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 86.
- <sup>60</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 156-158.
- <sup>61</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 156.
- <sup>62</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 323.
- <sup>63</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 36.
- <sup>64</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 20.
- <sup>65</sup> Siyar-ul-Auliya [Amir Khvurd, 752/1351-790/1382, in Farsi] cited and translated in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991) 197.
- <sup>66</sup> A. A. Tritton, "Muslim Funeral Customs," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, (1937-39) 9:653-61. G. Monnot, "Salat," Encyclopedia of Islam: New Edition (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963-) 931.
- <sup>67</sup> Robert Hillenbrandt, Islamic Architecture (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) 253.
- <sup>68</sup> Rehla 3:760.
- <sup>69</sup> Rehla 3:739. The text is unclear so the flowers and fruit may be distributed on the carpets instead.
- <sup>70</sup> Waqiat-e-Mushtaqui [Shaikh Rizq Ullah Mushtaqui, 1495/96-1581, in Farsi] trans. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, Waqi`at-e-Mushtaqui of Shaikh Rizq Ullah Mushtaqui : a source of information on the life and conditions in pre-Mughal India (New Delhi : Co-published by Indian Council of Historical Research and Northern Book Centre, 1993) 8.
- <sup>71</sup> Tarikh-i-Hind [Al-Biruni, 1030, in Arabic] trans. Edward C. Sachau, Alberuni's India, 2 vols. bound in 1 (New Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1996) 2:104.
- <sup>72</sup> Tarikh-i-Hind 95.
- <sup>73</sup> Tarikh-i-Hind 95.
- <sup>74</sup> Masalik al-absar fi-mamalik al-amsar [Shihab al-Din al-Umari, c.1344, in Arabic] trans. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi and Qazi Mohammad Ahmad, A Fourteenth Century Arab Account of India under Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq (Aligarh: Siddiqi Publishing House, 1971) 45. Rehla 3:654.
- <sup>75</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 89. Nizamuddin apparently requested three days of sama, probably to fill the 3 day period following his burial (siyyum), but this was not carried out by Shaikh Ruknuddin who probably disapproved of sama.

- 
- <sup>76</sup> Pinto 123
- <sup>77</sup> Thamarat-ul-quds, cited and excerpt translated in Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 22.
- <sup>78</sup> Rehla 625.
- <sup>79</sup> Jawami-ul-kalim cited in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 180.
- <sup>80</sup> Futuh-at-i-Firoz Shah 3:380.
- <sup>81</sup> K. A. Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh-i-Dehli [hereafter Life of Nasiruddin] (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991) 43.
- <sup>82</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 149-150.
- <sup>83</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 258.
- <sup>84</sup> Ernst 137.
- <sup>85</sup> Khair-ul-majalis [Hamid Qalandar] cited in Ernst 105.
- <sup>86</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 170.
- <sup>87</sup> Pinto 254.
- <sup>88</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Afif] 59.
- <sup>89</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Afif] cited in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 175-176.
- <sup>90</sup> Simon Digby, "Qalandars in the Dehli Sultanate," Islam in Asia 1:77.
- <sup>91</sup> Waqiat-e-Mushtaqi 79.
- <sup>92</sup> Siyar-ul-auliya cited in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 88.
- <sup>93</sup> K. A. Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shakar [hereafter Life of Fariduddin] (1955; reprint ed. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1973) 58.
- <sup>94</sup> Siyar-ul-auliya, cited in Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 161.
- <sup>95</sup> For example see Pinto 253.
- <sup>96</sup> Rehla 3:760.
- <sup>97</sup> Rehla 3:622.
- <sup>98</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] cited and trans. in Nizami, State and Culture 193
- <sup>99</sup> Siyar-ul-auliya cited in Nizami, Life of Fariduddin 39.

- 
- <sup>100</sup> Nizami, Life of Fariduddin 58.
- <sup>101</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 57.
- <sup>102</sup> Rehla 3:654.
- <sup>103</sup> Siyar-ul-auliya cited in Nizami, Life of Fariduddin 62.
- <sup>104</sup> Rehla 3:654.
- <sup>105</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Barani] 174.
- <sup>106</sup> Siyar-ul-auliya cited in K. A. Nizami, State and Culture 114 n. 6.
- <sup>107</sup> Nizami, Life of Nasiruddin 74-75 n. 35. Followers of the Chishti tradition considered government service forbidden to them while followers of the Suhrawardi tradition saw no problem with affiliating with the Sultan.
- <sup>108</sup> Futuhs-salatin cited in Currie 97.
- <sup>109</sup> Nizami, Life of Nasiruddin 67. Anthony Welch and Howard Crane. "The Tughluqs: Master Builders of the Delhi Sultanate." Muqarnas (1983) 1:160 n.13.
- <sup>110</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Afif] 96.
- <sup>111</sup> Futuh-i-Firoz Shah 387.
- <sup>112</sup> Futuh-i-Firoz Shah 384.
- <sup>113</sup> Peter Hardy, Historians of Medieval India: Studies in Indo-Muslim Historical Writing (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1960) 41.
- <sup>114</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Afif] 15.
- <sup>115</sup> Gate inscription cited and translated in Nizami, Life of Nasiruddin 87.
- <sup>116</sup> Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, A History of Sufism in India, 2 vols. (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1975) ##.
- <sup>117</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Afif] 111-115.
- <sup>118</sup> The Tilangani tomb's octagonal plan is preceded by a smaller tomb incorporated into Ghiyasuddin's tomb-fort and by Sultan Altamsh's tomb for his son Nasiruddin. It has been suggested that the geometry of tombs is related to social rank, with the square being used by Sultans and octagons being used by princes and nobles. See Welch and Crane 146-147.
- <sup>119</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 37.

---

<sup>120</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 36.

<sup>121</sup> Nizami, Life of Nizamuddin 57.

<sup>122</sup> Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi [Afif] cited in Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 10.

## Chapter 5 : The Epigraphic Program of the *Jamatkhana*

One of the most prominent features of the *Jamatkhana* of Nizamuddin is its extensive epigraphic program, most of which is selected from the Quran. Surprisingly, the epigraphs have never been documented; the luminaries of Indian Islamic architecture have only mentioned them in passing.<sup>1</sup> This chapter reflects on scholarly approaches to Quranic epigraphy in general, documents the epigraphs at the *Jamatkhana* and analyzes their content. Comparisons are made with earlier Delhi Sultanate Quranic epigraphs with the intent of illuminating the circumstances surrounding the conception of the epigraphic program. This chapter also explores what the early reception of the epigraphic program was probably like using historical documents and briefly discusses the Mughal epigraphic response in the other structures at the *dargah*.

### Approaches to Quranic Epigraphy

The past three centuries of European, North American and Indian scholarship (in the British tradition) on the Quranic architectural epigraphy found throughout Muslim civilization have developed increasingly knowledgeable and sensitive approaches to Muslim visual culture and history. However, viewing Quranic epigraphy in terms of the religious world-views of those that conceived and observed them has not always been the goal. Even when this has been the goal, the bases for selecting Quranic epigraphs have proven elusive without explicit historic documents explaining the process of epigraphic selection and implementation.<sup>2</sup>

Eighteenth and nineteenth century historians and archaeologists worked within a

model of historical inquiry that emphasized the collection of information pertaining to antiquity, political leaders, event chronologies and monuments. Attention was given to architectural inscriptions that were useful in this regard.<sup>3</sup> Orientalist scholars seldom discussed Quranic epigraphs, but in the course of their efforts to document historical inscriptions they gradually began to include Quranic selections as well. The approach of Orientalists working on other regions of Islamic civilization largely influenced the way scholars studied epigraphs on the Indian subcontinent.

The collection of architectural epigraphy in the Indian subcontinent occurred quite early in the study of Islamic architecture and epigraphy thanks to the efforts of Mirza Sangin Beg and Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1232-1315/1817-98).<sup>4</sup> Beg composed the *Sair-ul-manazil*, a text written before 1235/1820 that deals with epigraphy, and Khan wrote the *Asar-ul-sanadid*, a landmark study of Indian Islamic architecture. In the preface to the 1270/1854 edition of the *Asar-ul-sanadid*, Khan wrote, “The most attractive feature of the present edition is that the epigraphs have been reproduced in their original form and style of writing.”<sup>5</sup> Like his European contemporaries, Khan focused on historical inscriptions but also seemed to approach epigraphy as a connoisseur of calligraphy, bringing to mind J. Sourdél-Thomine’s observation that early Arab scholars, in contrast to their European contemporaries, were concerned with stylistic issues.<sup>6</sup> Elsewhere in the *Asar-ul-sanadid*, Khan first recorded the presence of Quranic epigraphy in *nakshi* (cursive) and *kufic* (geometric) at the *Jamatkhana* of Nizamuddin but did not document them.<sup>7</sup> The reports of Alexander Cunningham, the official Archaeological Surveyor to the Government of India, also commented on script styles at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex, but he used them to assist in the historical dating of

monuments.<sup>8</sup> Cunningham's assistant, J.D. Beglar, and writer, Carr Stephen, both made specific references to the *Jamatkhana* but did not mention its extensive Quranic epigraphs.<sup>9</sup>

A major change in the sporadic approach to studying Islamic epigraphy was advocated by the Swiss scholar Max van Berchem (1863-1921). Probably inspired by epigraphic studies on Latin and Greek inscriptions, van Berchem called for the systematic documentation of Arabic inscriptions throughout Islamic civilization to facilitate comparative analyses. However, van Berchem viewed architectural epigraphs as historical texts to be used for corroborating or contradicting more conventional historical texts and, therefore, de-emphasized Quranic epigraphy.<sup>10</sup> The subsequent efforts of J. Horowitz to systematically document the architectural epigraphs collected by earlier British and Indian scholars in the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) journal, Epigraphica Indo Moslemica (EIM), were no doubt inspired by van Berchem.<sup>11</sup> The ASI continued to publish the EIM and its later incarnation, the Epigraphica Indica, Arabic and Persian Supplement, for several decades, but the selection and content of Quranic inscriptions remained relatively undiscussed. This situation persisted in Zafar Hasan's surveys for the ASI, the Delhi List of Monuments and A Guide to Nizamuddin. Both extensively documented inscriptions with historical information but merely noted the presence of Quranic epigraphy at the *Jamatkhana*.<sup>12</sup>

Written for the ASI, M.A. Husain's Quranic and Historical Inscriptions of Protected Monuments in Delhi represented a significant departure.<sup>13</sup> Here, Quranic epigraphs were well documented but differentiated from "historical inscriptions." This distinction between religious and non-religious epigraphy reflected contemporary

Orientalist scholarship's restricted view of what was considered historical evidence as well as its secular, humanist foundation. Regardless, Husain inexplicably left out the *Jamatkhana* epigraphs but included the buildings surrounding the *Jamatkhana*.<sup>14</sup>

The field of Islamic Art History evolved into a distinct discipline in the early twentieth century through the efforts of scholars like Arthur Upham Pope, Ernst Kühnel, Kurt Erdmann and Richard Ettinghausen, who applied methods used for discussing Western European and Classical art to Islamic art. Working within European colonial legacies and models of Art History rooted in connoisseurship, these scholars used nineteenth century Anglo-European categories for Islamic art. Emphasis was laid on early Arab Islamic art and architecture for its antiquity and Persian art and architecture on account of its rational beauty. The Christian iconic tradition also became the primary reference point for all religious art. Consequently, Quranic epigraphy became the counterpoint to Christian iconic traditions that required explanation. There was also the idea that Quranic epigraphy should be discussed as an extension of the art of calligraphy, which had come to be defined as the foremost of Islamic arts by scholars. As a consequence, interest was also directed towards the evolution of scripts, which probably stemmed from the Arab connoisseurship of calligraphy.<sup>15</sup>

Art Historical scholarship in the second half of the twentieth century was less interested in making qualitative judgements. Instead, developments in the philosophy of History (and Art History) and historiography (social history, quantitative history, etc.) were drawn upon and attempts were made to trace the relationship between historical events (usually political) and the "artistic" visual discourse of Muslim societies. With greater sensitivity to the religious principles of Islam, closer scrutiny was paid to the

reasons behind the development of artistic traditions and specific objects. In terms of epigraphy, questions about who chose the epigraphs, for whom they were chosen and with what intent began to take precedence. Arguments were made against the previous assumption that Quranic epigraphic selections were largely arbitrary and evidence of conscious selection was sought out. For example, Oleg Grabar sought to relate selections of Quranic epigraphy to contemporary historical events.<sup>16</sup> Scholars like Grabar and Erica Dodd also looked closely into the relationship between Quranic selections and their placement within their architectural settings.

However, the relative lack of discussion of the religious basis to Islamic art and epigraphy was increasingly criticized. Both J. Sourdél-Thomine and Erica Dodd made a call for change in approach to Islamic epigraphy. J. Sourdél-Thomine's essay on epigraphy in the Encyclopaedia of Islam most clearly articulated the need for looking at Quranic epigraphy in terms of religious faith.<sup>17</sup> Sourdél-Thomine described a field consisting of those who ignored the religious connotations of Quranic epigraphy and those who over-attributed mystical significance to Quranic epigraphy. Dodd argued for the inclusion of Quranic epigraphy in the study of Islamic art and architecture, maintaining that earlier art historians treated Islamic epigraphy as abstract art, divorced from the tenets of the faith. Earlier scholarship was judged as interested in making aesthetic judgements, and linking aesthetics to race, using European ideals as a standard.<sup>18</sup>

Like the earlier efforts of van Berchem, Dodd catalogued Quranic epigraphs from various regions across Islamic civilization with the information sorted by *surah* (Quranic chapter) and the location of the epigraph within the building, hoping to incorporate the

world-view of Muslims in her analysis. Epigraphs from India, and Delhi in particular, dominated the book, due to the ongoing efforts of the ASI. In the accompanying text, Dodd framed her discussion by posing that the problem of how to represent an image of the divine was an essential one that was grappled with by various cultures. She went on to suggest that the Muslim use of epigraphy stemmed from a desire to glorify God and as a resolution to an aniconic religious society's problematic relationship to images.

Although changes in interpretations of Quranic epigraphy were advocated, it was less clear if changes in conceptual approaches to epigraphy were also needed.

More recent scholars have taken a variety of approaches to Quranic epigraphy. Anthony Welch, who writes on Delhi Sultanate and Mughal architecture, has contributed further to making Quranic architectural epigraphy an important part of studying Indian Islamic architecture, looking for themes in selections that echo contemporary historical events, thought and architectural function.<sup>19</sup> Z. Desai of the Archaeological Survey of India continues with the collection and documentation of inscriptions as a source of historical data. While no distinction is made between Quranic and "historical" inscriptions, the role of Quranic inscriptions in providing historical data remains unclear.<sup>20</sup>

Researching Indian Muslim calligraphers and calligraphy, W. E. Begley focuses on architectural epigraphy as an art form drawing comparisons to abstract and Christian iconic art. Begley writes, "... Like the figurative sculpture adorning medieval Christian churches, the Koranic inscriptions on mosques and tombs convey important religious concepts and values that help understand the deeper levels of meaning of the architectural monument ... calligraphy on monuments has increasingly served what

might be called an “iconographic” function - a function to which Western scholars have only recently begun to pay serious attention.”<sup>21</sup> Quranic epigraphy has also been used as an indicator of particular religious ideological discourse to be interpreted with contemporary beliefs and ideas about particular *surahs*.<sup>22</sup> Bloom and Khoury have both used Quranic selections as indicators of *Shia* ideology.

Sheila Blair provides the most in-depth discussion of approaches to Quranic epigraphy. Building on the scholarship of Max van Berchem, Blair consciously includes Quranic epigraphs in her catalog of inscriptions in Iran and Transoxania. She writes, “Religious texts such as Koranic citations, *hadith*, prayers and pious phrases are included in the volume because although they are often dismissed as banal, many times they provide clues about a building’s function and users.”<sup>23</sup> Blair’s entries note cases where Quranic selections seem appropriate in terms of architectural function or historical circumstance but admits that some selections escape explanation.<sup>24</sup>

More recently, Blair makes the case that Quranic texts were considered “meaningful.”<sup>25</sup> She notes that Quranic epigraphs epitomize aspects of the faith, underscore the function of the building, are prophylactic, address sectarian differences, engage in word play, give the impression of presenting the whole Quran (synecdoche), conform to space constraints, have different applications, and are selected by rote. Blair also notes that Quranic text is often reexamined and resignified in different periods.<sup>26</sup>

While increased attention is being given to Quranic epigraphs, their use as historical evidence continues to prove challenging. Without additional historical documentation, it remains difficult to prove conclusively which *ayat* (Quranic verse) within an entire selection is the basis for that selection and to pinpoint which historical

events directly impacted the selection. Also elusive is the complex network of associations and significance attributed to various *surah* and *ayah* and the degree that these attributions are consistent across geography and time.

### **Some Assumptions**

Some strains of popular opinion and scholarship assume Muslim societies and their thought to be uniform across geography and time. Since this study is located within a historiographical tradition based on the principles of Historicism, it can be assumed that Muslim societies, although sharing similarities in intellectual, political and social frameworks, varied across time and space. Consequently, the circumstances and people surrounding Quranic selections can be assumed to differ across time and place.

The desire to argue against the assumption that Quranic selections are arbitrary obscures the fact that the assumption does not follow from our general knowledge of Islamic civilization. If it is accepted that oral knowledge of either the whole or part of the Quran was widespread and formed the basis of literacy in Muslim societies in general, that the religious classes who derived their authority from their knowledge and interpretation of Quran and Islamic law were an integral part of state bureaucracies and that an elaborate theosophical literature (mystical poetry, devotional literature, etc.) was developed around the Quran, then it is more prudent to assume that all Quranic epigraphy is the result of conscious selection. The burden of proof is shifted to those that would argue in favour of arbitrariness. Assuming that Quranic epigraphs were important to those who selected and observed them, they should be regarded as an important data source regarding the historical thought of the period, particularly in terms of religious

belief and architectural design.

Architectural historian Sheila Blair notes that there is no evidence that historic Muslims employed the categories of “historical” and “religious” with regards to inscriptions.<sup>27</sup> This observation reveals two troublesome assumptions in the study of Islamic architectural epigraphy. The first assumption is that Quranic selections are not a form of historical evidence. While they may not offer direct information on a building’s construction, they are a potential source of evidence since they are conscious selections made within historical cultural discourses on architecture and Islamic theology. Instead of assuming that only some inscriptions have value as evidence to be used in historical writing, all inscriptions can be considered as a form of potential historical evidence to be used in historical writing.

The second assumption concerns the categories used to describe and analyze human societies. The categories of “historical” and “religious” apply a modern and Anglo-European historiographic notion of the occurrence of a division between Church and State in England and Europe to different societies. Building on the notion of the division between Church and State as an achievement of European society, these categories, while useful for understanding some periods of European history, are less useful for dealing with theocentric societies such as those found throughout Islamic civilization. Instead of assuming that Delhi Sultanate society was divided along religious and secular lines, Delhi Sultanate society can be assumed to be theocentric with interrelated cultural discourses that include religion, political rule and architecture.

On the assumption that medieval Christian and Islamic civilizations have developed similar concepts of art and architecture, the traditions of Quranic architectural

epigraphy and Christian figurative paintings and sculptures of icons are suggested to be similar or equivalent types of sacred ornament. This assumption of similarity makes Christian concepts of art and architecture the primary reference point for the consideration of Islamic architecture and epigraphy. The importance of other cultural influences in the formation and development of Islamic architecture is mitigated. Although the formation of early (and later) Islamic architecture is strongly influenced by Byzantine architectural traditions in the Middle East, the Islamic tradition also incorporates Persian, Central Asian, Turkish, Northern Indian and other traditions. In the case of Indian Islamic architecture, Quranic epigraphy can be compared not only to Christian iconography but also to the sculptural tradition of Indian temples as well. Instead of assuming that Christian icons and Quranic epigraphy were conceived within the same concept of art and architecture, it is more prudent to assume that the concepts varied due to different principles and historical influences.

When it comes to interpreting the content of the Quran selections, there is a common assumption that historical concepts are accessible to modern readers of the Quran in English, but there is a divergence in methods. Scholars like Welch, Begley and Blair form interpretive hypotheses from an informed twentieth century perspective, whereas historians like Ernst attempt to deduce interpretations from reconstructions of historic mentalities and concepts set within their intellectual and political contexts. Furthermore, there are, perhaps, epistemological differences to be considered between contemporary scholars and historical individuals involved with the selection, perception and comprehension of Quranic epigraphy, particularly if Muslim mystical interpretations of the Quran are deemed relevant since they ultimately suggest hierarchical readings take

place depending on the spiritual attainments of the reader. Consider the following statement by Amir Hasan Sijzi, the recorder of the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*. In a conversation with Shaikh Nizamuddin, he says, “On every occasion that I recite the Qur’an, more of its meaning unfolds for me than I had ever before understood.”<sup>28</sup> If this perspective is given credence, then scholarly methods are inevitably insufficient in interpreting Quranic selections. Ideally, one would have to be fluent in Quranic Arabic, a sincere mystic and an historian to fully communicate the significance of the passages.

In this study, historical concepts will be assumed to be accessible across time, culture and language to a degree and both interpretive methods will be used. Preference will be given to the latter method where possible since it is perhaps more consistent with the Historicist assumption which presumes a difference in thought or ends across time and place as opposed to presuming a common world-view.

### **Epistemology and Methodology**

Comparing Quranic selections between monuments in the same vicinity and time frame reveals similarities and differences from which conclusions can be drawn. Since deciding which Quranic *ayah* to use as epigraphs is a selective process, the ideas that are intended to be stressed can be learned by looking at consistencies and variances in specific selections and themes. The placement of Quranic *ayah* within an architectural design is also a selective process and its analysis can reveal which passages are intended to be emphasized. Since human beings have relatively similar visual abilities across time, contemporary observations can be indicative of historic observations. Using accepted historical narratives on the relevant period and appropriate historic documents

contemporary with the development of the physical environment, the conceptual framework that guided the perception of the physical environment can be learned.

The documentation of the epigraphs at the *Jamatkhana* was accomplished through on-site photography. Quranic selections were subsequently identified with the assistance of site attendants, digital enlargements of photographs, and a Quran CD-Rom searchable in Arabic.<sup>29</sup> The software's numbering system, (1924 Cairo edition) and translations of the Quran were used within this chapter. Assistance with the identification and translation of non-Quranic passages was given by the Islamic Information Centre, Vancouver.<sup>30</sup>

### Overall Findings

All of the epigraphs at the *Jamatkhana* are probably from the same period. They consist of various Quranic citations, one *hadith* (sayings of Prophet Muhammad), one Persian quatrain, the *asma al-husna* (ninety-nine names of God) and one Arabic passage (see Appendix 2). The Quranic epigraphs are very similar to those at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* complex (i.e. Qutbuddin Aibek and Altamsh's *qiblah* screens, Altamsh's tomb, and the Alai gate) in terms of calligraphic style (Altamsh's tomb and the Alai Gate only), the selection of *ayah* and their placement within an architectural scheme.<sup>31</sup> Roughly two thirds of the *ayah* used in the inscriptions in the *jamatkhana* appear at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam*, while approximately one third of the *ayah* used in the inscriptions are unique to the *Jamatkhana*. Through the addition of original selections and differences in the placement of *ayah* the thematic emphasis differs from the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex and is appropriate to the site. General references to Sufi activities are made with the

epigraphs. Emphasis is placed on the nature of God and the Hereafter and other major motifs of Muslim faith such as *Lail-tul-Qadr* (Night of Power), *Mehraj* (ascension of Prophet Muhammad), Allah's throne, the Names of God, the Kaba, *tawhid* (oneness of God), the Quran as revelation and Paradise. *Surah al-Ikhlās* and *Surah al-Hashr* (59:21-23) are the most clearly emphasized epigraphs. Both stress the oneness of God and describe his nature. The origin and content of the selections help characterize the *Jamatkhana* as a blessed place to the same degree as the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* and the most sacred sites in Islam, the *Masjid al-Aqsa* and *Masjid al-Haram*. The central chamber of the *Jamatkhana* is clearly indicated to be a *masjid*. There is a difference between which epigraphs are emphasized architecturally and those that are easily read by literate visitors to the site. The latter epigraphs are general in nature stressing God's oneness and role as Creator. They also allude to the ritual use of the building. For those who read all the epigraphs and were sincere followers of Sufi traditions, the Quranic selections would have probably held special significance, in terms of prayer and ritual. Finally, with the exception of the tomb of Shaikh Nizamuddin, subsequent epigraphic programs on Mughal buildings at Nizamuddin show little similarity.

### **Description and Assessment of the Epigraphy**

The majority of the epigraphs appear on the exterior of the *Jamatkhana*'s east façade and on the interior of the central chamber (Figures 3 and 64) (See Appendix 2 for identification of epigraphs). The interiors of the side chambers only contain brief epigraphs on the medallions over the doorways to the central chamber (Figure 65). The epigraphs in the interior central chamber are located on all four walls, the transitional

zone to the dome (squinch level) and on the dome itself. Placed in careful relation to the architectural design of the *Jamatkhana*, the epigraphs are most heavily concentrated around the exterior of the central entrance to the *Jamatkhana*, the *mihrab* and the transitional zone between the walls and the dome of the central chamber's interior. With the exception of two lengthy selections, which wrap around the interior of the transitional zone in the central chamber, most selections are brief and located in one place. They are textual sound-bites rather than prolonged citations. The common architectural motif of arches nested within arches allows, in many cases, the continuation of *surahs* from one arch to the arch immediately below (Figure 66).

Epigraphic programs are subject to revision in subsequent political dynasties; therefore, it is necessary to assess the degree of certainty that the inscriptions were all part of one program or the result of subsequent architectural remodeling of the site. It can be safely hypothesized that most of the inscriptions are part of one program dating to the construction of the *Jamatkhana*.

The gold and white paint that coat many of the inscriptions today (Figure 66) is clearly a modern addition but what remains unclear is if they reiterate an earlier distinction through colour. Earlier black and white photographs and colour paintings suggest that they do not.<sup>32</sup> The calligraphy for the most part is consistent in style suggesting that the epigraphs were completed at the same time. The only departure in style is the ornamental *kufic* calligraphy used in the squinches (Figure 40) and the central entrance to the *Jamatkhana*.<sup>33</sup> Since we see the same combination of cursive and geometric styles on the *qiblah* screens of the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* and the *Alai Darwaza*, there is no reason to think the *kufic* inscriptions at the *Jamatkhana* are an

earlier or later contribution.

The only documented evidence of a major renovation comes from Lal Beg who says that the Emperor Akbar ordered the walls to be refinished.<sup>34</sup> But the architectural calligraphy of the Akbari building on site, the tomb of Atgah Khan, is very different (Figure 67), reinforcing the notion that the *Jamatkhana's* calligraphy was not altered. However, the Persian quatrain/chronogram on the *Jamatkhana's* exterior wall may be an Akbari addition, given the Mughal fondness for using Persian chronograms to ornament their graves. The chronogram seems awkwardly placed, suggesting that it was not part of the overall epigraphic plan. Chronograms appear to be a feature introduced to the *dargah* of Nizamuddin by the Mughals; there are no known examples of Delhi Sultanate architecture using a chronogram.<sup>35</sup>

### Summary of Themes

In order to discuss the contents of the epigraphs it will be helpful to first summarize their contents from a late twentieth century perspective. The summary has been grouped into two sections to facilitate comparisons between selections based on the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex and selections unique to the *Jamatkhana*.

The selections from the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* can be summarized as follows: The oneness of God is repeatedly mentioned. In addition to alluding to his names, God is described as merciful, all knowing and the knower of secret meanings. He is the creator of heaven and earth, night and day, death and life, the seven heavens, time and man. God is also described as an active agent in the world, having dominion over everything, providing sustenance, teaching speech, sending tranquility, encouraging faith, giving

power, and judging humanity.

A variety of other topics emerge as well. There is the parable of the Children of Israel, who receive God's message, protection and bounty, but are punished for rejecting God twice. References are made to places of worship such as the temple of the Jews, which God permits to be destroyed as punishment, the Kaba, "the furthest mosque," and *Bakka*, all of which are full of blessings and guidance. The revelation of the Quran on the night of power (*lail-tul-qadr*) is referred to and the sacred text is clarified to not be a source of distress but a guide, a teaching and an admonition. The Prophet's knowledge of God, his ascension (*mehraj*) and his role as Messenger are affirmed, and direct experience or vision of God is mentioned. Instructions are given for believers to be humble in prayer, to avoid vain talk, to be charitable, to abstain from sex outside marriage and to celebrate God often and glorify him morning and evening. In the life Hereafter, unbelievers will face hell, while believers are promised the reward of paradisiacal gardens.

The following is a summary of the Quranic selections unique to the *Jamatkhana*, which are *Surahs al-Muzamil* (73:1-10), *al-Kahf* (18:1-8), *Saba* (34:1-5), *Hud* (11:7-9), *al-Anam* (6:1-40; 73-75) and *al-Israa* (17:12-34). Taken by themselves, the independent selections seem concerned primarily with God's role in reinforcing and diminishing belief, the day of judgement and the Hereafter, the punishment of unbelievers, the nature of belief and guidance on prayer.

God within these selections is the creator of a universe perfect in proportion, having merely uttered the word "be." Wise and Irresistible, He is master of heaven and earth and all knowing of what transpires in those realms and in the hearts of men. He

knows what comes from the earth and sky and returns to them. He is the lord of East and West and disposes of all affairs. He is the meticulous recorder of deeds. Capable of showing miracles to prove his existence, God refuses to do so since they will not be believed. He is the provider of bounty and sustenance to believers and obscures himself from unbelievers, whom he will punish. He will have complete dominion when the Hour comes.

The world is described in terms of heaven and earth, the present world and the more desirable Hereafter. The present world having been created in six days is said to be a glittering show for play and amusement. It exists only as a trial to distinguish those who conduct themselves righteously on earth.

The selections refer to the Hour or Day of Judgement, a moment of accounting for all souls. At this time the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised and souls will bear witness against themselves, eventually being rewarded or punished.

The Quran is offered as ultimate proof to doubters since it is without error and is meant as a reassurance for believers and a warning for unbelievers. The selections define Believers to be those who strive for the Hereafter in their present life and who choose to receive guidance. They will witness the fates of unbelievers. God will provide for the believers in this life but will truly distinguish them in the next life. They will be rewarded with forgiveness and sustenance. Believers are instructed to use the day for daily duties but to use the night for prayer, such as reciting the Quran in slow rhythmic tones.

A series of expressions beginning with the imperative "Say" are offered. These phrases demand profession of belief in God's authority, recognition of the day of

judgement, an oath to worship no other gods and acceptance of the Quran. More concrete instructions in codes of conduct are also offered, encouraging kindness to parents and generosity without being extravagant, forbidding the killing of children from fear of not being able to feed them, discouraging adultery and prohibiting killing and the theft of orphans' property. Belief is said to be reinforced by God and the specific example of Abraham is mentioned to whom the inner workings of heaven and earth were revealed in order to deepen his certainty about God.

Unbelievers are portrayed as willingly resisting the knowledge of God. They would not believe in miracles or the appearance of an angel. Without God's help they will not accept God nor realize their error until the moment of accounting. Deaf and dumb, they have lost their souls without realizing it. Encircling them in their own doubt, God will reinforce their unbelief. Given a second chance they would commit the same mistake. Unbelievers persist in denying the oneness of God. References are made to the story of Abraham, who had warned his father against idol worship, and to those who insist that God has a son. Erring populations have been destroyed by God before but not without sending adequate warning with messengers who were mocked and spurned. Unbelievers also deny the existence of the Hereafter by refusing to believe they will be raised after death. Materialists who desire things of this world are given what they want but are punished with hell. Spendthrifts are associated with evil but are to be treated by believers with kindness.

There are three non-Quranic epigraphs at the *Jamatkhana*. These stress the blessedness of Muhammad and his family (on the base of the central dome), the idea that the kingdom belongs to God (on the four squinches) and what the appropriate conduct in

a *masjid* should be (on the *qiblah* wall).

At the *Jamatkhana*, there is no obvious distinction between the placement (or style) of the epigraphs that initially appear on the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* and the ones unique to the *Jamatkhana*. They appear as one cohesive epigraphic program. Taken as a whole, the overall themes of all the *Jamatkhana* epigraphs are the following: the characteristics of God, early houses of worship, the Hereafter, punishment of unbelievers, guidance on prayer, definitions and consequences of belief and unbelief, the integrity of the Quran and prophecy. These topics for the most part are briefly referred to in the selections from the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* and are elaborated upon in the selections unique to the *Jamatkhana*. For example, the Hereafter is briefly mentioned in *Surah al-Israa* (17:10), which appears at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* (Alai Darwaza) and the *Jamatkhana*. However, the concept is more deeply explored at the *Jamatkhana* in the citations of *Surah al-Israa* (17:13, 14, 19, 21), *al-Anam* (6:2, 12, 16, 29, 32, 36), *Saba* (34:1) and *Hud* (11:7), which are unique to the *Jamatkhana*.

### **Placement of Epigraphs**

Selecting passages is only part of the process of implementing epigraphic programs. Appropriate locations must be sought for appropriate citations. The locations can in turn place limitations on the extent of the citation. The position of a selection within the architectural scheme can give greater emphasis to it or vice versa; selections can emphasize architectural features.

In addition to similarities between the Quranic selections used at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex and the *Jamatkhana*, there are similarities in the placements of those

selections. This is most evident with the three major Quranic citations on the exterior of the *Jamatkhana*. For example, *ayah* 1 to 5 of *Sura al-Israa* (17) appear prominently on the exterior of the north *musaffirkhana* (side chamber) arch of the *Jamatkhana* of Nizamuddin. The verse then continues in succession on the four interior squinches of the central chamber, beginning with the southwest squinch and ending on the northwest squinch with *ayat* 34. At the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex, *ayah* 1 to 5 of *Sura al-Israa* appear in prominent places on the exterior façade of the *qiblah* screens and the Alai *Darwaza*.<sup>36</sup> Like *Surah al-Israa*, *Surahs al-Fath* (48:1-6) and *ar-Rahman* (1-25) also appear in similar locations at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex and the *Jamatkhana*. There are also other general similarities in the interior placement of epigraphs at Altamsh's tomb, the Alai *Darwaza* and the *Jamatkhana*.

The similar selection and positioning of *ayah* 1-5 of *Surah al-Israa* may suggest that previous interpretations of the use of these *ayah* at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex as an allusion to military expeditions against Hindus, undertaken by the early Delhi Sultans, may be applicable to the *Jamatkhana*.<sup>37</sup> However, there are three issues to consider. First, *ayah* 1 to 5 of *Surah al-Israa* are part of a much longer citation that continues on the *Jamatkhana* interior and includes various other themes. Although the *Masjid* at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex has not survived in its entirety and more extensive citations of *Sura al-Israa* may have existed, the tomb of Altamsh and the Alai *Darwaza* have remained relatively intact and contain no additional references. The more extensive citation of *Sura al-Israa* at the *Jamatkhana* includes references to the following: The Day of Judgement, caution against worldliness, bestowal of bounty to those wishing for the Hereafter, care for parents, caution against spendthrifts, helping the poor, and the

illegality of adultery, murder and taking orphans' property. Second, Firoz Shah, the *Jamatkhana* patron, did not conduct any major military campaigns against the Hindus on the scale of the early Delhi Sultans, although he did adopt the rhetoric punishing idol worshipers. Third, the theme of conquering unbelievers seems at odds with the relatively pacifist and tolerant attitudes of Shaikh Nizamuddin towards Hindus. Such a statement would be inappropriate, although it is uncertain that the custodians of the *dargah* were able to exert any influence over the epigraphic program.

Instead, attention should be returned to the *surah*'s primary significance, which is its citation in the first *ayat* of a major cornerstone of Muslim faith, the *mehraj* of Prophet Muhammad. The value of the additional *ayah* may lie in the range of the other themes they introduce. The citation of the initial *ayah* on the exterior of the *Jamatkhana* emulate the associations made at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex between the sanctuaries in Mecca and Jerusalem that were the sites of Prophet Muhammad's spiritual encounter with God and blessed by Allah. The Persian epigraphs at the *Alai Darwaza* clearly show that, for its builders, the attraction of this verse lay in being able to draw associations between the *Masjid al-Haram* in Mecca, the *Masjid al-Aqsa* in Jerusalem and the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid*.<sup>38</sup> The relevant inscriptions at the *Alai Darwaza* are as follows:

This mosque, which in extent and height is like unto *Baitu-l-muqaddas* [*Al-Aqsa* mosque in Jerusalem], nay is the second *Baitu-Imamur* (Ka'ba), was built in pure faith and good intention by his exalted majesty ...<sup>39</sup>

... and preserve him [Ala al-Din] in his kingdom and rule as long as the world exists and this *Surah* is read: "Praise be unto Him who transported His servant by night from the sacred mosque (of Makka) to the *Masjid-al-Aqsa* (temple of Jerusalem) ..."<sup>40</sup>

The emulation of the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* epigraphs not only draws the same connections

between the *Jamatkhana* and the sanctified *Masjids al-Haram* and *al-Aqsa* but it also draws connections to the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid*, which had a highly symbolic presence in Delhi as the oldest mosque built by the early, great Delhi Sultans. Additional insight into this emulative process can be found by consulting the *Futuhāt-i-Fīroz Shāh* and *Fawāid-ul-fuād*, which will be taken up later in this chapter.

There are also dissimilar placements of Quranic selections. For example, *Sura al-Hashr* appears on the *Qutb Minar* on the second band from the ground (59:22-23), on the exterior of one of the *qiblah* screen arches (59:22-23), twice on the *qiblah* in the tomb of Altamsh, but the *ayah* appear at the base of the central dome at the *Jamatkhana* and the main entrance arch. Interestingly enough, the *ayah* also appear on the base of the domes at Firoz Shah's tomb at the *Hauz Khas* as well as the *chattri* (small domed) tombs located there.

### Contemporary visual observations

While those responsible for the epigraphs may have had full knowledge of their content, visitors to the *Jamatkhana* would have been limited by the physical perceptibility of the epigraphs. Current observations show which epigraphs are emphasized due to their placement and size and which ones can be easily read due to their placement, size and lighting conditions. At the *Jamatkhana*, emphasis on certain *surahs* and their content is accomplished in two ways. First, *surahs* are placed on prominent architectural features. The more prominent the feature the more emphasis a verse is given. Emphasis is placed on the epigraphs located on the large arches of the exterior façade (*Surahs ar-Rahman* (55:1-25), *al-Israa* (17:1-5), *al-Fath* (48:1-6)) and the

interior epigraphs located on the squinches (*Surahs al-Israa* (17:6-34), *al-Anam* (6:1-40)) and the *qiblah* (Figures 38, 39 and 68).<sup>41</sup>

The second means employed at the *Jamatkhana* to emphasize epigraphs is repetition. A repetition of *ayah* within a building suggests that the selection has additional significance. When both means of emphasis, prominent architectural placements and repetition, are employed together, the selections can be considered as having extra emphasis. This is most clear in the cases of *Surah al-Ikhlās* and *Surah al-Hashr* which appear in prominent locations and are repeated. *Surah al-Ikhlās* is the most emphasized *surah* in the *Jamatkhana* since it appears, in total, eleven times in the dome and on the *qiblah* wall, two of the most significant architectural zones. The *surah* appears eight times in a symmetrical arrangement within the central chamber dome (Figure 52). It also appears three times on the *qiblah* or west wall; it appears on the *mihrab* itself and most clearly on the two arches adjacent to the *mihrab* at ground level. *Surah al-Hashr* is repeated only twice but it appears on the exterior of the central arch in large writing and at the base of the central chamber's dome, two highly prominent positions (Figure 69). Other cases of repetition also occur with *Surahs al-Maidah* and *al-Mulk* but in less prominent locations. The former makes reference to the Kaba and the latter refers to the vision of God.

However, the epigraphs that are emphasized are not always the ones most easily read. The historic viewer of the epigraphs could have read much of the text located at lower levels of the *Jamatkhana* but would have had varying degrees of difficulty with many epigraphs due to their high placement and the dim lighting in the central chamber's interior. The *ayah* on the exterior arches over the two side chambers are not immediately

readable due to their height (*Surahs al-Israa* (17:1-5), *al-Fath* (48:1-6)) (Figure 70). The same is even more true for the two arches over the central entrance, since the *dargah* of Nizamuddin restricts one's angle of view. The *ayah* are most visible from a distance, but if one moves closer, where a more practical angle of view can be had, the complexity of the script, that is, the writing of one word over another, renders it more difficult to read.

The epigraphs on the lower half of the exterior façade and the interior *qiblah* wall are most easily read. On the exterior these include, the beginning of *Surah ar-Rahman* (55:1-25), *Surah al-Israa* (17:80) and *Surah al-i-Imran* (3:18). On the interior, the two arches with *Surah al-Ikhlās* (112:1-4) and the *hadith* regarding *masjids* and some of the *qiblah* epigraphs (the *shahada*, *Surahs al-i-Imran* (3:96-100), *al-Baqarah* (2:255) and *al-Qadr* (97:1-5)) are clearly legible.

The smaller arches on the exterior are located closer to eye level (one still has to look up to see them), and the script on the arches tends to be less intricate (*Surah al-Israa* (17:80) and *Surah al-i-Imran* (3:18)). The epigraphs on the smaller arches are also close to the central entrance so one inevitably passes them on the way into the central chamber. Despite the vertical orientation of the epigraph on the rectangular band (*Surah ar-Rahman* (55:1-25) which surrounds the central entrance, the epigraph's beginning is highly legible since it starts at eye level, is written in the largest script used at the *Jamatkhana* and begins with the well known phrase, "In the name of God the Most Beneficent the Most Merciful" (Figure 71). From a distance, the current tomb of Nizamuddin obstructs one's view of the rest of the epigraph, but if the earlier tomb was smaller, than the one that exists today, the epigraph would have been more legible from a distance.

In general, the darkness of the central chamber renders the internal epigraphs difficult to read until one's eyes adjust to the reduced light. Upon entry into the *Jamatkhana*, light from the doorway and the window screens in the east facade illuminate the west wall, making its calligraphy the most legible. Since proximity to the *mihrab* wall is considered desirable for practical and symbolic reasons, the epigraphs of the lower west wall are most easily viewed. Furthermore, highly recognizable *surahs* such as *Surah al-Ikhlās* are used. Of the arches at ground level the epigraphs adorning the arches of two passageways leading to the *musafirkhanas* may also have been noticed frequently (*Surah al-Anām* 6:73-74 and *Surah al-Mulk* 67:2-5).

The most easily read epigraph from the *mihrab* is the *shahada* which is written in relatively large letters and located near a standing person's eye level (Figure 68). The other three bands of epigraphs on the *mihrab* are less legible since their beginnings are oriented vertically. They begin just above ground level and are more easily observed while seated. Underneath the *shahada* is a *surah* that is only legible at close distance (*Surah al-Ikhlās* 112:1-4). The *mihrab* epigraphs are most legible to the person sitting and standing before it, this often being the *imam*.

While architectural features provide emphasis to certain epigraphs, epigraphs also emphasize certain architectural features in two ways. First, there is an increased density of epigraphs that corresponds with architectural regions of increased importance. Quranic epigraphs serve as a special form of architectural ornament since they are not only decorative, but also command the reverence that Muslims give to the word of God in form and content. Even when the Arabic epigraphs could not easily be read, they would have been assumed to include Quranic passages, deserving the utmost respect.

The sanctity attributed to the Quran is used to attribute sanctity and importance to architecture and the space it frames.

Quranic epigraphs are used throughout the *Jamatkhana* to emphasize its arches, squinches, central dome and *mihrab* niche. For example, the exterior of the central entrance is made more visually prominent due to the following features: the large central dome above the entrance; the entrance arch, which is taller and narrower than the two adjacent arches; the increased height and protrusion of the entrance portal; the addition of an inner arch; the use of a perforated stone screen; and the use of doors. Quranic ornament is also used to emphasize the central entrance. Unlike the side chambers the central opening has more epigraphs which are contained in the rectangular band and inner arch (Figure 5).

Another example lies in the interior of the central chamber. The densest use of epigraphs occurs at the squinch level, drawing attention upwards. These epigraphs are mainly continuous selections that start on the *qiblah* wall and continue along the squinches and arches counterclockwise around the central chamber. Since the citations begin on the west wall, the *qiblah* wall is emphasized. The set of notions used for reading Arabic text is then associated with the spatial dynamics of the building. All four walls become a continuous medium for the epigraphs. The citation of *Surah al-Hashr* and the names of God at the base of the dome reinforce this notion. The *mihrab* niche is also densely laden with Quranic epigraphs, emphasizing its importance.

The second way epigraphs emphasize architectural features is through their content. Epigraphs at the *Jamatkhana* refer to building use and make allusions that help suggest how the building should be regarded. On the exterior of the *Jamatkhana*, the

small arch between the large north arch and the central arch bears an inscription that mentions the actions of entering and exiting, laying emphasis on the entrance (Figure 71). One has to pass this epigraph when entering the *Jamatkhana* from this side. The epigraph, which is highly legible and reasonably close to eye-level reads, “Say: ‘O my Lord! let my entry be by the Gate of Truth and Honour, and likewise my exit by the Gate of Truth and Honour; and grant me from Thy Presence an authority to aid (me).’” (17:80).<sup>42</sup> The gate metaphor not only alludes to the entrance but characterizes it as a “Gate of Truth and Honour.” The phrase “an authority to aid” may refer to Shaikh Nizamuddin and his nearby tomb, given the proximity of his grave. A clearer reference to Nizamuddin also exists on the *Jamatkhana*’s exterior in the form of the Persian inscription/chronogram.

*Ayat* 18 of *Surah* 3, which is located south of the central entrance and symmetrically opposite to *ayat* 17:80, may also emphasize the entrance, but this is less clear. It reads, “There is no god but He: that is the witness of Allah, His angels, and those endued [sic] with knowledge, standing firm on justice. There is no god but He the Exalted in Power, the Wise.” (3:18). The verse seems to function as a reminder to profess the oneness of God before entering the central hall and it may also contain another reference to Shaikh Nizamuddin in the phrase, “those endued [sic] with knowledge.”

In the interior of the *Jamatkhana*, the epigraphs on the *mihrab* allude to the *mihrab* itself. Like the Kaba, a portion of *Surah al-i-Imran* (3:96-100), appears on the rectangular border surrounding the *mihrab* at the *Jamatkhana*. The citation appropriately includes a reference to the Kaba, drawing attention to the *mihrab* and its role as an

indicator of the direction of the Kaba. The selection's subsequent reference to the People of the Book (*Ahl al-Kitab*), however, is highly puzzling in this context.<sup>43</sup> The *mihrab* is also the site where highly recognizable Quranic passages, which have been the focus of exegesis and analysis, are located. These are the *Ayat al-Kursi* in *Surah al-Baqarah* (2:255), *Surah al-Ikhlās* (112:1-4) and *Surah al-Qadr* (97:1-5). The importance attached to these *ayah* enhances the importance of the *mihrab* by virtue of their proximity.

Finally, the two *hadiths* cited on the *qiblah* wall include a reference to *masjid*, suggesting clearly that the central chamber was to serve as a *masjid* and that one should greet it according to Prophet Muhammad's tradition. The selection states, "... To everything there is a greeting, and the greeting of the *masjid* is two *rakaa't*."

### **Historical documents and interpretation of the inscriptions**

The following historical documents are roughly contemporary with the epigraphs at the *Jamatkhana* and stimulate useful interpretive hypotheses about the selection and reception of the inscriptions. The *Futuhāt-i-Fīroz Shāh* is a document written by the Delhi Sultan, Fīroz Shāh Tughluq, and is thought to have originally appeared as an architectural epigraph.<sup>44</sup> The *Fawā'id-ul-fuād* is a record by disciple Amir Hasan Sijzi Dihlawi of conversations with Nizamuddin, which were very popular during the Shaikh's lifetime and would have been known to his followers and admirers.<sup>45</sup> Amir Khvurd compiled a hagiographic account of the lives of the early Chishtis and Shaikh Nizamuddin entitled the *Siyar-ul-auliya*.<sup>46</sup> Carl Ernst's research at Khuldabad has unearthed several useful documents.<sup>47</sup> They include Ruknuddin Kashani's *Nafais-ul-anfas* (731-37/1331-37) and Hammaduddin Kashani's *Ahsan-ul-aqwal*, which are both

*malfuzats* for one of Nizamuddin's successors, Burhanuddin Gharib. There is also Azad Bilgrami's *Rawzat-ul-awliya* (1152/1740), a collection of hagiographies of Khuldabad saints including Zaynuddin Shirazi, a disciple of Burhanuddin Gharib.<sup>48</sup>

In the *Futuhat-i-Firoz Shah*, where the *Jamatkhana* at Nizamuddin's *dargah* is mentioned, Firoz Shah claims to restore a number of historic monuments including the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex in an effort to commemorate the early Delhi Sultans. Anxious to represent himself as upholding Islam, Firoz Shah claims to persecute deviant Islamic sects and destroy several Hindu temples. However, no major military campaigns against Hindus on the scale of those made by the early Delhi Sultans took place under Firoz Shah.<sup>49</sup> On the contrary, his reign saw the increased integration of Hindus into the Delhi Sultanate bureaucracy and Firoz Shah himself was the son of a Rajput lady of nobility.<sup>50</sup> But since the days of Mahmud of Ghazna, it was important for Muslim rulers in India to maintain the rhetoric of punishing idol-worshippers. Catering to a Hanafi *ulama*, Firoz Shah aspired to be seen in terms of his predecessors, such as Sultans Mahmud, Aibek, Altamsh, and Alauddin Khalji who all sought religious justifications for their violence, and as the ideal Muslim/Persian ruler. Firoz Shah sought to associate himself with the early Delhi Sultans and their successful military exploits through restoring their tombs, sporadically destroying Hindu temples, persecuting divergent Islamic sects and adopting the rhetoric of violence against idol worshippers. In this context, the similarities between the epigraphs at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex and the *Jamatkhana* facilitate Firoz Shah's desire to commemorate the early Delhi Sultans and to characterize himself as defender of the faith and punisher of polytheists like his predecessors.

The person selecting the epigraphs would have had to take into account not only

Firoz Shah's interests, but also would have had to make religiously informed selections in concordance with the legacy of Shaikh Nizamuddin and the interests of the custodians of the *dargah*, who would have been entitled to much public respect and popular appeal on account of Shaikh Nizamuddin's widespread fame. It should be recalled that Shaikh Nizamuddin and his followers were not associated with active conversion but preferred to inspire conversion through pious example and demonstrated relative tolerance to Hindus.<sup>51</sup>

Since it can be assumed that the *Jamatkhana* inscriptions were selected after the passing of Shaikh Nizamuddin and the writing and circulation of the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the inscriptions reflect some of the religious interpretations of Shaikh Nizamuddin and the Chishti tradition as documented in the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*, but this is not the case. The epigraphic selections do not exhibit a close relationship to the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*. Instead, they encompass general Islamic beliefs with some oblique references to Sufi religious thought and practice in general, but there are no references that seem specific to the Chishti tradition. Nevertheless the *Fawaid-ul-fuad* remains a useful document in interpreting the inscriptions from a contemporary mindset.

There are several Quranic references in the *Fawaid-ul-fuad* but few coincide with the ones used at the *Jamatkhana*.<sup>52</sup> The only verses that appear both in the *Jamatkhana* and the *Fawaid-ul-fuad* are *Surah al-Anam* and *Surah al-Ikhlās*. *Surah al-Anam* is one of the longest citations at the *Jamatkhana* but it appears only as a tangential reference in the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*. Shaikh Nizamuddin is discussing the Prayer of Towers when a disciple asks about the Prayer of Light. Shaikh Nizamuddin replies, "What is called the Prayer of Light consists of ... two prostrations in the first of which one recites *Surah al-Anam*

(*Surah* 6) from the beginning up to the verse ending with “they deride” (v.4) and in the second of which one recites from “do they not see that we destroyed, and so forth” (v.5) up to “they deride” (v.9).”<sup>53</sup> In addition to being a reference brought up by a disciple, the Prayer of Light seems to refer to a type of prayer known across different Islamic traditions. The passage does indicate that the appearance of *Surah al-Anam* held deeper significance for those with religious knowledge.

*Surah al-Ikhlās* appears ten times on the *Jamatkhana* interior and once on the *mihrab*. In the *Fawaid-ul-fuad*, *Surah al-Ikhlās* appears six times and is recommended as part of various supererogatory prayer cycles to be recited either once, five times or ten times. Since *Surah al-Ikhlās* is one of the most repeated and commented upon Quranic *surahs* across Muslim civilization, its occurrence in both the *Fawaid-ul-fuad* and the *Jamatkhana* does not indicate a clear link between Shaikh Nizamuddin’s religious views and the *Jamatkhana* epigraphs. Instead, Shaikh Nizamuddin’s comments suggest that some people regarded *Surah al-Ikhlās* as representing a portion of the Quran or as part of a prayer cycle. Shaikh Nizamuddin speaks directly of the merits of *Surah al-Ikhlās*. He says, “The Prophet-upon whom be peace-said: ‘*Surat al-Ikhlās* is equivalent to one-third of the Qur’an’ ... If you should miss some portion of the Qur’an in your recitation, the three times that you recite *Surat al-Ikhlās* are equivalent to having recited the entire Qur’an!”<sup>54</sup>

Shaikh Nizamuddin makes some other interesting comments that suggest that the appearance of the *Ayat al-Kursi* (2:255) on the *Jamatkhana’s mihrab* can be a poetic reminder to the faithful that true prayer is conducted before the Throne of God. Shaikh Nizamuddin relates a story about a *Qazi* in Badaun who was annoyed with the visiting

Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi's insinuations that the *Qazi* conducted prayer improperly. The *Qazi* realized his error when he, "had a dream in which he saw Shaykh Jalal ad-din Tabrizi – may God sanctify his lofty secret – with his prayer carpet spread before the Divine Throne."<sup>55</sup> The story makes the point that religious scholars, preoccupied with the material world and religious technicalities, pray merely in the direction of the Kaba, whereas, "the beggars of God [Sufis] never offer prayer unless they see the Throne of God."<sup>56</sup>

Shaikh Nizamuddin provides a useful summary of the Quran as a whole that coincides with the themes that we have identified in the *Jamatkhana* inscriptions, suggesting that the epigraphs should be viewed as a general synopsis of the major themes of the Quran. The themes of the *Jamatkhana* selections are: the characteristics of God; early houses of worship; the Hereafter; punishment of unbelievers; guidance on prayer; definitions and consequences of belief and unbelief; the integrity of the Quran; and prophecy. Shaikh Nizamuddin says, "There are ten articles of faith in the Qur'an. Of these ten eight are already set forth in the *Fatiha*. What are these ten articles of faith? They are: God's essence, His attributes, His actions, [characteristics of God] remembering the world to come [the Hereafter], dedicating oneself to God and trusting to his mercy [guidance on prayer], remembering the saints and, also, one's enemies, fighting the unbelievers [punishment of unbelievers, definitions and consequences of belief and unbelief], and observing the divine statutes [guidance on prayer, the integrity of the Quran, and prophecy]."<sup>57</sup>

On the outer arch on the southwest squinch of the *Jamatkhana* is a portion of *Surah al-Muzamil* (73:1-4) which reads, "O thou folded in garments! Stand (to prayer) by

night, but not all night, half of it, or a little less, Or a little more; and recite the Qur'an in slow measured rhythmic tones [*tartil*]." This citation is unique to the *Jamatkhana* and is clearly an allusion to Sufi activities practiced in fourteenth century Delhi. This citation is also consistent with Shaikh Nizamuddin's recommendations to give prayer at night and to recite the Quran with slowness and devotion, suggesting that the selections may, in this case, reflect the thought of Shaikh Nizamuddin and be indicative of the activities within the *Jamatkhana*. Amir Hasan Sijzi writes,

At that time there was a group observing the all-night prayer vigil in the mosque. 'If one stayed up all night in one's home,' I asked, 'what would be the result?' 'To recite one portion of the Qur'an at home,' he replied, 'is better than to recite one portion of the Qur'an at home,' he replied, 'is better than to recite the whole of the Qur'an in a mosque!'<sup>58</sup>

The Shaikh goes on to warn against conspicuous devotion. In another passage, the Shaikh speaks about reciting the Quran. He says, "One must recite the Qur'an with deliberate cadence (*tartil*) and also with rhythmic repetition (*tardid*). ... *Tardid* ... occurs when the verse that has been recited arouses such a taste for God and sensibility to His Presence that it must be repeated."<sup>59</sup> Although the epigraphs and the text closely correspond, the practices referred to were probably common to a variety of Delhi Sultanate Islamic traditions.

Shaikh Nizamuddin also makes several references to Prophet Muhammad's *Mehraj*, which is mentioned in the citation of *Surah al-Israa* that appears on the *Jamatkhana* and at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex. Pressed to explain what the *Mehraj* was Nizamuddin, replies, "Imagine the best."<sup>60</sup>

Finally, the notion of attaining a vision of God is raised in the epigraphs and discussed in the *Fawa'id-ul-fuad*. *Ayah* 2 to 5 of *Surah al-Mulk* (67) appear on a ground

level arch on the interior of the central chamber's south wall and on the squinch-level arch on interior west wall. They include the following passage, "He Who created the seven heavens one above another: no want of proportion wilt thou see in the Creation of (Allah) Most Gracious. So turn thy vision again: seest thou any flaw? Again turn thy vision a second time: (thy) vision will come back to thee dull and discomfited, in a state worn out." (67:3-4) On the topic of the vision of God, Shaikh Nizamuddin says, "It has been reported ... that when they will have witnessed that blessing [the vision of God], they will remain in a state of awe for thousands of years. ... That vision will be such a very, very brief glimpse that afterward one may look for something more."<sup>61</sup>

Although these correspondences are compelling, passages in the *Fawaid-ul-fuad* that point to a specific Chishti religious practice do not find themselves echoed in the *Jamatkhana* inscriptions. For example, Shaikh Nizamuddin gives the specific advice of reciting *Surah al-Asr* ten times during the afternoon prayer cycle and *Surah al-Juma* every evening for relief from material distress, which Shaikh Nizamuddin's master Shaikh Farid used to recite as well. In clear cases like these, the *ayah* cited do not appear on the *Jamatkhana*.

The *Fawaid-ul-fuad* enables us to recreate the perspective of people, like Amir Hasan Sijzi, who was a literate Muslim in fourteenth and fifteenth century and closely followed Shaikh Nizamuddin's views, on the *Jamatkhana* epigraphs. Such a person would know that Shaikh Nizamuddin disapproved of Quranic text on tombs and coffin shrouds (*chaddar*).<sup>62</sup> The very image of the Quran's words emanated light for the true believer, even if one was illiterate.<sup>63</sup> The act of reading Quranic *ayah* brought tranquility to the reader, a manifestation of spiritual bliss. Reciting and chanting the Quran in

measured tones deepened one's understanding of the holy book and one's faith as one hoped for God's rewards.<sup>64</sup> One hoped for an increased attachment to God, to be pervaded with the Quran's meaning, or to be overcome with humility.<sup>65</sup> The interpretation of the Quran was something that deepened with each reading for the spiritually accomplished.<sup>66</sup> *Ayah* that captured one's attention offered potential divine guidance on individual concerns and actions.<sup>67</sup> The selections at the *Jamatkhana* encompassed the ten articles of faith that Shaikh Nizamuddin discerned in the Quran such as God's essence, actions and attributes and the Hereafter. The presence of *Surah al-Anam* in the *Jamatkhana* interior evoked the supererogatory Prayer of Light (6:1-9). The numerous citations of *Surah al-Ikhlās* brought to mind the conclusion of a prayer cycle as well as the Prayer of Khizr.<sup>68</sup> They would have also represented the text of the entire Quran.<sup>69</sup> Consequently, the central chamber of the *Jamatkhana* would give the supplicant the impression of being surrounded by the entire Quran. Finally, the *mihrab* was not just an indicator of the direction of Mecca but a reminder that all prayer was to be conducted as if before the Throne of God.

The *Siyar-ul-auliya* offers a specific reference to a Quranic *ayat* that also appears at the *Jamatkhana*. An appeal for guidance is made to the Shaikh by a man who has returned from making pilgrimage to Mecca but remains distracted. The Shaikh recommends that he recite *Ayat* 4 from *Surah al-Fath* (48) seven times a day with his right hand on his chest.<sup>70</sup> The first six *ayah* of *Surah al-Fath* appear on the exterior arch of the south chamber. Although the Quranic reference in the text is highly specific to the incident described, the coincidental use of the *ayat* suggests that the selection at the *Jamatkhana* could have been interpreted as a tool to reinforce faith and induce spiritual

calm.

Carl Ernst's research also provokes further hypotheses that Quranic epigraphs were selected and perceived in terms of religious thought, experience and ritual. Burhanuddin Gharib, a prominent disciple of Nizamuddin would prescribe prayers with *ayah* beginning with "*Qul*" (i.e. *salwat al qalaqil*) to ward off evil and solve family problems. These are perhaps similar to the series of expressions found in *Surah al-Anam* in the *Jamatkhana* epigraphs. Burhanuddin also specifies the *surahs* to be recited by a *dervish* visiting the deceased, which include two of the *ayah* used at the *Jamatkhana*, the Throne verse (2:255) and *Surah al-Ikhlās* (112).

Ernst's research also gives the occasion to speculate that Zaynuddin Shirazi, a disciple of Burhanuddin Gharib, may have been connected with the selection of the epigraphs at the *Jamatkhana*. Zaynuddin Shirazi stayed in Delhi between 748/1348 and 752/1352. Shirazi, who was considered learned in Quran, recited the Quran every morning at the tomb of Nizamuddin for two months. He stayed in Delhi long enough to witness the accession of Firoz Shah Tughluq to the throne of the Delhi Sultanate in 751/1351 and even met with the new Sultan in 752/1352, when he was asked to remain in Delhi but decided to return to the Deccan.<sup>71</sup>

### **Mughal epigraphs at Nizamuddin**

There are few similarities in the epigraphic selections of the *Jamatkhana* and subsequent Mughal structures at the *dargah*, suggesting that the criteria for selecting epigraphs between Delhi Sultanate and Mughal eras are different. The most common overlap is the citation of the *Ayat al-Kursi* (2:255) which appears on the graves of

secondary figures at the tomb of Atgah Khan and the *Chaunsath Khamba* (on gravestone of Aziz Kokaltash's wife). The most compelling coincidence is the use of *ayah* 78 to 81 of *Surah al-Israa* around the *mihrab* of Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb. Some of these *ayah* also appear near the entrance to the central chamber of the *Jamatkhana*, drawing a connection between the *mihrab* of Nizamuddin's tomb and the entrance to the *Jamatkhana*. This connection further reveals that epigraphy could be used to reinforce relationships between different buildings from different eras. It's worth noting that the *Ayat al-Kursi* also appears on the tomb's *mihrab*.

## Conclusions

Comparing the epigraphs at the *Jamatkhana* of Nizamuddin with the epigraphs on early Delhi Sultanate architecture, historical documents and subsequent Mughal epigraphs yields a variety of useful hypotheses that illuminate the conception and reception of the epigraphic program. The *Quwwat-ul-Islam* complex is clearly a major influence on the selection and placement of epigraphs at the *Jamatkhana*. The epigraphs are thoughtfully selected and positioned to lay emphases on generally accepted Islamic principles, while alluding to Sufi beliefs and practices. The epigraphs' comprehensive reiteration of Islamic motifs and principles are primarily an exploration of the nature of God and true faith. Despite the new relationship that the building's construction created between the Sultan and the Chishti order, the epigraphs seem to include no overt political messages. Furthermore, there is no clear effort to enhance the importance of Shaikh Nizamuddin by stressing ideas of intercession. While the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* epigraphs influenced the *Jamatkhana*, the Mughal monuments at Nizamuddin were not similarly

influenced by the *Jamatkhana* epigraphs, pursuing, instead, an alternative approach to the selection and positioning of epigraphs.

---

<sup>1</sup> I thank Dr. Anthony Welch for pointing out the absence in documentation and encouraging this study.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed discussion of the history of scholarship on Islamic epigraphy in general, see Sheila Blair, Islamic Inscriptions (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998). For a discussion of scholarship on Indian Islamic epigraphy see Z. A. Desai's preface in W. E. Begley, Monumental Islamic Calligraphy from India (Villa Park, IL: Islamic Foundation, 1985) 8-10.

<sup>3</sup> S. Blair, Islamic Inscriptions 19. J. Sourdel-Thomine, "Kitabat," Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition, 1986, vol. v, 210-216.

<sup>4</sup> Desai, Monumental Islamic Calligraphy 8. Some earlier precedents in architectural epigraphy are the work of German traveler and historian Niebuhr (1733-1815), the French expedition to Egypt from 1798 to 1801 according to S. Blair, Islamic Inscriptions 12.

<sup>5</sup> Sayyid A. Khan, Asar-ul-sanadid [1854, in Urdu] trans. R. Nath as Monuments of Delhi: Historical Study (New Delhi: Ambika, 1978) xiv.

<sup>6</sup> Sourdel-Thomine 210.

<sup>7</sup> Nath 37.

<sup>8</sup> For example, see Alexander Cunningham, Archaeological Survey of India: Four Reports Made During the Years 1862-63-64-65 (reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1972) vol. i, 188-89.

<sup>9</sup> J. D. Beglar, Archaeological Survey of India: Report for the Year 1871-72 (reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1966) vol. iv, 75. Carr Stephen, Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi (1876; reprint ed. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1967) 112.

<sup>10</sup> Blair, Islamic Inscriptions 13.

<sup>11</sup> Blair, Islamic Inscriptions 64. Desai, Monumental Islamic Calligraphy ... 8. Desai lists additional scholars who collected Indian inscriptions after S. A. Khan.

<sup>12</sup> Monuments of Delhi: Lasting Splendour of the Great Mughals and Others, Maulvi Zafar Hasan, compiler and J.A. Page, ed., 4 vols. in 3 bindings (1917; reprint ed. New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 1997) vol iii, 151-152. Zafar Hasan, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10 A Guide to Nizamuddin (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922) 15.

---

<sup>13</sup> M. A. Husain, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 47 A Record of All the Qur'anic and Non-Historical Epigraphs on the Protected Monuments in the Delhi Province (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1936).

<sup>14</sup> For example, the Quranic epigraphs of the tomb of Atgah Khan and the Chaunsath Khambha were documented. Husain 21-31.

<sup>15</sup> Nabia Abbot, "Arabic Paleography," *Ars Islamica* (1941) viii: 67-104.

<sup>16</sup> Oleg Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem," *Ars Orientalis*, vol. iii (1959) 33-62.

<sup>17</sup> Sourdel-Thomine 214. See also J. Sourdel-Thomine, "Khatt," Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition, 1986, vol. v, 1113-1122.

<sup>18</sup> Erica Dodd and Shereen Khairallah, The Image of the Word: A Study of the Quranic Verses in Islamic Architecture (Beirut: The American University of Beirut, 1981) vol. 1, 8.

<sup>19</sup> See Anthony Welch, "Qur'an and Tomb: The Religious Epigraphs of Two Early Sultanate Tombs in Delhi" Indian Epigraphy: Its Bearing on the History of Art, eds. Frederick M. Asher and G.S. Gai (New Delhi: Mohan Primlani, 1985) 257-267. Welch argues that the Qutb Minar contains citations directed at the unbelievers at a time of Islamic territorial expansion while the *qiblah* screens focus on themes of worship, religious obligations and Allah's power.

<sup>20</sup> Desai, Monumental Islamic Calligraphy 8-10. Z. Desai, "Islamic Inscriptions: Their Bearing on Monuments" Indian Epigraphy: Its Bearing on the History of Art, eds. Frederick M. Asher and G.S. Gai (New Delhi: Mohan Primlani, 1985) 251-256.

<sup>21</sup> Begley 12-13.

<sup>22</sup> Jonathan M. Bloom, "The Mosque of al-Hakim in Cairo," Muqarnas 1 (1983) 15-36. Nuha Khoury, Safawid epigraphy in Isfahan : the Masjid-i Shah (Victoria: University of Victoria, M.A. thesis, 1983).

<sup>23</sup> Sheila Blair, The Monumental Inscriptions from Early Islamic Iran and Transoxiana (Leiden: E. J Brill, 1992) 9.

<sup>24</sup> Blair, The Monumental Inscriptions 9. Blair refers specifically to Surah al-Hashr (59: 21-24).

<sup>25</sup> Blair, Islamic Inscriptions 211.

<sup>26</sup> Blair, Islamic Inscriptions 215.

<sup>27</sup> Blair, Islamic Inscriptions 19.

<sup>28</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad [707/1308-722/1322, in Farsi] trans. Bruce Lawrence as Morals for the Heart: Conversations of Shaykh Nizam ad-din Awliya recorded by Amir Hasan (New York: Paulist Press, 1992) 163. See also, p. 160-61 where Shaikh Nizamuddin discusses the relationship between intuitive and cognitive modes of knowledge.

<sup>29</sup> The Holy Quran (Version 6.3.1) (Cairo: Sakhr Software Co., 1991-1996)

<sup>30</sup> My thanks go to Abu Bakr and Shahin of the Islamic Information Centre, Vancouver for helping me with this task.

<sup>31</sup> There is also a correspondence between some of the inscriptions and their calligraphic style at the *Jamatkhana* and Firoz Shah's tomb suggesting a possible relationship between the epigraphic programs of both buildings.

<sup>32</sup> See black and white photograph in John Marshall, Annual Report of the Director General of Archaeology in India 1919-20 (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922) Plate II a. See colour paintings of the *Jamatkhana* exterior in M.M. Kaye, ed. The Golden Calm: An English Lady's Life in Moghul Delhi (Exeter: Webb & Bower, 1980) 105.

<sup>33</sup> According to Begley 14, Kufic script was popular in the twelfth century which would suggest an earlier date for any inscriptions in this script.

<sup>34</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 15. Hasan relied on Lal Beg's Thamarat-ul-quds, which he possessed in manuscript form.

<sup>35</sup> For example, see Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 8, 12, 16. Hasan points out chronograms for several Mughal structures including Bai Kokaldi's tomb, Jahanara's tomb and Farid Murtaza Khan's wooden canopy over the grave of Nizamuddin.

<sup>36</sup> Surah al-Israa 17:1-6 appears on the exterior of the central arch of Aibek's *qiblah* screen and *ayah* 1-5 appear on the southernmost arch of the south extension to the *qiblah* screen by Altamsh. At Altamsh's tomb, the interior east wall bears *ayah* 1-4. Altamsh's *Arhai-din-ka-jhompra Masjid* in Ajmer also bears *ayah* 1-4 on its *qiblah* screen. At the *Alai Darwaza*, *ayah* 1-12 appear on the exterior of the south side of the building and are repeated in the interior of the building, beginning on the interior north wall and wrapping around the rest of the interior.

<sup>37</sup> Alexandra Bain, Qur'anic Epigraphy in the Delhi Sultanate: The 'Alai Darwaza (Victoria, BC: University of Victoria, M.A. thesis, 1992) 56, 72. Bain interprets the repetition of *ayah* 1 to 12, particularly *ayah* 7 to 10 as a reference to divinely sanctioned punishment of people heedless of God's will to parallel Allaudin Khalji's exploits against the Hindus. Noting the Persian inscriptions on the *Alai Darwaza* Bain also convincingly concludes the epigraphist of the *Alai Darwaza* chose the passage from *Surah al-Israa* in

order to make comparisons between the Quwwat-ul-Islam complex and the holy places at Mecca and Jerusalem.

<sup>38</sup> Bain 62.

<sup>39</sup> J. A. Page, An Historical Memoir of the Qutb, Delhi (Calcutta: Architectural Survey of India, 1926) 37.

<sup>40</sup> Page 38.

<sup>41</sup> It is worth noting that with the exception of the *qiblah* these citations are located high up and are difficult to view from a distance, compelling one to angle one's head sharply. A reverential posture is imposed on those looking at the text.

<sup>42</sup> The epigraph also appears on Aibek's *qiblah* screen at the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque.

<sup>43</sup> The People of the Book are generally thought to be Jews and Christians. It is possible that the reference to the *Ahl al-Kitab* alludes to believers in the Vedic traditions, but this is speculative. Alternatively, this could be a rote citation of the verse but Dodd and Khairallah's survey of Islamic inscriptions, Image of the Word, does not confirm this.

<sup>44</sup> Futuhāt-i-Fīroz Shah [c.1354, in Farsi] trans. as "Futuhāt-i Fīroz Shah of Sultan Fīroz Shah," The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians, 8 vols. (London: 1867; repr. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1963-) 3:374-388.

<sup>45</sup> Fawāid-ul-fuād 324. According to Amir Hasan Sijzi, copies of the Fawāid-ul-fuād were in circulation and were for sale. He writes, "From the time that I first began to record these words till today when I reached the conclusion, there has elapsed a full twelve years, and this sum of twelve years, having been forged in the crucible of Truth, has been transformed into the gold coin of twelve months in the eyes of present-day moneychangers. It is to be hoped that this gold coin will now become a seal stamped on the hearts [of readers], ensuring both the full value of true faith and its universal circulation, if God Almighty wills. And God alone knows the Truth!"

<sup>46</sup> No English translation of the Siyar-ul-auliya is available.

<sup>47</sup> Carl W. Ernst, Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992).

<sup>48</sup> The following are additional sources that would be useful to consult: the Awarif-ul-Maarif by Shaykh Shihab ad-din Suhrawadi, which seems to have been a major influence in the organization (in particular the *jamatkhana* concept) and thought of the Chishti (See Fawāid-ul-fuād 167); Gisu Daraz's Quran commentary (India Office Library #109-111); Ruknuddin Kashani's Quran commentary, Rumuz-ul-walihin (partially extant in R. Kashani's Shamail-ul-atqiya). Both Quran commentaries may shed light on the Quranic selections at the *Jamatkhana*. Ernst 251-253 also lists additional Quran commentaries to

be considered.

<sup>49</sup> J. M. Banerjee, History of Firoz Shah Tughluq (New Delhi: Munishiram Monoharlal, 1967) 26-66 esp. 40-44 and n. 157.

<sup>50</sup> Banerjee 10.

<sup>51</sup> Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991) 124-129. Nizami argues that Shaikh Nizamuddin had a very tolerant attitude towards Hindus. The primary evidence cited is from the Fawaid-ul-fuad in which Nizamuddin greets a Hindu friend of a disciple and says that conversion of Hindus is only achieved through friendship and exemplary conduct. It can be assumed that the Shaikh's followers and custodians incorporated Nizamuddin's views into their own.

<sup>52</sup> The Fawaid-ul-fuad contains references to *Surahs al-Anam* (Q.6:1-9; 1 occurrence), *al-Asr* (Q.103; 1 occurrence), *al-Baqara* (unspecified; 1 occurrence), *al-Buruj* (Q.85; 3 occurrences), *al-Falak* (Q.113; 1 occurrence), *al-Fatiha* (Q.1; 7 occurrences), *al-Ikhlās* (Q.112; 6 occurrences), *al-Juma* (Q.62; 1 occurrence), *al-Naba* (Q.78; 2 occurrences), *al-Naziat* (Q.79; 1 occurrence), *al-Tariq* (Q.76; 1 occurrence), *al-Yasin* (Q.36; 2 occurrences), *al-Yusuf* (Q.12; 1 occurrence), *al-Zilzal* (Q.99; 1 occurrence), *al-Kafirun* (Q.109), *al-Nas* (Q.114; 1 occurrence). There may be more Quranic references that are not recorded in B. Lawrence's translation. See Fawaid-ul-fuad 103.

<sup>53</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 134.

<sup>54</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 245.

<sup>55</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 345.

<sup>56</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 345.

<sup>57</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 166.

<sup>58</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 106.

<sup>59</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 162.

<sup>60</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 314.

<sup>61</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 356.

<sup>62</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 347.

<sup>63</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 91.

---

<sup>64</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 162.

<sup>65</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 120-121, 162-163.

<sup>66</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 163.

<sup>67</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 165.

<sup>68</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 103.

<sup>69</sup> Fawaid-ul-fuad 245.

<sup>70</sup> Nizami 73.

<sup>71</sup> Ernst 137-138.

## **Chapter 6 : Post-Delhi Sultanate Developments at the *Dargah* of Nizamuddin**

One of the unique aspects of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin is that in the centuries following the Delhi Sultanate period up until the present time the site has consistently attracted further architectural development despite the considerable changes to the cultural, political and social systems governing the Delhi region and South Asia as a whole. This chapter concludes this study of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin and its surroundings during the Delhi Sultanate period by surveying subsequent developments which include Mughal architectural contributions, the encounters of British Colonials with the site and some of the more recent developments taking place at the site today. Although the area continued to be regarded as highly important after the Delhi Sultanate period, the basis for defining its importance has varied, reflecting the various infusions of additional cultural traditions into the Delhi region, social restructuring and transformations to its built environment.

### **Chronological Survey of Mughal developments**

The majority of the structures at the site of Nizamuddin's tomb were built during Mughal rule in South Asia, which extends from the early sixteenth to the nineteenth century AD. In addition to adding new buildings to the site, Mughal patrons also sponsored the rebuilding of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin itself. These construction efforts demonstrate continuing reverence for the Shaikh from the beginnings of the Mughal empire to its end in 1274/1858. An exhaustive treatment of the various structures and graves built during this period is beyond the scope of this study. Instead, this chapter

attempts to survey chronologically the structures raised at the site and the patrons involved with the aim of facilitating further study.<sup>1</sup>

Zafar Hasan's immensely useful study of the Nizamuddin area surveyed the site's buildings not in chronological sequence, but as one encountered them while walking through the site. Accompanying biographical sketches of the patrons and construction histories were also provided. Hasan and his readers entered through the gate to the walled outer enclosure and *baoli* on the north. Walking down the west side of the *baoli*, a visitor passed the early Mughal era two-story mosque and tomb termed "*Chini ka Buruj*" (Figure 61) and the tomb of Bai Kokaldi. A left turn was made at the end of the *baoli* bringing one past Maruf's pre-Mughal buildings on the left. An immediate right brought one to the entrance of the inner enclosure surrounding Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb, an early Mughal core surrounded by late Mughal additions (Figure 2). After presenting a summary of the construction history of the Shaikh's tomb, Hasan turned to the *Jamatkhana* immediately west of the tomb. Briefly mentioning a late Mughal structure ("*majlis khana*") near the entrance to the enclosure, Hasan proceeded to discuss the tombs of Princess Jahanara, Emperor Muhammad Shah and Mirza Jehangir, which belonged respectively to the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries AD. A small court directly east of the tomb of Nizamuddin was briefly discussed and followed by an in-depth discussion of the tomb and court of Amir Khusrau's early Mughal tomb. To the south of Amir Khusrau's tomb, the late Mughal archway of Mirza Ikram fronting a Tughluq era structure was noted (Figure 23). Two buildings outside the court of Amir Khusrau's tomb were visited next. West of the tomb was the small building known as the Khan-i-Dauran Khan *masjid*, a late Mughal contribution, and on the east was the

“*langarkhana*.” Next came the sixteenth century tomb of Atgah Khan and the nineteenth century *Khanaqah* of Bahram Shah both located outside the enclosure surrounding Shaikh Nizamuddin’s tomb, northeast of the Shaikh’s tomb. Moving further away from the enclosure, the seventeenth century building containing the grave of Aziz Koka was reviewed along with the pre-Mughal “*Lal Mahal*”, the *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah *Masjid* (“*Kali*” *Masjid*) and the *Khan-i-Jahan* Tilangani tomb.

Hasan’s study gives an impression of the site as a whole during the early twentieth century but the chronological development of the site remains difficult to follow. The short biographical sketches provided by Hasan do not always show the building events at the *dargah* of Nizamuddin in the context of broader architectural trends and historical events. For example, the construction of Humayun’s tomb and Shah Jahan’s relocation of the Mughal capital from Agra to Shahjahanabad Delhi are not considered. The following is a chronological survey of Mughal developments at Nizamuddin West.

### **Survey of Mughal buildings**

After a lapse of approximately 150 years in construction activity, the *dargah* of Nizamuddin site found new architectural patrons with the arrival of the army of Zahiruddin Babur, a Central Asian noble claiming descent from Timur. Unsuccessful in establishing himself securely at Samarqand under the ascending Uzbeks, Babur had turned his attention towards the Lodi dynasty’s territories in India, defeating Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat in 1526. Babur’s military successes laid the foundation for the emergence of the Mughal dynasty and empire that would be the major political force in

the Indian sub-continent for the next 300 years. The *dargah* of Nizamuddin attracted the patronage of some key figures in the establishment of Mughal rule in the Indian subcontinent.

According to an inscribed marble tablet on the north end of Amir Khusrau's grave, Mahdi Khwaja was the founder of an unspecified "matchless and incomparable" building between 1528 and 1530.<sup>2</sup> In addition to mentioning that the tablet was raised during Babur's reign, the poetic inscription praises Amir Khusrau and reveals the date of his death and the construction date using chronograms composed by Shihabuddin of Herat.<sup>3</sup> Shihabuddin was a composer of verse and poetic chronograms who arrived at Babur's court in 934/1528.<sup>4</sup> Chronograms were a consistent feature of Mughal inscriptions at the site, providing an important means of dating the structures. Their creators were often named as well, indicating Mughal tastes for clever epitaphs and the use of tombstones and graves as a medium to communicate notions of self and religion.

Mahdi Khwaja was a commanding officer in Babur's army that passed through Delhi on various occasions. He was probably of Timurid descent and was the brother-in-law (*yazna*) of Babur.<sup>5</sup> A commander in the left wing of Babur's victorious army at Panipat, Khwaja was sent ahead to guard the Delhi treasury while Babur made his victory tour of the Delhi region, which included a visit to the tomb of Shaikh Nizamuddin. In doing so, Babur probably emulated his ancestor Timur and set a precedent for future Mughal Emperors wishing to assert their authority upon ascension to the throne. After the conquest of Delhi, Khwaja probably accompanied Babur to Agra and, being active in the military, continued to travel extensively. In addition to probably being rewarded heavily from the Agra treasury, Khwaja was given the territories of Etawah and the Fort

of Biana. It is curious that Khwaja saw the need to emphasize Amir Khusrau's grave instead of Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb. Amir Khusrau had achieved fame for his poetry as far as Central Asia and that Babur himself seems to have been educated with Khusrau's lyrics.<sup>6</sup>

Babur's son, Humayun, seems to have also ordered additions to the *dargah* complex a year after gaining the throne in 936/1530 and near the time of the establishment of his capital city, Dinpanah (refuge of Religion), on the banks of the Jumna just one and half kilometres north of the *dargah* complex. An inscription on the enclosure that surrounds the grave of the famous poet, Amir Khusrau, bears an inscription celebrating Khusrau, the date 938/1531 and offers platitudes for Humayun who is entitled Shah of Shahs. The *Thamarat-ul-quds* indicates that during a pilgrimage trip to the *dargah* of Shaikh Nizamuddin, Humayun ordered an abandoned tomb at the site demolished and commissioned a marble gravemarker, marble pavement and an enclosure for Amir Khusrau's tomb.<sup>7</sup> Humayun seems to have been quite conscious of the Shaikh's fame as indicated by his comment to the water carrier who had helped save his life during his flight from India in 948/1542 due to Sher Shah Suri's successful rebellion against Humayun. The water carrier was named Nizam and Humayun promised to make him as famous as Nizamuddin Auliya.<sup>8</sup>

In Suri controlled Delhi, the noble Isa Khan commissioned an octagonal tomb in what must have been Ghiyaspur.<sup>9</sup> The *dargah* of Nizamuddin must have influenced the siting of the tomb just as the design of *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani's octagonal tomb along with Sher Shah's octagonal tomb in Sassaram probably inspired Isa Khan's tomb. Although Humayun's Dinpanah was located near the *dargah*, the Suri tomb of Isa Khan

must have drawn attention to the way the site could be used for monumental tombs for the elite.

Following his flight to Safavi Iran and the court of Shah Thamasp in 947/1540, where he visited the tomb of Ali (the eighth Imam and son of Musa), Humayun resided in Iran for an extended period. After the reconquest of Delhi (Dinpanah) in 962/1555, Humayun paid his respects to the grave of Nizamuddin with the visiting Ottoman general Sidi Ali Reis. Sidi Ali Reis, who wrote about his travels, also noted the popularity of Amir Khusrau's poetry at Humayun's court and the emperor's great interest in the subject, perhaps explaining the earlier interest of both Mahdi Khwaja and Humayun in Amir Khusrau's tomb.<sup>10</sup>

According to the *Thamarat-ul-quds*, Muhammad Tughluq's tomb over Shaikh Nizamuddin's grave was rebuilt or remodeled to include a dome and stone lattice screen and the surrounding court repaved with stone in accordance with the wishes of Bairam Khan, Azam Khan, Mirza Khan, Khwaja Jahan and others during the reign of Humayun's son Akbar.<sup>11</sup> It is not clear why so many patrons were involved, whether they acted together or separately and whether the commissions took place all at once or at different points in time.

A Shia Muslim and a poet, Bairam Khan (d. 968/1560) was the principal general in Humayun's reconquest of India from the Suris and was Akbar's guardian.<sup>12</sup> Following Humayun's death, Bairam Khan, who was married to a granddaughter of Babur, wielded immense influence rivaling the young Akbar's authority. Bairam Khan occupied the position of *Khan Kahan* and *wakil* in Akbar's administration based in Agra but rebelled and fled Agra after being dismissed from power due to court intrigue and Akbar's wishes.

Bairam Khan was murdered in Gujerat after seeking forgiveness for his rebellion. Mirza Khan appears to refer to Bairam Khan's son, Abdur-Rahim (964-c.1055/1556-1645) who was entitled Mirza Khan by Akbar in 969/1562 and married to Atgah Khan's daughter, Mah Banu.<sup>13</sup>

The holder of the title Azam Khan was probably Shamsuddin Muhammad Atgah Khan (d. 969/1562) who was the husband of one of Akbar's wetnurses, Ji Ji Anagah.<sup>14</sup> The couple cared for Akbar when Humayun was in flight. Upon his restoration, Humayun bestowed the title Atgah Khan on Shamsuddin and the title Azam Khan was given by Akbar following Shamsuddin's defeat of the rebel Bairam Khan. When Shamsuddin was murdered in 969/1562 due to court intrigue and jealousy, the title was passed on to his son Mirza Aziz Koka, Akbar's foster brother, which means the *Thamarat-ul-quds* could also be referring to him.

Khawja Jahan probably refers to Khawja Aminuddin Mahmud of Herat (d. 982/1574), who was part of Humayun's court that fled India and was also the *bakshi* (accountant, paymaster) of Akbar.<sup>15</sup> An accountant and skilled calligrapher, Aminuddin received the title *Khawja Jahan* when Akbar gained the throne.

With the exception of Mirza Khan, all the patrons mentioned above were senior nobles in the Mughal court, who helped regain the empire for Humayun. For this generation, Dinpanah and its environs would have been the objective during the reconquest; it was the symbolic capital of the empire and consequently an important place to demonstrate their social and religious status. Babur and Humayun's royal pilgrimages to the *dargah* of Nizamuddin added imperial focus to the ever popular

*dargah*, making it an appropriate site for nobles to commission buildings and assert their importance in Akbar's new regime.

The *Thamarat-ul-quds* also credits Sayyid Shihabuddin Ahmad Khan of Nishapur (d. 999/1590) with erecting a dome with latticed walls over Amir Khusrau's grave in 969/1561-2.<sup>16</sup> Appointed the ruler of Delhi (Dinpanah) upon Akbar's ascension, Shihabuddin was a key conspirator against Bairam Khan and Atgah Khan and contributed to both men's demise. His commissions set a precedent for subsequent governors of Delhi, suggesting that like the Mughal emperors, the governors and elite of the city also used the site to convey their authority.

The Emperor Akbar's interaction with the *dargah* seems to be largely associated with the construction of his father's tomb and the burial of his foster father within the *dargah's* precinct. Akbar's enchantment with Shaikh Salim Chishti and the resulting pilgrimages to the graves of early Chishti masters benefited the *dargah's* popularity and caretakers.

Two years after the death of Humayun in 963/1556, Humayun's son and successor Akbar transferred the royal court to Agra, but commissioned a monumental tomb for Humayun in what must have been Ghiyaspur in 970/1562.<sup>17</sup> The structure known as Nizamuddin's *chillagah* adjoined the north wall of the tomb complex. Perhaps inspired by Isa Khan's tomb, the site's selection was probably linked to the presence of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin and the tomb's construction undoubtedly brought an immense number of people to the area and greatly increased attention to the *dargah*.

In the same year, Sayyid Faridun Khan installed a marble slab with an inscription at the north end of Shaikh Nizamuddin's grave.<sup>18</sup> The inscription attributes a tomb

(*ruseh*) to Faridun and stresses his status as a *Sayyid* and a *Hashmi* (a descendant of the Prophet's ancestor Hashim). The builder is also stated to be a *Hashmi*. Nizamuddin is characterized as the *gauth* (pole, axis) of the world and as the *qiblah* for nobles and commoners. The date is embedded in a chronogram and the epigraph was designed by Husain Ahmad Chishti, who also seems to have designed an earlier inscription at the site on a tomb on the *baoli* in 948/1541-42.<sup>19</sup> The Faridun mentioned may be the brother of Mah-Jujak Begam, one of Humayun's wives.<sup>20</sup>

The Akbari historian Badaoni mentions a Husain Chishti (d. 996/1588) who was originally from Delhi.<sup>21</sup> A member of the *khanaqah* at Sikri, Husain was a disciple of Shaikh Salim Chishti and was known to have written many works. Husain Ahmad Chishti appears to be the same calligrapher associated with the inscriptions on the *Buland Darwaza* of Akbar's *masjid* at Fatehpur Sikri.<sup>22</sup>

At the same time that the construction of Humayun's tomb was underway, a tomb for Akbar's foster father Atgah Khan was also commissioned and completed in 974/1566-7 by Ustad Khuda Quli according to an inscription on the tomb.<sup>23</sup> The patron appears to have been Atgah Khan's son and Akbar's foster brother, Aziz Koka. Atgah Khan had been murdered several years earlier in Agra in 970/1562-63.

Akbar, who became a *murid* of Shaikh Salim Chishti of Sikri and therefore a devotee of the graves of previous Chishti khalifas, traveled to the Delhi area in 1564, 1566, 1567, 1568 and 1570, journeys that included visits to Humayun's tomb and the *dargah* of Nizamuddin, where he would have seen Shihabuddin's tomb for Shaikh Nizamuddin and Aziz Koka's tomb for Atgah Khan.<sup>24</sup> Akbar's trip in 1570 occurred in a year when Humayun's tomb was being completed and when Akbar's son Salim

(Jehangir) was born. Akbar credited the birth of his son to the blessing of Shaikh Salim Chishti. One year later Salim Chishti died and Akbar relocated his capital to Fatehpur Sikri. The *Thamarat-ul-quds* indicates that in 980/1572-3, Akbar himself ordered that the walls of Firoz Shah's *Jamatkhana*, believed to be built by Nizamuddin, be redressed.<sup>25</sup>

Another major tomb project was commissioned in the area possibly during the end of Akbar's reign and is attributed to Bairam Khan's son, Abdurrahim Khan (Mirza Khan) (d. 1036/1628) who was Akbar's Khan Khanan but was less powerful during Jehangir's reign. He enjoyed renown for his literary and linguistic accomplishments. Abdurrahim was married to Mah Banu, the sister of the patron of Atgah Khan's tomb, Aziz Koka. On the basis of stylistic similarities to Humayun's tomb and textual evidence, Rahim Khan's tomb has been suggested to have been commissioned in 1006/1598 for Mah Banu who died in that year.<sup>26</sup>

In 1014/1605, the year in which Akbar's son Salim (Jehangir) succeeded his father as Mughal emperor, an individual named Tahir Muhammad Imaduddin Hasan, son of Sultan Ali Sabzwari, commissioned a new tomb for Amir Khusrau in 1014/1605 according to inscriptions on the present tomb.<sup>27</sup> The marble structure was rectangular in plan and supported a vaulted roof. In addition to referring to Jehangir and Tahir, the inscriptions mention that the scribe of the text was a grandson of Shaikh Fariduddin (Baba Farid), Abdun Nabi son of Aiyub, indicating the continued presence of the descendants of Nizamuddin's dependents at the *dargah*.

A wooden domed structure similar in design to Amir Khusrau's tomb and inlaid with marble, a technique common in Gujerat, was commissioned by Sayyid Farid Murtaza Khan (d. 1025/1616) in 1017/1608-9 to cover the grave of Shaikh Nizamuddin

inside the existing marble tomb, according to an inscription on the structure.<sup>28</sup> Born in Delhi, Farid was an important noble and landowner in Delhi during Akbar's reign.<sup>29</sup> Akbar occasionally resided with Farid in Delhi and allocated to him the income from the nearby village of Salimgarh. Farid built Faridabad, a suburb of Delhi, and its *masjid* was completed the same year Jehangir ascended to the throne.<sup>30</sup> Farid was instrumental in securing Salim (Jehangir's) position on the throne. He was appointed governor of Gujerat but was recalled and later made governor of the Panjab.

Akbar's foster brother, Aziz Koka, appears to have been buried just south of the tomb of his father Atgah Khan in a marble hypostyle hall with Gujerati style lattice screens inscribed with the date 1033/1623-24, which corresponds to the date of Aziz's death.<sup>31</sup> Aziz's fortunes varied under Jehangir's reign and he eventually died in Ahmadabad while in royal service.<sup>32</sup> The marble hall is situated in a complex consisting of two enclosures. The first enclosure included a gate similar in style to the gates at Humayun's tomb and a series of cells that are no longer extant. The second enclosure contains the marble hall which is unique in Delhi and does not seem to have been exclusively a tomb like that of Atgah Khan. The complex may have been intended as a *khanqah* as well as a funerary site, suggesting the *dargah* complex was an active site in addition to a burial ground.

The cases of Farid and Aziz indicate that patrons were a means for the transmission of design ideas and taste from other regions of the Mughal empire, particularly Gujerat. Farid Murtaza Khan and Aziz Koka who both spent time in Gujerat, each commissioned structures strongly influenced by Gujerati design and techniques.

Six years after Shah Jahan, Jehangir's son and successor, took control of the Mughal empire, the emperor made a pilgrimage to Humayun's tomb and the *dargah* of Nizamuddin, where he gave a sizeable donation to its caretakers. A career soldier in the army of Shah Jahan made the next contribution to the *dargah* of Nizamuddin. After the construction of the Taj Mahal and following the relocation of the Mughal capital from Agra to the newly completed Shahjahanabad in 1057/1648, the senior soldier and Shia Muslim, Khalilullah Khan, was appointed as the governor of the Shahjahanabad province in 1061/1651.<sup>33</sup> Around a year later Khalilullah commissioned a verandah (*aiwanra*) to surround Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb as indicated by an inscription on the multi-foiled arches of the verandah.<sup>34</sup> The verandah must have completely obscured Faridun's tomb for the Shaikh. Khalilullah's commission is indicative of the continuing role of urban officials and of the involvement of Shia patrons in the development of the *dargah*.

Shah Jahan's relocation of his capital brought more opportunities for imperial patronage of the *dargah*, particularly on account of its relatively close proximity to the new walled city. The new capital no doubt encouraged the historic use of tombs of the *mashaikh* in the region, including the *dargah* of Nizamuddin, for the observance of religious festivals and the death anniversaries (*urs*), and as highly popular sites for socialization.

Shah Jahan's daughter, the famous Princess Jahanara, was an active patron of architecture and commissioned a marble tomb enclosure for herself south of the Shaikh's tomb and adjacent to the *Jamatkhana*. The building marks the first commission at the site known to be made by a woman. A marble headstone at her grave bears an inscription identifying her and the date of her death, 1092/1681.<sup>35</sup> Following her father's death,

Jahanara left Agra for Shahjahanabad and assumed a prominent place in the cultural life of the city. Neither city was truly the royal capital anymore since Aurangzeb maintained a mobile and militarily active court.<sup>36</sup> A *murid* of a Chishti shaikh, Jahanara wrote a work on the life of Muinuddin Chishti, the first Chishti shaikh in India.<sup>37</sup> The *dargah* of Nizamuddin offered the closest opportunity for her to be buried in the precinct of a Chishti shaikh.

A funerary enclosure adjacent to Jahanara's tomb and similar in design is reputed to have been built for the Emperor Muhammad Shah (d. 1748).<sup>38</sup> Muhammad Shah gained the throne at Bidyapur in 1719 and before entering Shahjahanabad in 1720, he completed a circuit, which included Shaikh Salim Chishti's tomb in Fatehpur Sikri, Muinuddin's tomb in Ajmer and Nizamuddin's tomb outside Shahjahanabad.<sup>39</sup> His reign, was marked by the invasion and sack of Delhi (Shahjahanabad) by Nadir Shah, the emperor of Iran. It was also a period in which the early Chishti *dargahs* of Qutbuddin, Nizamuddin and Nasiruddin enjoyed immense popularity and were visited by many thousands of devotees during the *urs* (anniversary of a person's death). Muhammad Shah actively endorsed and financed the large celebrations, which temporarily transformed the region with the erection of tents near the *dargahs* and lights along the major thoroughfares, which were lined with peddlers selling their wares.<sup>40</sup> He commissioned a large enclosure to surround the crowds at Nasiruddin's *dargah*, which suggests that the walls once surrounding the *dargah* of Nizamuddin may date to this period.<sup>41</sup> During Muhammad Shah's reign, the Hindu festival of *Vasant Panchmi* (*Basant Panchmi*), marking the coming of spring, was celebrated at various *dargahs* by Muslims and Hindus

including Nizamuddin especially since Amir Khusrau was popularly thought to have introduced the festival to Muslims.<sup>42</sup>

Two years after becoming emperor, Alamgir II had an inscribed tablet installed at the *dargah*.<sup>43</sup> The inscription says that slaves of the Shaikh are made kings and implies that Alamgir was enthroned because he was a slave of Nizamuddin. A supervising eunuch slave Hoshyar Khan and the date 1169/1755-6 are also mentioned but it is unclear what Alamgir exactly commissioned.<sup>44</sup>

Following the Battle of Delhi in 1803, the British Resident became the controlling authority in Delhi, directing the affairs of the Mughal emperor. The British allocated the territory of Firozpur to their agent in Alwar Nawab Ahmad Baksh Khan, who commissioned some changes to the *dargah* of Nizamuddin.<sup>45</sup> Since the Nawab's wealth depended on his relationship with the British, Ahmad Baksh Khan's commissions are indicative of the emergence of a new class of patrons attempting to emulate previous patrons of the site. The Nawab, who was a friend of the later Resident Thomas Metcalfe, seems to have been involved either with the repair or construction of the rubble masonry wall that enclosed the *dargah* and many of its surrounding buildings in 1223/1808-9.<sup>46</sup> The Nawab is also credited with modifying the tomb of Shaikh Nizamuddin, replacing Khalilullah's columns with the "organic" ones that are in place today. The small domes on the verandah of Nizamuddin's tomb may have also been commissioned by the Nawab.<sup>47</sup>

According to an inscription, Bahram Shah, a son of Shah Alam II, commissioned a *khanaqah* near Atgah Khan's tomb in 1810, which indicates that religious activities

continued at the site.<sup>48</sup> Ten years later, Faizullah Khan Bangash commissioned a copper ceiling with blue enamel for the verandah surrounding the tomb of Shaikh Nizamuddin.

The ineffectiveness of the Mughal Emperor was most clearly indicated in the attempts of the powerless Akbar II and his wife Mumtaz Mahall to have their son Mirza Jehangir, of whom the British disapproved, appointed as the official successor to the throne.<sup>49</sup> Jehangir attempted to shoot Seton, the British Resident, and was exiled from Delhi to Allahabad. Mirza Jehangir died in 1821 and is thought to be buried in a marble enclosure commissioned by his mother near Muhammad Shah's enclosure. The emperor Akbar Shah II is credited with rebuilding the current dome of Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb, which resembles the domes of the *jami masjid* of Shajahanabad, in 1239/1823-4.<sup>50</sup> The south court of Nizamuddin's tomb, which is paved with black and white marble may date to this period as well.

The Nizam of Hyderabad commissioned a gate to the court of Amir Khusrau's tomb inscribed with the date 1881. Kurshid Jah of Hyderabad commissioned an inscribed marble balustrade to surround the grave of Shaikh Nizamuddin, and Muhaiyuddin Khan of Hyderabad did the same for Amir Khusrau's tomb in 1303/1885. A tomb for the popular nineteenth century poet Mirza Ghalib who died in 1285/1869 was also built at the site near the tomb for Aziz Koka.

In addition to being strongly influenced by the pre-existing reverence for the *dargah*, the Mughals laid their own emphases through their patronage of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin. For example, the grave of the poet Amir Khusrau became the focus of several commissions that, demonstrate in architectural terms the popularity and influence of his poetry. Since Dinpanah had been sited adjacent to Nizamuddin, the *dargah*

became the most convenient holy site for the urban elite. The construction of Humayun's tomb diminished the adverse impact that the transfer of the court may have had. Instead, the presence of a large staff and the visitations of the dynasty's elite brought new wealth into the area and established the region surrounding the *dargah* as a preferred place of burial for the Mughal elite. Because of Akbar's special attention to Shaikh Salim Chishti, the *dargah* continued to enjoy royal favour throughout the Mughal period. The deep roots of the Mughal elite in Delhi fostered further commissions at the *dargah* during Jehangir's reign. Architectural developments in Gujerat came to exert influence over new architecture at the *dargah* through patrons that had various interests in the region.

The continued popularity of the *dargah* and future architectural commissions at the site were assured with Shah Jahan's relocation of the Mughal capital to Shahjahanabad. Part of the belt of villages, agricultural lands, former cities and architectural ruins surrounding the new capital, the *dargah* remained relatively accessible to inhabitants of the capital. The governor of Shahjahanabad's addition to the tomb for the Shaikh signaled the continued importance of the *dargah* in helping to establish political authority. With her strong religious connections to the Chishti order, Princess Jahanara's return to Shahjahanabad brought new possibilities for imperial patronage and emphasis on the *dargah* emerged when Princess Jahanara, an active architectural patron and devotee to the Chishti tradition, returned to Shahjahanabad from her self-imposed exile.

During Muhammad Shah's reign and residence in Shahjahanabad it becomes clear that the *dargah* of Nizamuddin along with the other *dargahs* in the region played a large and significant role in the social and religious life of the Shia, Sunni and Hindu

inhabitants of Shahjahanabad, particularly during important dates in the Muslim and Hindu calendars. Thousands of visitors came to the region's historic *dargahs*, which continued to be favorite burial places for the Delhi elite. Not only a burial site, the *dargah* of Nizamuddin attracted additional functional buildings such as the *khanaqah* of Bahram Shah and the Khan-i-Dauran Khan *Masjid*.

British controlled Delhi witnessed even more commissions by the Mughal elite at the *dargah*, symbolic expressions of authority and piety despite the relative powerlessness of the Mughal emperors. British economic developments created a new class of patrons who also sought to leave their mark on the *dargah* of Nizamuddin.

The many epitaphs that help construct a chronology of the site's development during Mughal rule also reveal many of the calligraphers, enigmatists and builders associated with site's buildings reflecting the emphasis Mughal society placed on these arts. Death, veneration of Shaikh Nizamuddin, spiritual salvation are all reflected upon in these epitaphs, conscious and sometimes pretentious demonstrations of faith and refinement. These epitaphs along with the accompanying architecture celebrate the memory of Shaikh Nizamuddin and Amir Khusrau and poeticize Muslim concepts of death.

### **British encounters with the *dargah* of Nizamuddin**

When the British came to control the Indian subcontinent, they viewed the architectural landscape of the Delhi region, including the *dargah* of Nizamuddin through eyes accustomed to European tastes.<sup>51</sup> Initially preoccupied with controlling the territory and later reveling in its picturesque decay, the British developed affection and a sense of

responsibility for the monuments of Delhi. Nineteenth century historiography and archaeology were employed to explain and conserve their surroundings which to them seemed mysterious. A tension emerged between those advocating further historical research into India's monuments and their conservation and those who saw such research as an unnecessary expense to the British administration. But how did the British view a living site, one with deep cultural significance such as the *dargah* of Nizamuddin? This section looks at some British Colonial perspectives on the *dargah* of Nizamuddin and explores how artists, Government officials, soldiers and scholars came to regard the site.

The British brought an additional type of visual perception, historical consciousness and set of meanings with which to encounter the *dargah*. Rooted in their own cultural notions of historical consciousness, the British emphasized the site's antiquity and artistry over the site's importance as a place to express religious devotion through architecture and ritual as well as display social status.

Artists and draftsmen, Thomas and William Daniell, toured India between 1786 and 1793 during the troubled reign of the blind Shah Alam II.<sup>52</sup> Indulging their passion for travel while aiming to supply curious Britons with drawings of the "mysterious Orient," the Daniells made many aquatint sketches and drawings of Indian architecture. Little historical context was provided obscuring the age and the cultural context for the scenes they represented. The Daniell's made at least three drawings of the buildings at the *dargah* of Nizamuddin.<sup>53</sup>

The Daniell's drawings were a visual rather than a textual impression of the *dargah*. The *dargah* was seen as a three dimensional object to be drawn in ways that would appeal to a British public keen on "picturesque" art and willing to pay for images

of South Asia. Looking at their drawing of the main shrine and *Jamatkhana* (Figure 72), the first thing to note is that the drawing is a two point perspective at a three-quarter view. This contrasts with M. A. Khan's one-point perspective drawing of the *dargah* (c. 1844) made some fifty years later (Figure 73). Although employing a limited knowledge of perspective, Khan is still steeped in the more "axometric" Persian miniature painting tradition. While the Daniell's image is centred around the buildings and their relation to each other, Khan's image is centred around the cenotaph of Shaikh Nizamuddin. Another key difference is the attention paid to lighting and shadows in the Daniell's drawing which is not evident in Khan's image. These differences indicate the general differences in perception and representation of three-dimensional space between British and local artists.

Certain adjustments have been made in the Daniell's drawing when compared to a photograph of the site. The proportions of the buildings have been extended vertically. The drums for the domes of the *Jamatkhana* are taller. The domes themselves are smaller and have a more pronounced curvature. The screens in the foreground have much larger and simplified perforations. The sources of light are puzzling since one source comes from behind the *Jamatkhana* and should cast a shadow over the tomb. Another source comes from the side of tomb, which is therefore, bathing in its own light source, giving it an ethereal feeling. This was perhaps an effort to illustrate the sanctity of the place using European artistic conventions, in which mysterious light sources are used to suggest holiness. The curious figures in the foreground, stately and refined in their demeanour, give the site the impression of being a place of elegant repose. These adjustments suggest that the Daniells went beyond an empirical description of the site

using European techniques in perspective drawing but sought to create an image based on notions of the picturesque landscape painting tradition and what the 'Orient' should look like. In this case the *dargah* appears as a stately but ethereal "public" monument with prominent domes visited by upright reflective gentlemen.

Following the Battle of Delhi in 1803, the British Resident became the premier authority in Delhi. In 1806, the Assistant Resident at Delhi, Charles Metcalfe, wrote some comments that illuminate contemporary British attitudes to Delhi's architecture in general. He wrote,

There is, however, something in this place to which the mind cannot be indifferent. The ruins of grandeur that extend for miles on every side fill it with serious reflection. The palaces crumbling into dust, every one of which could tell many tales of royal virtue or tyrannical crime, of desperate ambition of depraved indolence ... these things cannot be looked at with indifference.<sup>54</sup>

Metcalfe's wistful tone has been commented on before, but his view of palace buildings as a repository of historical tales of evil and virtue seems to be one that is generally applied to much of the architecture in Delhi. Equally interesting is Metcalf's distress over the decay of architectural monuments and the general lack among Indians and British colonials of historical consciousness in British terms. These attitudes illuminate Metcalf's younger brother's view of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin.

Thomas Metcalfe joined his brother Charles in Delhi in 1813 and eventually became the British Resident and Agent to the Governor-General at the Court of the King of Delhi. To share his life with his family, particularly his daughters, Metcalfe compiled a book by 1844 entitled Reminiscences of Imperial Dehlie.<sup>55</sup> It consisted of a series of paintings of Delhi's people and architecture, commissioned from M.A. Khan.<sup>56</sup> The pictures were accompanied by Metcalfe's commentary.

Metcalfe's commentary, which include citations of "Oriental" tradition and "Muhammadan" historians, revealed the amateur historian in him. The buildings were primarily a means to inquire into the historical personalities associated with the structures. Each building triggered historical anecdotes; or rather tales of "tyrannical crime." In his survey of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin, Metcalfe included the legend of Sultan Ghiyasuddin's assassination when discussing the tomb of Nizamuddin<sup>57</sup>, the political intrigues of Prince Jehangir the son of the emperor Akbar Shah when discussing the Prince's tomb,<sup>58</sup> the "madman" Adham Khan's murder of Atgah Khan when discussing the tomb known as the "*Chaunsath Khamba*"<sup>59</sup> and the sketchy basics of the poet Amir Khusrau's life when discussing his tomb.<sup>60</sup>

Metcalfe's book was essentially a series of postcards showing the places that he had presumably visited and that had made an impression on him. The *dargah* joined the ranks of the major architectural monuments of Delhi such as St. James Church, the *Jama Masjid* of Shahjahanabad, Humayun's tomb and the Red Fort, which are all represented in his book. A good example of this "tourist" perspective is Metcalfe's picture and annotation of the *baoli*.<sup>61</sup> Metcalfe wrote,

A celebrated Boulee or deep Reservoir adjoining to the Shrine of the Saint Nizamuddin ... It is much resorted to by Travelers, to witness the feats of Divers who are located at the place and jump from a considerable height into the Reservoir.<sup>62</sup>

Curiously, Metcalfe omitted the tomb of Princess Jahanara, an historical character that may have held extra interest for his daughters.

In short, Metcalfe singled out either big or intricate monuments associated with a male protagonist and a melodramatic story. As for the *dargah*'s religious significance,

Metcalfe had only the following to say, "His tomb which is visited by all religious Devotees, Hindoos as well as Mahomedans was erected by some of his disciples ..."<sup>63</sup>

Finally, Metcalfe was impressed by the craftsmanship of the buildings hence the following comment:

Within the enclosure of Nizamodeen's Tomb are the annexed cenotaphs both of marble and though executed at very different periods, they are both exquisite specimens of oriental designs and perfect execution. The one is sacred to the memory of the unfortunate Emperor Mohammed Shah ... The lattice work of the screen is incomparable and the massive slab of which the Doorway is composed most beautifully carved.<sup>64</sup>

Thomas Metcalfe was not the first to comment on the intricate marble work at the *dargah* site. Between 1831 and 1836, a young Second Lieutenant in the Bengal horse artillery named Thomas Bacon also recorded his impressions. Bacon wrote,

About a quarter of a mile from [Humayun's tomb] is a small tomb of exquisite workmanship, in memory of Nizamud-deen Olea, one of the Afghan princes who flourished at the beginning of the fifteenth century.<sup>65</sup> This beautiful specimen of the arts of those days is built entirely of white marble, of the most spotless quality, carved into screenwork of the most delicate design, and in every way most highly finished. The lattice work around the sainted shrine is so very slight, and so finely wrought, as to make the admirer tremble lest the next puff of wind should shiver it to atoms; yet it has remained here since the year 1415, and is now without a single chip or scar of any kind. The whole of what I have here described is on a miniature scale, very seldom employed by the natives in the commemoration of great men or of great deed ... The relics in question are the more valuable on this account, and also for their perfect preservation. There is, moreover, something so chaste, so simple, and yet so elaborate, about the place, that the very contradiction enhances the admiration when seen; such a sacred care seems to have been bestowed upon it, that it is difficult to fancy that it has been entrusted to any other keeping than to the light hands of fairies or angels: time has placed no mark upon it; it is as fresh and perfect as if it had only just been finished by the artist.<sup>66</sup>

For Bacon, tombs were commemorative structures built by artists. The *dargah* contained buildings of inexplicable craftsmanship and in an unusual state of preservation

amongst the ruins of Imperial Delhi, leading Bacon to make allusions to the supernatural. It is as if he felt that the site's existence and craftsmanship were a manifestation of the site's sanctity.

The writings and drawings of Alexander Cunningham and his Assistant J. D. Beglar of the Archaeological Survey of India were supposed to bring a more "scientific" approach to the study of Indian architecture. In the introduction to his surveys, Cunningham offered a series of quotations that summarized British attitudes to the architectural landscape in general that also have a bearing on the *dargah*. The British saw the historical landscape as something to be documented and studied in a systematic way. For example, Cunningham quoted the following reference to Indian Archaeology by the Governor General of India:

What is aimed at is an accurate description, illustrated by plans, measurement, drawings or photographs, and by copies of inscriptions, of such remains as most deserve notice, with the history of them so far as it may be traceable, and a record of the traditions that are preserved regarding them.<sup>67</sup>

This being said, it is surprising to find that when Cunningham discusses the *dargah* of Nizamuddin, he slips into the retelling of local legend while casting doubt over the morality of Nizamuddin.<sup>68</sup>

The study of monuments also became a means to demonstrate British intellectual refinement particularly to their European peers. The Governor General of India was again quoted by Cunningham as saying,

... everything that has hitherto been done in this way has been done by private persons, imperfectly and without system. It is impossible not to feel that there are European Governments, which, if they had held our rule in India, would not have allowed this to be said.<sup>69</sup>

While there was concern for European opinion, there was also the notion that India's history must be unearthed not for its inhabitants but for future Englishmen in a more thoroughly dominated British India. The Governor General of India was also quoted as saying,

But so far as the Government is concerned, there has been neglect of a much cheaper duty, - that of investigating and placing on record, for the instruction of future generations, many particulars that might still be rescued from oblivion, and throw light upon the early history of England's great dependency; a history which, as time moves on, as the country becomes more easily accessible and traversible, and as Englishmen are led to give more thought to India than such as barely suffices to hold it and govern it, will assuredly occupy, more and more, the attention of the intelligent and inquiring classes in European countries.<sup>70</sup>

Historical study and architectural conservation, then, become a part of the expansion and consolidation of British control of India.

Cunningham's assistant J. D. Beglar elaborated on the physical description of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin. He published plans of two of the *dargah*'s structures: the tomb of Nizamuddin and the tomb known as the "*Chaunsath Khamba*." However, Beglar did not only describe the site. He assessed the site's aesthetics, commenting on whether individual buildings were beautiful and architecturally consistent. Beglar wrote,

In the immense crowd of structures about Humayun's tomb, I only notice Khizr Khan's *Masjid* and *Chaunsat Khamba*. The *masjid* consists of one great room surmounted by a noble dome; the dome is flattish inside and is supported on pendentives the most beautiful in Delhi; ... these support gothic arches exquisitely carved and fretted, and in perfect keeping with the great entrance arch, which itself is very beautiful. ... the side halls are not particularly noticeable for anything but their utter want of keeping with the central hall.<sup>71</sup>

Beglar's description depended on European architectural terms such as pendentives and gothic arches indicating that Beglar viewed the site in terms of the Anglo-European architectural tradition and aesthetics.

H. C. Fanshawe was the Late Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government and published a guide to Delhi in 1902.<sup>72</sup> His book was a mix between a guidebook, scholarly research and a memorial to British soldiers who responded to the 1857 Mutiny. Fanshawe's book contained an appeal for the conservation of Delhi's architecture particularly with the coronation *darbar* soon approaching.<sup>73</sup> Fanshawe singled out the *dargah* of Nizamuddin as part of his original contribution, since his drawings of the site were the first to be published.<sup>74</sup> His drawings for the other sites he mentioned were obtained from the Military.

Fanshawe described the *dargah* of Nizamuddin as "one of the principal places of Muhammadan reverence in all of India"<sup>75</sup> but, like Cunningham, went on to speculate about his role in the death of certain Delhi Sultans and dwelled on the biographies of those buried in the tombs. Regarding the buildings at the *dargah*, Fanshawe wrote, "The conception of these hardly appertains to the region of high art, but the execution is well worthy of notice, as are the beautiful pierced marble screens in the walls of the enclosures."<sup>76</sup> Atgah Khan's tomb is described as "one of the most effective and pleasing specimens of polychromatic decoration in the whole of India, and even in its present half ruined condition will be considered by most people extremely pretty."<sup>77</sup>

Fanshawe also noted that the verandah ceiling of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin was restored by Mr. Robert Clarke B.C.S., Commissioner of Delhi "who was closely connected with Delhi and its development for a period of nearly ten years, and was greatly beloved by all classes of its citizens."<sup>78</sup> Fanshawe's comment is the earliest reference to British intervention at the *dargah*. Clarke's intervention is characterized as part of his duty to his citizenry and evidence of his considerate leadership. The *dargah's*

maintenance came to be seen as part of a British official's responsibility and a tool to demonstrate cultural awareness to the populace.

In his annual report of 1918-19, Sir John Marshall, the Director-General of the Archaeology Survey in India, quoted from his employee Mr. Page., as follows;

At the *Dargah* of Hazrat Nizamud-d-Din Aulia and Khwaja Amir Khusru, Rs. 2,851 have been laid out on conservation and the unusual item of redecoration. 'The principal work here,' Mr. Page writes, 'is the re-painting of the domed interior and of the exterior walls of the shrine of Nizamuddin Aulia, the faded designs and patterns remaining from the last occasion of its embellishment in the time of Muhammad Shah being carefully followed in the new work, as far as feasible. It should be mentioned that this work, which admittedly goes beyond the limits set by the Archaeological Department to measures of conservation desirable on purely archaeological grounds, is being undertaken at the special desire of the Pirzadas of the shrine, who are concerned rather with the embellishment of the shrine as a religious edifice than with its conservation as a monument of historical importance.'<sup>79</sup>

The next year Marshall again commented on the work.

This vision of Mr. Page, went somewhat beyond the limits of legitimate conservation as recognised by the Archaeological Department. This must not infrequently happen in the case of sacred monuments which are still "living," but it is manifestly more in the interest of the building that the restorations required by the Trustees should be carried out under expert guidance than that our assistance should be withheld because such restorations are not wholly approved on Archaeological grounds.<sup>80</sup>

Though bending the rules in this case, Marshall has clearly cast himself in the role of an expert whose advice and approval should be sought out when it comes to modifying historical monuments.

British interaction with the site of Nizamuddin was not just limited to curiosity, scholarship and preservation. On a regional level, the British made some dramatic transformations, which would have adversely impacted the *dargah*. In the aftermath of the 1857 Mutiny, they occupied Shahjahanabad and the royal fort causing the evacuation

of great numbers of Muslim elite and lower classes from the city. Many of them sought refuge near Humayun's tomb and the *dargah* of Nizamuddin.<sup>81</sup> After 1911, the British decided to make Delhi the capital of their territories in India and made massive land acquisitions to the south of Shahjahanabad, forming what would be New Delhi.<sup>82</sup> The new city no doubt, redistributed the population of the Delhi environs, of which the *dargah* was a part, and changed the historic agricultural land use of the area.

### **Recent and Contemporary developments**

The *dargah* of Nizamuddin and its surrounding buildings have not fared well in Post-Colonial India. The brutal partition of the sub-continent again created huge population movements that were echoed in the *dargah*'s development. Many Muslims left for Pakistan, while those who stayed concentrated around traditional Muslim centres such as the *dargah*. The influx of Panjabi refugees into the capital, which had begun during British rule escalated. These pressures in the last century led to the development of a dense multi-story residential fabric that envelopes the historic buildings today. Some of the funerary architecture like the tomb of *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani have been used as residences for over seventy years.

In addition to residential development, there have been some major architectural commissions of a religious nature in and around the area. These include the Centenary Methodist Church in 1958 (Figure 74), the Oberoi hotel, a large multistory Islamic Centre by the Jamia Millia Islamia (Figure 75), a Hindu temple (Figure 76) and a modern *dargah* for the Indian Muslim intellectual, Innayat Khan (Figure 77).

---

<sup>1</sup> A chronological approach is also taken in Matsuo Ara, *Dargahs in Medieval India: A Historical Study on the Shrines of Sufi Saints in Delhi with Reference to the Relationship*

between the Religious Authority and the Ruling Power (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1977 [in Japanese]).

<sup>2</sup> Zafar Hasan, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10 A Guide to Nizamuddin [hereafter A Guide to Nizamuddin] (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922) 22-24.

<sup>3</sup> A chronogram (*muamma*) consists of rhyming couplets that encoded dates or numbers using a standard system of numerical equivalents for letters that were added together to give an appropriate answer. Chronograms were part of late fourteenth and fifteenth century Persian and Central Asian literary traditions. Timur, himself, employed one in his own writings.

<sup>4</sup> Muntakhabut Tawarikh, 3 vols. [Abdul Qadir Badaoni, 1615, in Farsi] Various translators (Calcutta: 1924; reprint ed. Patna: Academica Asiatica, 1973) 1:449.

<sup>5</sup> Baburnama [Babur, c. 1530, in Chagatai Turki] trans. Annette S. Beveridge, The Baburnama in English, 2 vols. (London: 1922; reprint ed. New York: AMS Press, 1971) 475. Ain-i-Akbari [Abul-Fazl Allami, c. 1596-97, in Farsi] trans. H. Blochman, The Ain-i Akbari, 3 vols. bound in 2 (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1997) 1:463.

<sup>6</sup> Muhammad Abdul Ghani, A history of Persian language and literature at the Mughal court (Farnborough, Eng. : Gregg International Publishers, 1972) 186.

<sup>7</sup> Thamarat-ul-quds [Lal Bakshi, c. 1597-8, in Farsi] excerpt cited and trans. in Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 22.

<sup>8</sup> Tezkereh al vakiat [Jauher, in Farsi] trans. Charles Stewart, The Tezkireh al vakiat or Private Memoirs of the Moghul Emperor Humayun (1832; reprint ed. New York: Augustus M. Kelley Publishers, 1969) 18.

<sup>9</sup> Percy Brown, Indian Architecture (Islamic Period) (1947; reprint ed. Bombay: Taraporevala's Treasure House of Books, 1964). Brown dates the tomb of Isa Khan to 1547. Nath notes that an inscription over the *mihrab* of Isa Khan's tomb includes the date 954/1547 in R. Nath, History of Sultanate Architecture (New Delhi: Abhinav, 1978) 87.

<sup>10</sup> The Travels and Adventures of the Turkish Admiral Sidi Ali Reis in India, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Persia, during the years 1553-1556, trans. A. Vambery (reprint ed. Lahore: 1975) 53-55.

<sup>11</sup> Thamarat-ul-quds excerpt cited and trans. in Hasan 11.

<sup>12</sup> Blochman 1:329.

<sup>13</sup> Blochman 1:354.

- 
- <sup>14</sup> Blochman 1:337.
- <sup>15</sup> Blochman 1:467.
- <sup>16</sup> *Thamarat-ul-quds* cited in Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 25.
- <sup>17</sup> Catherine B. Asher, Architecture of Mughal India (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 44.
- <sup>18</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 11.
- <sup>19</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 8.
- <sup>20</sup> Blochman 1:477.
- <sup>21</sup> *Muntakhabut Tawarikh* 3:298.
- <sup>22</sup> Asher 52. See also, Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, A History of Sufism in India, 2 vols. (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1975) 281.
- <sup>23</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 31.
- <sup>24</sup> Ebba Koch, "The Delhi of the Mughals Prior to Shahjahanabad as Reflected in the Patterns of Imperial Visits," Art and Culture eds. A. J. Qaisar and S. P. Verma (Jaipur: Publication Scheme, 1993) 2-20.
- <sup>25</sup> *Thamarat-ul-quds* excerpt cited and trans. in Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 15.
- <sup>26</sup> Asher 142-143.
- <sup>27</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 26.
- <sup>28</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 12.
- <sup>29</sup> Blochman 1:454.
- <sup>30</sup> Blochman 1:688.
- <sup>31</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 34.
- <sup>32</sup> Blochman 1:343.
- <sup>33</sup> Muhammad Umar, Islam in Northern India During the Eighteenth Century (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1993) 170. *Shah Jahan Nama* [Inayat Khan, in Farsi] trans. A. R. Fuller, The Shah Jahan Nama of Inayat Khan eds. W. E. Begley and Z. A. Desai (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990) 453.
- <sup>34</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 13.

- <sup>35</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 16.
- <sup>36</sup> John F. Richards, The Mughal Empire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 165.
- <sup>37</sup> Satish Chandra, "Cultural and Political Role of Delhi," Delhi Through the Ages, Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society, ed. R. E. Frykenberg (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986) 205-217 esp. 208.
- <sup>38</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 18.
- <sup>39</sup> William Irvine, Later Mughals, 2 vols. bound in 1, ed. Jadunath Sarkar (reprint ed. New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1971) 2:2, 104.
- <sup>40</sup> Umar 417.
- <sup>41</sup> Muraqqa-i-Delhi [Durga Quli Khan, in Farsi] cited and excerpt trans. in Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, "The Early Chishti Dargahs," Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History and Significance ed. Christian W. Troll (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989) 21.
- <sup>42</sup> Umar 417.
- <sup>43</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 13.
- <sup>44</sup> Two years later, an individual named Jawhar commissioned a doorway with an inscribed tablet between Amir Khusrau's tomb enclosure and Nizamuddin's. The inscription appears to commemorate the death of Hoshyar Ali Khan.
- <sup>45</sup> Percival Spear, Twilight of the Mughals; Studies in Late Mughal Delhi (1951; reprint ed. New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp., 1961) 182-183.
- <sup>46</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 7, 14.
- <sup>47</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 14.
- <sup>48</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 32.
- <sup>49</sup> Spear 41-44.
- <sup>50</sup> Hasan, A Guide to Nizamuddin 14.
- <sup>51</sup> See a detailed study of British portrayals of Sultanate architecture in Sonia W. Lochner, Ruins of Power: Picturesque Portraits of Delhi Sultanate Architecture (Victoria, BC: University of Victoria, M. A. Thesis, 1990).
- <sup>52</sup> Mildred Archer and Ronald Lightbown, India Observed: India as viewed by British Artists 1760-1860 (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1982) 10.

---

<sup>53</sup> See Lochner 192-193.

<sup>54</sup> Charles Metcalfe cited in Mildred Archer, Indian Architecture and the British (Country Life Books, n.d.). Archer cites from E. Thompson, The Life of Charles Lord Metcalfe (1927) 63.

<sup>55</sup> The book was never published but is included in M.M. Kaye ed., The Golden Calm: An English Lady's Life in Mongol Delhi (Exeter: Webb & Bower, 1980).

<sup>56</sup> Mildred Archer, "Artists and Patrons in 'Residency' Delhi, 1803-1858," Delhi Through the Ages 276.

<sup>57</sup> Metcalfe in The Golden Calm 104.

<sup>58</sup> Metcalfe in The Golden Calm 106.

<sup>59</sup> Metcalfe in The Golden Calm 108-109.

<sup>60</sup> Metcalfe in The Golden Calm 112.

<sup>61</sup> Metcalfe in The Golden Calm 131.

<sup>62</sup> Metcalfe in The Golden Calm 131.

<sup>63</sup> Metcalfe in The Golden Calm 104.

<sup>64</sup> Metcalfe in The Golden Calm 106.

<sup>65</sup> Note Bacon's misunderstanding of who Nizamuddin was.

<sup>66</sup> Thomas Bacon excerpt cited in H. K Kaul, Historic Delhi (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985) 268-269.

<sup>67</sup> Governor General of India, excerpt in Alexander Cunningham, Archaeological Survey of India: Four Reports Made During the Years 1862-63-64-65. (reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1972) iii

<sup>68</sup> Cunningham 215.

<sup>69</sup> Governor General of India, in Cunningham ii.

<sup>70</sup> Governor General of India, in Cunningham i-ii.

<sup>71</sup> J. D. Beglar, Archaeological Survey of India: Report for the Year 1871-72 (reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1966) 4:75.

<sup>72</sup> H. C. Fanshawe, Delhi Past and Present (1902; reprint ed. Gurgaon, Haryana: Vintage Books, 1991).

---

<sup>73</sup> Fanshawe xii-xiii.

<sup>74</sup> Fanshawe xiv.

<sup>75</sup> Fanshawe 235.

<sup>76</sup> Fanshawe 240.

<sup>77</sup> Fanshawe 242.

<sup>78</sup> Fanshawe 238.

<sup>79</sup> John Marshall, Annual Report of the Director General of Archaeology in India 1918-19 (Calcutta: Superintendent Govt. Printing, 1921) 2-3.

<sup>80</sup> John Marshall, Annual Report of the Director General of Archaeology in India 1919-20 (Calcutta: Superintendent Govt. Printing, 1922) 4.

<sup>81</sup> Narayani Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires 1803-1931 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981) 23.

<sup>82</sup> Gupta 178-179.

## Chapter 7 : Conclusion

When the *dargah* of Nizamuddin was developed in the fourteenth century AD, the Delhi region was a complex blend of urban and suburban settlements diverse in culture. Sultan Muhammad's Jahanpanah, and Sultan Firoz Shah's Firozabad were the principal cities of the age surrounded by supporting villages. The cultural mix included local Hindus who had presumably lived in the region before the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, descendants of the original Muslim Turkish and Afghan military and ruling elite, Persian Muslim refugees and recent Hindu converts to Islam. Segregation along racial and religious lines was by no means absolute and was mitigated through intermarriage, daily interaction, the inclusion of Muslim converts into the Sultanate bureaucracy as well as economic, intellectual and religious exchanges. Muslim society had already incorporated into their own way of life many of the region's pre-Islamic traditions ranging from ascetic practices to architectural design.

The reigning Sultans saw themselves as a combination of the Persian kings of ancient legends as well as the Commanders of all Faithful Muslims (*Amir-ul-muminin*) throughout the Muslim world. Comparing themselves to the founders of the Delhi Sultanate, Sultans Muhammad and Firoz Shah not only saw themselves as administrators of the state but as upholders of Islamic faith. Belief and religious practice in the Hindu traditions were tolerated but vulnerable to attack and condemnation by the Sultans who never abandoned Mahmud of Ghazna's rhetoric of punishing "idol-worshippers." Hanafi interpretations of Sunni Islam were officially endorsed but the plurality of Islamic traditions could not be completely suppressed.

The greatest challenges to the Sultans' control over the practice of Islamic faith were the multitude of *khanaqahs* centred around the *mashaikh* and Sufi interpretations of Islam that had emerged in the capital region. *Khanaqahs* were places where one would find food, temporary accommodations and religious discussion and some were host to recitations of devotional poetry (*sama*), a practice frowned upon by the religious establishment. To contain these centres of potential dissent and religious diversity, both Sultans increased their role in *khanaqah* life by providing funding and Sultan Firoz Shah, in particular, embarked on an extensive *khanaqah* building program.

A common set of beliefs, rituals and practices were prevalent in Delhi society, especially those concerning the *mashaikh* and the afterlife. People from all walks of life would have agreed that the best of the *mashaikh* were spiritual beings favoured by the Divine, possessing considerable authority to interpret Islam. They could offer protection for one's spiritual welfare in their lifetime and from beyond the grave. It was common practice to submit oneself to their life-long spiritual guidance. It was the *mashaikh* who held the most influence over how Delhi's Muslim residents chose to practice Islam and every time one of the esteemed *mashaikh* passed away, society was thought to have suffered a tremendous loss.

Tomb building was a popular practice for the elite and gravesites in general were considered to be sites of spiritual interaction. The gravesites of the pious were understood to be extraordinarily blessed places that were especially appropriate for daily and supererogatory prayers as well as for making petitions for divine assistance. As part of their burial rituals, it was commonplace for Delhi locals to cover grave-markers completely with flowers and other offerings at the time of death, incorporating Hindu

venerative practices into Muslim burial rituals. Visits to cemeteries and graves of the *mashaikh*, where burial rituals were reenacted, were considered an integral part of religious and social life.

One of the most important khanaqahs in the Delhi region belonged to Shaikh Nizamuddin, who was the leader of the popular Chishti spiritual tradition and steadfastly refused financial ties to the Sultanate. In a small complex located near the Jumna River, which seems to have included a multi-purpose hall (*jamatkhana*) that served as a communal residence for initiates and travelers, Nizamuddin shared his ideas on faith, morality and death with the thousands of admirers and followers that came to visit him. They bestowed upon him generous donations, which he scrupulously used to assist the needy and support his nephews and his spiritual mentor's grandsons, who resided with him.

The death of Shaikh Nizamuddin must have been a traumatic event for many Delhi residents and the future of his *khanaqah* as well as the appropriate place of burial was on the minds of many. There is compelling evidence that shows the Shaikh was buried a short distance away from his *khanaqah* and that the architectural developments at his gravesite all occurred after his death. It is highly unlikely that Shaikh Nizamuddin ever saw or commissioned any of the structures built at his gravesite.

Amidst the religious agendas of the Sultans and the beliefs and customs of Delhi locals, Shaikh Nizamuddin's gravesite was transformed from an isolated resting place into a centre of pilgrimage, religious activity and human settlement. Unlike the tomb commission for Sultan Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah by Sultan Muhammad, who alone asserted its importance with his wealth and attention, Shaikh's Nizamuddin's gravesite

would have probably been regularly visited, in keeping with local customs by the large number of Delhi locals who had admired and consulted the Shaikh for his guidance and blessings during his lifetime. The site was easily accessible to residents of Jahanpanah and Firozabad. Women and perhaps some of the Hindus living in the region were probably among the visitors to the grave. Followers of the Chishti tradition, such as Zaynuddin Shirazi and Nasiruddin, who carried on the Shaikh's religious teachings, are known to have used the site to express their religious devotion. Shaikh Nizamuddin himself anticipated the popularity of his gravesite, advising his dependents to reside near his grave and support themselves using the donations that would inevitably accumulate there. This, no doubt, occurred and it is perhaps possible that the Tughluq-era buildings near Nizamuddin's grave served as their residences and marked the initial transference of the Shaikh's *khanqah* activities to his gravesite.

With the attention inevitably given to Nizamuddin's place of burial, the site served as a catalyst for a variety of different developments, attracting both small and large architectural commissions primarily during the reign of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq. When taken as a whole, these developments are surprisingly diverse. Only some are funerary in nature; the rest are all associated with religious activity and human settlement. The developments include the no-longer extant tomb for the Shaikh commissioned by Sultan Muhammad as well as some other small tombs, small scale structures that were possibly residences, Sultan Firoz Shah's *Jamatkhana* with its central chamber *masjid*, the step-well (*baoli*), the large octagonal tomb complex of *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani, the Friday *masjid* of Maqbul's son *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah and *Malik Sayyid-ul-Hujjab* Maruf's structures near the *baoli*.

An important aspect of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin site that has not been stressed before, is the survival of small-scale buildings (Maruf's passageway, "*langarkhana*," and building south of the *dargah* of Nizamuddin) using Tughluq-era construction techniques. Grouped with the *chillahgah* that adjoins the enclosure to Humayun's tomb and is thought to be Nizamuddin's residence, and the unidentified building at Mahipalpur, these structures comprise a class of buildings that require further study. Furthermore, the inscription on Maruf's structures provides a rare example of a date associated with these types of structures.

Despite the confusion surrounding the patronage of the *Jamatkhana* and thoughts that it was built during Shaikh Nizamuddin's lifetime, the building can be confidently attributed to Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq and concluded to have been built on the basis of compelling textual evidence well after the Shaikh's death. Although there are similarities in design details between the Khalji-era *Alai Darwaza* and the *Jamatkhana*, the architectural details and construction methods of the *Jamatkhana* can also be considered to be consistent with other monumental Tughluq-era buildings. There is no convincing reason, textual or archaeological, to think that the *Jamatkhana* was built in separate phases by different patrons. Instead, its present layout is probably how it was initially conceived with a court of enclosing sandstone screens to surround the *dargah*. Some modification to the building's surface treatment most likely took place in Mughal and more recent times. Not much is known about the designers and builders of the *Jamatkhana*, merely that it is possible that Firoz Shah's *khanaqah* architect and builder, Malik Ghazi Shahna and Abdul Hakk, may have been involved and that the construction force may have included Hindus as in the case of the restoration of the *Qutb Minar*.

Firoz Shah's unusual three-chamber *Jamatkhana* seems to have been conceived specifically to encourage the development of *khanaqah* activities at the site of Shaikh Nizamuddin's tomb. With the purpose of establishing a lasting role for the Sultan in the Shaikh's religious legacy, the *Jamatkhana's* construction was an effort to relocate the activities centred around the Shaikh's *khanaqah* to his gravesite. By referring to the building as a *jamatkhana*, Firoz Shah alluded to earlier Chishti *jamatkhanas*, strongly suggesting that the site was to function as a *khanaqah* in keeping with the other *khanaqahs* that the Sultan had established in the region.

However, the structure was far more elaborate than the earlier *jamatkhanas* mentioned in textual sources. Instead of relying upon conventional architectural models, an innovative three-chamber design was conceived with the central chamber distinguished as a place of prayer from the less clearly defined side-chambers, which probably served as multipurpose rooms for sleep, religious discussion and meals. By introducing a new and more structured design for *jamatkhanas*, the Sultan assumed the authority to redefine how Chishti religious activities should be conducted. Though innovative, the *jamatkhana* was also designed appear to be a historic monument since it strongly resembled the *Alai Darwaza* at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* complex. This display of historical consciousness is consistent with Firoz Shah's restorations to Delhi's historic architecture, which served to compare himself favourably to the accomplishments of the past Delhi Sultans. It is also plausible that older models of architecture were deemed more appropriate for commemorating Shaikh Nizamuddin, who had lived in Delhi from Balban's reign until the rise of Muhammad bin Tughluq.

The allusions to Delhi's historic architecture were further reinforced with the

*Jamatkhana's* epigraphic program. One of the major epigraphic programs still extant from the Delhi Sultanate period, the *Jamatkhana's* primarily Quranic inscriptions were clearly inspired by those found at the *Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid* complex but were unique to the *Jamatkhana*, having been thoughtfully selected and positioned.

Emphasizing generally accepted Islamic principles while alluding to Sufi beliefs and practices, the epigraphs' comprehensive reiteration of Islamic motifs and principles were an exploration of the nature of God and true faith. They included no overt political allusions, despite the new relationship that the building's construction created between the Sultan and the Chishti order. Furthermore, there was no clear effort to enhance the importance of Shaikh Nizamuddin by stressing ideas of intercession. Although not all the epigraphs would have been easily read, some were conveniently positioned making them an integral part of a visitor's interaction with the *Jamatkhana*. The choice of Shaikh Nizamuddin's gravesite for such an extensive and permanent Quranic epigraphic program indicated the height of Shaikh's religious stature in Delhi Sultanate society and the sanctity attributed to his *dargah*.

Following Sultan Firoz Shah's lead and guided by their own personal devotions to the Shaikh and the Chishti order, nobles in Firoz Shah's court were responsible for the site's further development. The construction of the large octagonal tomb for the Sultanate's top official, the *Khan-i-Jahan* Maqbul Tilangani, and the tomb's elaborate enclosure, which are now endangered, clearly demonstrates the wealth of Maqbul's family and shows that the *dargah* of Nizamuddin was regarded as a highly prestigious location. The fact that Maqbul was a convert to Islam raises interesting questions about whether his tomb reflected his layered identity in its architecture. In this context, it

would be useful to consider the tomb's epigraphs, which still require documentation and analysis.

In preceding Delhi Sultanate architecture, octagonal plans were associated with princes, such as the tombs of Altamsh's son Nasiruddin and Ghiyasuddin Tughluq's son Zafar Khan, which suggests that the tomb plan for Maqbul was indicative of social rank. Most intriguing are the similarities between the enclosure for Sultan Firoz Shah's shrine for the *Qadam Sharif* and the enclosure for Maqbul's tomb, which would form the basis for an interesting comparative study. The purpose of such a large tomb and enclosure remains unclear, but it is possible that Maqbul's tomb, like the tomb of Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah, was host to a large staff of religious devotees (*arbab*). It can be imagined to have been a manufactured religious centre funded by the *Khan-i-Jahan*'s wealth that asserted his social stature and assured his spiritual success.

The construction of the *baoli* and *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah's large *masjid*, which is currently being restored and heavily modified, most clearly point to a significant growth in population in the area surrounding the *dargah* of Nizamuddin. This growth suggests that the site was not only an active *khanaqah* administered by the Shaikh's dependents and heavily visited on religious occasions but was the centre of a larger, more permanent community. Located close to the *dargah*, the *baoli* may have initially been conceived to support mass pilgrimage to the *dargah*, gradually being used to sustain a larger community in the area. Junan Shah's large *masjid* with its four-court design that was especially suitable for the rainy season, served the congregational worship needs for a Muslim community of considerable size. This flow of people would have drawn greater attention to the tomb of Junan Shah's father, Maqbul. Particular attention should

be paid to the inscription on Junan Shah's *masjid* requesting God's blessings for those who remembered Junan Shah in their prayers. The inscription included the term *dargah*, which possibly referred to the large tomb complex of Maqbul but more likely referred to the tomb and court of Shaikh Nizamuddin. Along with the growth in population, the number of people involved closely with the religious activities of the *dargah* also appears to have increased as suggested by the construction of the buildings adjacent to the *baoli* that are attributed to Maruf.

Development at the *dargah* subsided for over one hundred and fifty years, but so long as the region was still inhabited, the *dargah* would have remained active. Architectural commissions at the site resumed with the establishment of a new Muslim empire superimposed over the fragmented Delhi Sultanate by the Central Asian Mughals. Though the Mughals shared many cultural and religious affinities with the Delhi's Muslim society, they were inheritors of Timurid values and were encountering Hindu culture anew.

The early Mughals brought their Timurid literary court culture and more heterodox religious views to the *dargah*, celebrating the poet Amir Khusrau as much as Shaikh Nizamuddin. Akbar's relationship with Shaikh Salim of the Chishti order ensured the support of its historic *dargahs*, including the *dargah* of Nizamuddin. Chishti history was rewritten and rebuilt in line with the changing Mughal aesthetics to serve their own ends. The memory of past Chishti masters seemed to rival if not overwhelm Chishtis of the Mughal era. The fortuitous siting of two Mughal capitals in the region, Dinpanah and Shahjahanabad sustained the interaction of the elite and the public with the *dargah*. For the Mughal Emperors, performing pilgrimage to the *dargah* became part of their

enthronement ritual. The elite classes made commissions at the *dargah* demonstrating their refinement and status. As in Firoz Shah's time, visits to the tomb along with other tombs in the region continued to be a major social and religious event that grew with imperial patronage. While the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* epigraphs influenced the *Jamatkhana*, the Mughal monuments at Nizamuddin were not similarly influenced by the *Jamatkhana* epigraphs, pursuing instead, an alternative approach to the selection and positioning of Quranic epigraphs.

Under British control of India, the land use of the area surrounding the *dargah* of Nizamuddin changed drastically and a new class of patrons commissioning works at the *dargah* emerged. The British effected massive population movements that placed developmental pressures on the site. In addition, British scholarship introduced principles of conservation and historical consciousness while maintaining notions of European cultural superiority. For the British, the *dargah* was an important historic site requiring expert conservation and care. Its spiritual attributes were only vaguely sensed in contrast with the unceasing devotion and embellishment of the shrine by locals, who focused on Nizamuddin's cenotaph. The surrounding architecture was not seen simply as a historical artifact requiring preservation but as a spiritual well from which guidance and blessings could continue to be drawn and as a site to continue demonstrating one's social rank and religiosity.

In independent, post-partition India, the *dargah* has retained its historic religious function and regard but it is also increasingly seen by Hindu intellectuals influenced by British antiquarianism as an endangered part of the modern secular Indian state's heritage. Now an island of Muslim life in a predominantly Hindu capital, the *dargah* and

its surrounding historic buildings are being heavily modified, enveloped by multiple stories of hastily conceived human dwellings built on land controlled by the *dargah sharif*, who claim descent from Shaikh Nizamuddin's dependents. They use their authority to offer guidance and blessings, cultivate international links and coordinate group pilgrimages to the site, effectively serving as travel agents and enhancing the *dargah's* revenue stream. Only the *dargah* itself and the adjacent *Jamatkhana* have been able to resist the developmental pressures facing the site thanks to the continued reverence of Delhi citizens for Shaikh Nizamuddin and his gravesite.

The scholar Bruce Lawrence has suggested that Nizamuddin's memory was sustained by the literature that surrounds him. No doubt the architecture that covers his tomb and surrounds it played a role as well. It is perhaps ironic that Shaikh Nizamuddin, whose gravesite has received so much architectural embellishment over the centuries, personally disapproved of tomb restorations. Nizamuddin's *murid* and compiler of his conversations, Amir Hasan, relates the following brief but intriguing exchange that gives us a clue as to how the Shaikh himself might have viewed the various reconstructions of his tomb. Hasan writes,

I had a thought in mind and that day I voiced it to the master. What I had wondered was: A tomb, once it has been built, if it becomes defiled, should one then rebuild it? "No," replied the master. "Whatever has been defiled should not be refurbished. It is better to consign its contents to the mercy of Almighty God!"<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Fawaid-ul-fuad* [Amir Hasan, 1308-1322, in Farsi] trans. Bruce Lawrence as Morals for the Heart: Conversations of Shaykh Nizam ad-din Awliya recorded by Amir Hasan (New York: Paulist Press, 1992) 323.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources (listed chronologically):

The Holy Quran (Version 6.3.1). Cairo: Sakhr Software Co., 1991-1996.

Tarikh-i-Hind. [Al-Biruni, 1030, in Arabic] trans. Edward C. Sachau. Alberuni's India. 2 vols. New Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1996.

Farman of Allaudin Khalji [Amir Khusrau] cited and translated by Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, Perso-Arabic sources of information on the life and conditions in the Sultanate of Delhi. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1992.

Fawaid-ul-fuad. [707/1308-722/1322, in Farsi] trans. Bruce Lawrence as Morals for the Heart: Conversations of Shaykh Nizam ad-din Awliya recorded by Amir Hasan. New York: Paulist Press, 1992.

“Khilafatnama,” [Shaikh Nizamuddin, 1323, in Arabic] in Siyar-ul-auliya. [Amir Khvurd, in Persian] cited and translated in K. A Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991.

Rehla. [Ibn Battuta, 1325-1354, in Arabic] trans. H. A. R. Gibb. The Travels of Ibn Battuta. 4 vols. London: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Masalik al-absar fi-mamalik al-amsar. [Shihab al-Din al-Umari, c.1344, in Arabic] trans. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui and Qazi Mohammad Ahmad. A Fourteenth Century Arab Account of India under Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. Aligarh: Siddiqui Publishing House, 1971.

Futuhs-salatin. [Abd-ul-Malik Isami, 1350, in Persian] trans. Agha Mahdi Husain Shah namah-i Hind of Isami. 3 vols. Bombay, New York: Published for the Dept. of History, Aligarh Muslim University [by] Asia Pub. House, c. 1967-1977.

Qiwam-ul-aqaid [Muhammad Jamal Qiwamuddin, 1354, in Farsi] excerpts in K. A Nizami. The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991.

Futuh-i-Firoz Shah. [c.1354, in Farsi] trans. as “Futuh-i Firoz Shah of Sultan Firoz Shah,” by H. M. Elliot and J. Dowson. The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians. 8 vols. London: 1867; reprint ed. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1963-.

Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi. [Barani, 1359, in Farsi] trans. H. M. Elliot and J. Dowson. The History of India as Told by its Own Historians. 30 vols. London: 1867; reprint ed. Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952-60? vol. 14.

- Khair-ul-majalis. [Hamid Qalandar] excerpts in K. A Nizami. The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991.
- Siyar-ul-Auliya. [Amir Khvurd, 752/1351-790/1382, in Farsi] excerpts cited and translated in K. A Nizami, The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991.
- Jawami-ul-kalim. cited in K. A Nizami. The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991.
- Tuzuki-i-Timuri. [Timur, c. 1398, in Chagatai Turkish; trans. Abu Talib Husaini into Farsi, 1628] trans. H. M. Elliot and J. Dowson. The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians. 8 vols. London: 1867; reprint ed. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1963-.
- Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi. [Shams Siraj Afif, c. 1398, in Farsi] trans. H. M. Elliot and J. Dowson. The History of India as told by its own Historians. 30 vols. London: 1867; reprint ed. Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952-60? vol. 15.
- Waqiat-e-Mushtaqui. [Shaikh Rizq Ullah Mushtaqui, 1495/96-1581, in Farsi] trans. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui. Waqi'at-e-Mushtaqui of Shaikh Rizq Ullah Mushtaqui : a source of information on the life and conditions in pre-Mughal India. New Delhi: Co-published by Indian Council of Historical Research and Northern Book Centre, 1993.
- The Travels and Adventures of the Turkish Admiral Sidi Ali Reis in India, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Persia, during the years 1553-1556. trans. A. Vambery. reprint ed. Lahore: 1975.
- Thamarat-ul-quds [Lal Bakshi, 1597-98, in Farsi] excerpts cited and trans. in Zafar Hasan. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10: A Guide to Nizamuddin. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922.
- Tarikh-i-Ferishta [Muhammad Qasim Ferishta, 1596-1609-10, in Farsi] trans. J. Briggs as History of the Rise of the Mohammedan Power in India. 4 vols. [1829] reprint ed. Calcutta: 1909, 1966-71.
- Ain-i-Akbari [Abul-Fazl Allami, in Farsi] trans. H. Blochman, The Ain-i Akbari. 3 vols. bound in 2. Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1997.
- Muntakhabut Tawarikh [Abdul Qadir Badaoni, 1615, in Farsi] 3 vols. trans. G. Ranking, W. H. Lowe and W. Haig. reprint ed. Patna: Academica Asiatica, 1973.
- Shah Jahan Nama, [Inayat Khan, in Farsi] trans. A. R. Fuller, The Shah Jahan Nama of Inayat Khan. eds. W. E. Begley and Z. A. Desai. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Muraqqa-i-Delhi [Durga Quli Khan, in Farsi] excerpt cited and trans. in Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, "The Early Chishti Dargahs," Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History and Significance, ed. Christian W. Troll. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.

### Secondary Sources:

Abbot, Nabia. "Arabic Paleography," Ars Islamica (1941). viii: 67-104.

Ali, A. Yusuf. Medieval India: Social and Economic Conditions. London: Oxford University Press, 1932.

Ara, Matsuo and Tsukinowa Tokifusa, "Outline of Surveys and Studies of the Architectural Remains of the Delhi Sultanate Period," Acta Asiatica (1982). 43:92-109.

Ara, Matsuo. Dargahs in Medieval India: A Historical Study on the Shrines of Sufi Saints in Delhi with Reference to the Relationship between the Religious Authority and the Ruling Power. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1977 [in Japanese].

Asher, Catherine B. Architecture of Mughal India. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Bain, Alexandra. Qur'anic Epigraphy in the Delhi Sultanate: The 'Alai Darwaza. Victoria, BC: University of Victoria, M.A. thesis, 1992.

Banerjee, J. M. History of Firoz Shah Tughluq. New Delhi: Munishiram Monoharlal, 1967.

Beglar, J. D. Archaeological Survey of India: Report for the Year 1871-72. reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1966. vol. iv.

Begley, W. E. Monumental Islamic Calligraphy from India. Villa Park, IL: Islamic Foundation, 1985.

Bhandari, Neena. "Shadows Of The Original," The Pioneer, October 01, 1995.

Blair, Sheila. The Monumental Inscriptions from Early Islamic Iran and Transoxiana. Leiden: E. J Brill, 1992.

Blair, Sheila. Islamic Inscriptions. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998.

Blochman, H. in Ain-i-Akbari [Abul-Fazl Allami, in Farsi] trans. H. Blochman, The Ain-i Akbari. 3 vols. bound in 2. Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1997.

Bloom, Jonathan M. "The Mosque of al-Hakim in Cairo," Muqarnas 1 (1983).

- Bosworth, C.E. The Islamic Dynasties. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1967.
- Budget Of Govt. Of New Delhi For The Year 1999 – 2000.
- Burton-Page, J. "Dihli," Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960-.
- Carr, E. H. What is History? [1961] reprint ed. London: Penguin, 1990.
- Chabbi, J. "Khankah," Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960-.
- Chandra, Satish. "Cultural and Political Role of Delhi," Delhi Through the Ages, Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Cohn, Jeffrey B. The Madrasa of Allaudin Khalji. Victoria, BC: University of Victoria, M.A. thesis, 1984.
- Cunningham, Alexander. Archaeological Survey of India: Four Reports Made During the Years 1862-63-64-65. reprint ed. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1972.
- Currie, P. M. The Shrine and Cult of Muin al-din Chishti of Ajmer. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Desai, Z. "Islamic Inscriptions: Their Bearing on Monuments," Indian Epigraphy: Its Bearing on the History of Art. eds. Frederick M. Asher and G.S. Gai. New Delhi: Mohan Pramlani, 1985.
- Desai, Z. A., "Preface" in W. E. Begley, Monumental Islamic Calligraphy from India. Villa Park, IL: Islamic Foundation, 1985.
- Digby, Simon. "Qalandars in the Dehli Sultanate," Islam in Asia. 2 vols. ed. Yohanan Friedman. Boulder: Westview Press, 1984.
- Digby, Simon. "Tabarrukat and Succession among the Great Chishti Shaykhs of the Delhi Sultanate," Delhi Through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society. ed. R.E. Frykenberg Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Dodd, Erica and Shereen Khairallah. The Image of the Word: A Study of the Quranic Verses in Islamic Architecture. 2 vols. Beirut: The American University of Beirut, 1981.
- Eaton, Richard M. Sufis of Bijapur 1300-1700: Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.
- Ernst, Carl W. Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center. Albany: SUNY Press, 1992.
- Fanshawe, H. C. Delhi Past and Present [1902] reprint ed. Gurgaon, Haryana: Vintage Books, 1998.

- Frykenberg, R. E. ed. Delhi Through the Ages: Essays in Urban History Culture and Society. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Gibb, H. A. R. "Foreword to Volume Three," The Travels of Ibn Battuta A.D. 1325-1354. Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1971.
- Goswamy, B.N. "In the Sultan's Shadow," Delhi Through the Ages. ed. R.E. Frykenberg. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Grabar, Oleg. "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem," Ars Orientalis. vol. iii 1959.
- Grabar, Oleg. The Alhambra. London: Allen Lane, 1978.
- Grabar, Oleg. The Great Mosque of Isfahan. New York: New York University Press, 1990.
- Gramsci, Antonio. Selections from the Prison Notebook, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and G.S. Smith. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971.
- Gupta, Naryani. Delhi Between Two Empires 1803-1931: Society, Government and Urban Growth. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981.
- Habib, M. "Chishti Mystic Records of the Sultanate Period" in Politics and Society During the Early Medieval Period: Collected Works of Professor Mohammad Habib. ed. K.A. Nizami. 2 vols. New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1974.
- Habib, Muhammad and Khaliq Ahmad Nizami. A Comprehensive History of India: Vol. 5: The Delhi Sultanate (A.D. 1206-1526). reprint ed. New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1982.
- Hardy, Peter. Historians of Medieval India: Studies in Indo-Muslim Historical Writing. London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1960.
- Hasan, Zafar. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10: A Guide to Nizamuddin. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922.
- Husain, M. A. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 47 A Record of All the Qur'anic and Non-Historical Epigraphs on the Protected Monuments in the Delhi Province. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1936.
- India Tribune (Chicago), December 12, 1992.
- Irvine, William. Later Mughals. 2 vols. bound in 1. ed. Jadunath Sarkar. reprint ed. New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1971.
- Kaul, H. K. Historic Delhi. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985.

- Kaye, M.M., ed. The Golden Calm: An English Lady's Life in Moghul Delhi. Exeter: Webb & Bower, 1980.
- Khan, Sayyid A. Asar al-sanadid [1854 edition, in Urdu] partial trans. R. Nath as Monuments of Delhi: Historical Study. New Delhi: Ambika, 1978.
- Khoury, Nuha. Safawid epigraphy in Isfahan : the Masjid-i Shah. Victoria: University of Victoria, M.A. thesis, 1983.
- Koch, Ebba. "The Delhi of the Mughals Prior to Shahjahanabad as Reflected in the Patterns of Imperial Visits," Art and Culture. eds. A. J. Qaisar and S. P. Verma. Jaipur: Publication Scheme, 1993. 2-20.
- Koch, Ebba. Mughal Architecture: An Outline of Its History and Development. Munich: Prestel, 1991.
- Lal, B. B. "Archeology and Babri Masjid, Facts of history cannot be altered," The Hindu. July 1, 1998.
- Lawrence, Bruce. "Early Indo-Muslim Saints and Conversion," Islam in Asia. ed. Yohanan Friedmann. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984.
- Lawrence, Bruce. "Translator's Introduction," Nizam ad-Din Awliya: Morals for the Heart. New York: Paulist Press, 1992.
- Lawrence, Bruce. Notes from a Distant Flute: The Extant Literature of pre-Mughal Indian Sufism. Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1978.
- Lort, Jennifer E. Curious Seen: Baolis of the Delhi Sultanate. Victoria, B.C.: University of Victoria, M.A. thesis, 1995.
- Majumdar, R.C. ed. et al. The History and Culture of the Indian People: The Delhi Sultanate. Bombay, 1960.
- Mala, S. Babs. "The Sufi Convent and its Social Significance in the Medieval Period of Islam," Islamic Culture. (1977) 31-52.
- Marshall, John. Annual Report of the Director General of Archaeology in India 1919-20. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922.
- Monnot, G. "Salat," Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960-.
- Nand, Lokesh Chandra. Women in Delhi Sultanate. Allahabad, India : Vohra Publishers, 1989.
- Nath, R. Monuments of Delhi: Historical Study. New Delhi: Ambika, 1978.
- Nizami, K. A. "Khwaja Muin al-din Hasan Chishti," Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960-. 2:49-50.

- Nizami, K. A. State and Culture in Medieval India. New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, 1985.
- Nizami, K. A. The Life and Times of Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar. [1955] reprint ed. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1973.
- Nizami, K. A. The Life and Times of Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh-i-Dehli. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991.
- Nizami, K. A. The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991.
- Oak, P. N. "Cities and Region Since," Vaishnava News Network. June 4, 1999.
- Page, J. A. A Memoir on Kotla Firoz Shah. Delhi: Architectural Survey of India, 1937.
- Page, J. A. An Historical Memoir of the Qutb, Delhi. Calcutta: Architectural Survey of India, 1926.
- Page, J. A., ed. Monuments of Delhi: Lasting Splendour of the Great Mughals and Others, Maulvi Zafar Hasan, compiler. 4 vols. in 3 bindings. [1917] reprint ed. New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 1997.
- Pinto, Desiderio. "The Mystery of the Nizamuddin Dargah," Muslim Shrines in India, ed. Christian W. Troll. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Pinto, Desiderio. Piri-Muridi Relationship: A Study of the Nizamuddin Dargah. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995.
- Richards, John F. The Mughal Empire. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Rizvi, S. A. A. A History of Sufism. 2 vols. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1975.
- Rozehnal, Robert T. The Shrine and Cult of Shaykh Nizam-al-Din Awliya. Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1995.
- Sachau, Edward. "Preface," Alberuni's India. 2 vols. New Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1996.
- Said, Edward. Orientalism. London: Routledge, 1978.
- Schimmel, Annemarie. Islam in the Indian subcontinent. Leiden : E.J. Brill, 1980.
- Shokoohy, Mehrdad and Natalie. Hisar-i Firuza: Sultanate and early Mughal architecture in the district of Hisar, India. London: Monographs on Art Archaeology and Architecture, 1987.

- Shrivastava, Ashirbadi Lal. The Sultanate of Delhi (711-1526 A.D.). Agra: Shiva Lal Agarwala and Co., 1966.
- Siddiqi, I.H. and Q.M. Ahmad, "Introduction," A Fourteenth Century Arab Account of India and Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. Aligarh: Siddiqi Publishing House, 1971. 1-23.
- Siddiqi, Iqtidar Husain. "The Early Chishti Dargahs," Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History and Significance. ed. Christian W. Troll. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Siddiqi, Iqtidar Husain. Perso-Arabic sources of information on the life and conditions in the Sultanate of Delhi. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1992.
- Sourdel-Thomine, J. "Khatt," Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960-. v: 1113-1122.
- Sourdel-Thomine, J. "Kitabat," Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960-.
- Spear, Percival. Twilight of the Mughals; Studies in Late Mughal Delhi. [1951] reprint ed. New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp., 1961.
- Stephen, Carr. Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi. 1876 reprint ed. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1967.
- Thompson, James W. "University of Berlin: Niebuhr and Ranke," A History of Historical Writing. vol. 2. New York: Macmillan, New York, 1942. 168-191.
- Tosh, John. The Pursuit of History: Aims Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History. [1984] reprint ed. London: Longman, 1993.
- Tritton, A. A. "Muslim Funeral Customs," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. (1937-39) 9: 653-61.
- Troll, Christian W., ed. Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History and Significance. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Umar, Muhammad. Islam in Northern India During the Eighteenth Century. New Delhi: Munishiram Monoharlal, 1993.
- Welch, Anthony. "The Shrine of the Qadam Sharif," Muqarnas. 14: 125-156.
- Welch, Anthony and Howard Crane. "The Tughluqs: Master Builders of the Delhi Sultanate." Muqarnas. (1983) 1: 123-166.
- Welch, Anthony. "A Medieval Center of Learning in India: The Hauz Khas Madrasa in Delhi," Muqarnas. 13: 163-189.

Welch, Anthony. "Quran and Tomb" Indian Epigraphy: Its Bearing on the History of Art, eds. Frederick M. Asher and G.S. Gai. New Delhi: Oxford & IBH Publishing Co., 1985. 257-267.

Yamamoto, T., M. Ara, and T. Tsukinowa, Delhi: Architectural Remains of the Sultanate Period. 3 vols. Tokyo: University of Tokyo, 1968-70 [in Japanese].

Zavarzadeh, Masud. Seeing Films Politically. Albany: SUNY, 1991.

## Appendix 1: Proposed Chronology of Delhi Sultanate Building Events at Nizamuddin West

Date	Building event	Source
c. 725/1325 (death of Nizamuddin)	Muhammad Tughluq erects a dome over Nizamuddin's grave.	<i>Siyar-ul-auliya</i> .
c. 1354? (proposed date of Firoz Shah's <i>masjid</i> where <i>Futuhāt</i> was inscribed)	Firoz Shah has <i>Jamatkhana</i> erected. Firoz Shah has arches of dome, wood (sandal) lattice work and golden chandeliers secured by gold chains to the recesses of the 4 domes added to tomb of Nizamuddin.	<i>Futuhāt-i-Firoz Shah</i>
770/1368-9 (death of <i>Khan-i-Jahan</i> Maqbul Tilangani)	<i>Khan-i-Jahan</i> Maqbul Tilangani buried at the "foot" of Nizamuddin.	<i>Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi</i> [Afif]
c. 770/1368-9	Tomb of <i>Khan-i-Jahan</i> Maqbul Tilangani built.	Identified through local tradition according to Hasan, <i>A Guide to Nizamuddin</i> 38.
772/1370-71 (inscription)	<i>Khan-i-Jahan</i> Junan Shah Maqbul builds <i>masjid</i> adjacent to Maqbul's tomb.	Inscription on marble slab on eastern gateway of <i>masjid</i> according to Hasan, <i>A Guide to Nizamuddin</i> , 36.
781/1379-80	Malik Sayyid-ul-Hujjab Maruf, noble of Firoz Shah, commissions vaulted roof on passage on south end of the baoli and rubble structure immediately adjacent.	Inscription on building according to Hasan, <i>A Guide to Nizamuddin</i> , 36.
<b>Undated Structures</b>		
before 781/1379-80	<i>Baoli</i> (stepwell)	Construction technique resembles Gandak-ki <i>baoli</i> , Mehrauli, New Delhi.
	Unidentified tomb known as " <i>Bara Khambha</i> "	Construction technique resembles Junan Shah's <i>masjid</i> .
	Unidentified structure behind <i>dalan</i> of Mirza Ikram	Construction technique resembles Junan Shah's <i>masjid</i> and <i>chillagah</i> .
	Unidentified structure known as " <i>Langarkhana</i> "	Construction technique resembles Junan Shah's <i>masjid</i> and <i>chillagah</i> .
	" <i>Lal Mahal</i> "	
	Unidentified tomb south of Nizamuddin's tomb.	
	Unidentified tomb on <i>baoli</i>	

## Appendix 2 : Jamatkhana Epigraphs

Location		Epigraph	Similar selections on other Delhi Sultanate Buildings
<b>EXTERIOR</b>			
North Musaffir Khana arch		Al-Israa 17 : 1-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arhai-din-ka-jhompra mosque, Ajmer; qiblah screen, 17:1-4</li> <li>Quwwat al-Islam, Aibek qiblah screen; 17:1-6</li> <li>Quwwat al-Islam, Al-Tamsh qiblah screen; S arch, 17:1-5, 10-12</li> <li>Altamsh tomb; outer arch E entrance, 17:1-4</li> <li>Alai gate; S archway, 17:1-12, 7-10</li> </ul>
small arch between north Musaffir Khana and central entrance		Al-Israa 17 : 80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quwwat al-Islam mosque, Aibek's qiblah screen; 2<sup>nd</sup> arch from S, 17:78-82</li> </ul>
Central entrance	Rectangular band	Ar-Rahman 55 :1-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quwwat al-Islam mosque, Al-Tamsh qiblah screen; 1<sup>st</sup> arch N of Aibek's screen, 55:1-14</li> <li>Al-Tamsh tomb; outer arch of S. entrance, 55:1-12</li> </ul>
	outer arch	Al-Hashr 59 : 21-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qutb mosque; arch, 59:22-23</li> <li>Qutb minar; basement story, 59:22-23</li> <li>Altamsh tomb; arch N of mihrab, 59:21; inner arch of S entrance, 59:21-24</li> <li>Arhai-din-ka-jhompra Mosque, Ajmer; qiblah screen, 59:21-24 &lt;check&gt;</li> <li>Zafar Khan tomb; on arch, 59:21-23</li> <li>Firoz Shah tomb ; on arches in tomb, 59:21-24; on drum, 59:22-23</li> </ul>
	inner arch	Imran 3 : 26-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hauz Khas chattris 2,3,5,6; dome drum, 59:22-23</li> <li>Al-Tamsh tomb; dome, 3:25-26</li> <li>Zafar Khan tomb; inside arches, 3:25-26</li> </ul>

small arch between  
south Musaffir khana

Imran 3 : 18

- Sultan Ghari, mihrab, 3:17-18
- Bara Khamba, Nizamuddin; dome, 3:17-18
- Hauz Khas; 3:18

quatrain between  
small arch and south  
Musaffir khana

Persian  
chronogram The administrator of two  
worlds, the king of water and  
earth surely became a lamp  
for both the worlds. When I  
sought the date of his death,  
the praiser cried out from the  
invisible 'the empire of  
religion' (725/1325)

South Musaffir  
khana arch

Al-Fath 48 : 1-6 (7th word)

- Qutb minar; 3<sup>rd</sup> band of basement, 48:1-6
- Quwwat al-Islam mosque, Aibek's qiblah screen;  
2<sup>nd</sup> arch from S, 48:1-5
- Al-Tamsh tomb; inner arch of E entrance, 48:1-5
- Alai gate; arch on windows entrance, 48:1-9
- Sultan Ghari; 48:1-5
- Zafar Khantomb; arch, 48:1-5

---

## INTERIOR

---

Arches in Dome

W

Al-Ikhlās

112 : 1-4

- Qutb; arch of recess, 112:1-4
- Altamsh tomb; above inner arch of N entrance,  
112:1-4
- Zafar Khan tomb; outside of arched gateway, 112:1-4
- "Shaikh Kabir Auliya" tomb; on graves, 112:1-4

SE

"

"

S

"

"

NE

"

"

E

"

"

NW

"

"

N

"

"

SW

"

"

**Base of Dome**

W

Asma al-husna

Names of God

- Qutb Minar; fifth band, all of asma al-husna
- Quwwat al-Islam, Al-Tamsh's qiblah screen; 2<sup>nd</sup> S arch, some of asma al-husna
- Al-Tamsh tomb; W wall, some of asma al-husna (twice)
- Firoz Shah tomb; dome drum, all of asma al-husna?

SW  
S  
SE  
E  
NE  
N

Names of God (continued)

“  
“  
“  
“

الذي له كل شيء ولي  
المخلصين محمد رسول  
الله واله المطهرون  
صلى الله علي خير  
محمد واله اجمعين ؟؟؟؟؟

To him whom everything belongs, the friend of the Sincere. Muhammad the Messenger of Allah and his family the purified peace of God be upon his family, the best of his creation, Muhammad and his family, all of them ???

NW

Al-Hashr

In the Name of God the Most Beneficent the Most Merciful  
59 : 22-24

- Qutb mosque; arch, 59:22-23
- Qutb minar; basement story, 59:22-23
- Altamsh tomb; arch N of mihrab, 59:21; inner arch of S entrance, 59:21-24
- Arhai-din-ka-jhompra Mosque, Ajmer; qiblah screen, 59:21-24 <check>
- Zafar Khan tomb; on arch, 59:21-23
- Firoz Shah tomb ; on arches in tomb, 59:21-24; on drum, 59:22-23
- Hauz Khas chattris 2,3,5,6; dome drum, 59:22-23

## Squinches

<b>W</b>				
Rect. Border	Al-Anam	6 : 1-5		• Firoz Shah tomb; medallion on dome, 6:1
Outer arch	Al-Mulk	67 : 1-3		• Altamsh tomb; octagonal frieze, 67:1-30
Inner arch	“	67 : 4-6		• Sultan Ghari mosque, around mihrab, 67:1-2
<b>SW</b>				
Rect. Border	Al-Anam	6 : 6-10		
Outermost arch 1	Al-Muzamil	73 : 1-10		
arch 2	Al-Israa	17 : 5-7		
arch 3	“	17 : 7-9		
arch 4	Arabic phrase	الملك لله الواحد القهار (repeated) The Kingdom belongs to God, the One, the Dominant		
Innermost arch 5	Al-Israa	17 : 9-11		
<b>S</b>				
Rect. Border	Al-Anam	6 : 11-16		
Outer arch	Kahf	18 : 1-5		
Inner arch	“	18 : 5-8		
<b>SE</b>				
Rect. Border	Al-Anam	6 : 16-21		
Outermost arch 1	Al-Muminun	23 : 1-8 (4th word)		• Quwwat al-Islam mosque, Aibek's qiblah screen; centre arch, 23:1-14
arch 2	Al-Israa	17: 12-13		• Altamsh tomb; inner arch N entrance, 23:1-14
arch 3	“	17 : 14-16		
arch 4	Arabic phrase	الملك لله الواحد القهار (repeated) The Kingdom belongs to God, the One, the Dominant		
Innermost arch 5	Al-Israa	17 : 16-18		

<b>E</b>			
Rect. Border	Al-Anam	6 : 21 (7th word) - 27 (2nd word)	
outer arch	Saba	34 : 1-3	
inner arch	"	34 : 3-5	
<b>NE</b>			
Rect. Border	Al-Anam	6 : 27-31	
Outermost arch 1	Al-Ahzab	33 : 40-46	• Quwwat al-Islam mosque, Al-Tamsh qiblah screen; 1 <sup>st</sup> N arch, 33:40-44
arch 2	Al-Israa	17 : 18-21	
arch 3	"	17 : 22-24	
arch 4	Arabic phrase	الملك لله الواحد القهار (repeated) The Kingdom belongs to God, the One, the Dominant	
Innermost arch 5	Al-Israa	17 : 24-29 (7th word)	
<b>N</b>			
Rect. Border	Al-Anam	6 : 32-35	
Outer arch	Fatir	35 : 1-2	• Quwwat al-Islam, ? qiblah screen; on arch, 35:1-2
Inner arch	Fatir	35 : 3-5	
<b>NW</b>			
Rect. Border	Al-Anam	6 : 36-40	
Outermost arch 1	Al-Maidah	5 : 97- 100 (4th word)	• Alai gate; niches of E gateway, 5:97-100
arch 2	Al-Israa	17 : 27 (3rd word) - 30	
arch 3	"	17 : 31- 33	
arch 4	Arabic phrase	الملك لله الواحد القهار (repeated) The Kingdom belongs to God, the One, the Dominant	
Innermost arch 5	Al-Israa	17: 33- 34	

**Ground level arches**

**N wall -  
arch  
nearest east  
wall**

outer arch	Al-Anam	6 : 73-74
inner arch	Al-Anam	6 : 74-75

**N wall -  
arch  
nearest  
west wall**

outer arch	Maidah	5 : 97-98
inner arch	Maidah	5 : 98-99 (5th word)

**W wall -  
arch  
nearest  
north wall**

outer arch	Ikhlas	112 : 1-4
------------	--------	-----------

inner arch

Hadith

قال رسول الله صلى الله  
عليه و سلم لكل شي  
تحية و تحية المسجد ركعتا

The Messenger of God, peace  
of God be upon him, said:  
two everything ther is a  
greeting, and the greeting of  
the masjid is two rakaa't  
(prayers).

- Alai gate; niches of E gateway, 5:97-100

- Qutb; arch of recess, 112:1-4
- Altamsh tomb; above inner arch of N entrance, 112:1-4
- Zafar Khan tomb; outside of arched gateway, 112:1-4
- "Shaikh Kabir Auliya" tomb; on graves, 112:1-4

<b>Mihrab</b>	outer rect border	Al-I-Imran	3 : 96-100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quwwat al-Islam mosque, Al-Tamsh qiblah screen; 3<sup>rd</sup> S arch, 3: 95-96, 97-102</li> <li>• Sultan Ghari; mihrab, 3:95-96</li> <li>• Alai gate; around windows, 3:95-99</li> <li>• Firoz Shah tomb; medallion above arch, 3:95-96</li> <li>• Altamsh tomb, mihrab, 2:255</li> <li>• Firoz Shah tomb; arch in tomb chamber, 2:255</li> <li>• Al-Tamsh tomb; inner arch of E. entrance, 97:1-3</li> <li>• Firoz Shah tomb; medallion on dome, 97:1-5</li> </ul>
	outer arch	Al-Baqarah	2 : 255	
	inner rect border	Al-Qadr	97 : 1-5	
	band above inner arch	Shahadah	There is no God but God, Muhammad is the messenger of God	
	inner arch	Ikhlas	112 : 1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qutb; arch of recess, 112:1-4</li> <li>• Altamsh tomb; above inner arch of N entrance, 112:1-4</li> <li>• Zafar Khan tomb; outside of arched gateway, 112:1-4</li> <li>• “Shaikh Kabir Auliya” tomb; on graves, 112:1-4</li> </ul>
	inscription on lamp image	Arabic phrase	O Allah, Muhammad	
<b>Ground level arches (continued)</b>	<b>W wall - arch nearest north wall</b>			
	outer arch	Ikhlas	112 : 1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qutb; arch of recess, 112:1-4</li> <li>• Altamsh tomb; above inner arch of N entrance, 112:1-4</li> <li>• Zafar Khan tomb; outside of arched gateway, 112:1-4</li> <li>• “Shaikh Kabir Auliya” tomb; on graves, 112:1-4</li> </ul>
	inner arch	Hadith	قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم لكل شي تحيه و تحيه المسجد ركعتا	
			The Messenger of God, peace of God be upon him, said:	

two everything ther is a greeting, and the greeting of the masjid is two rakaa't (prayers).

<p><b>S wall - arch nearest west wall</b></p>			
outer arch	Hud	11 : 7-8	
inner arch	Hud	11 : 8-9 (10th word)	
<p><b>S wall - arch nearest east wall</b></p>			
outer arch	Al-Mulk	67 : 2-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Al-Tamsh tomb; octagonal frieze, 67:1-30</li> <li>• Sultan Ghari; mihrab, 67:1-2</li> </ul>
inner arch	Al-Mulk	67 : 4-5 (2nd word)	
<p><b>E wall - arch nearest south wall</b></p>			
outer arch	Al-Hashr	59 : 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qutb mosque; arch, 59:22-23</li> <li>• Qutb minar; basement story, 59:22-23</li> <li>• Altamsh tomb; arch N of mihrab, 59:21; inner arch of S entrance, 59:21-24</li> <li>• Arhai-din-ka-jhompra Mosque, Ajmer; qiblah screen, 59:21-24</li> <li>• Zafar Khan tomb; on arch, 59:21-23</li> <li>• Firoz Shah tomb ; on arches in tomb, 59:21-24; on drum, 59:22-23</li> <li>• Hauz Khas chattris 2,3,5,6; dome drum, 59:22-23</li> </ul>
inner arch	Al-Hashr	59 : 22-23 (15th word)	

**E wall -  
arch  
nearest  
north wall**

outer arch	Ta Ha	20: 1-4
inner arch	Ta Ha	20 : 5-8

- Al-Tamsh tomb; around marble mihrab, 20:1-12

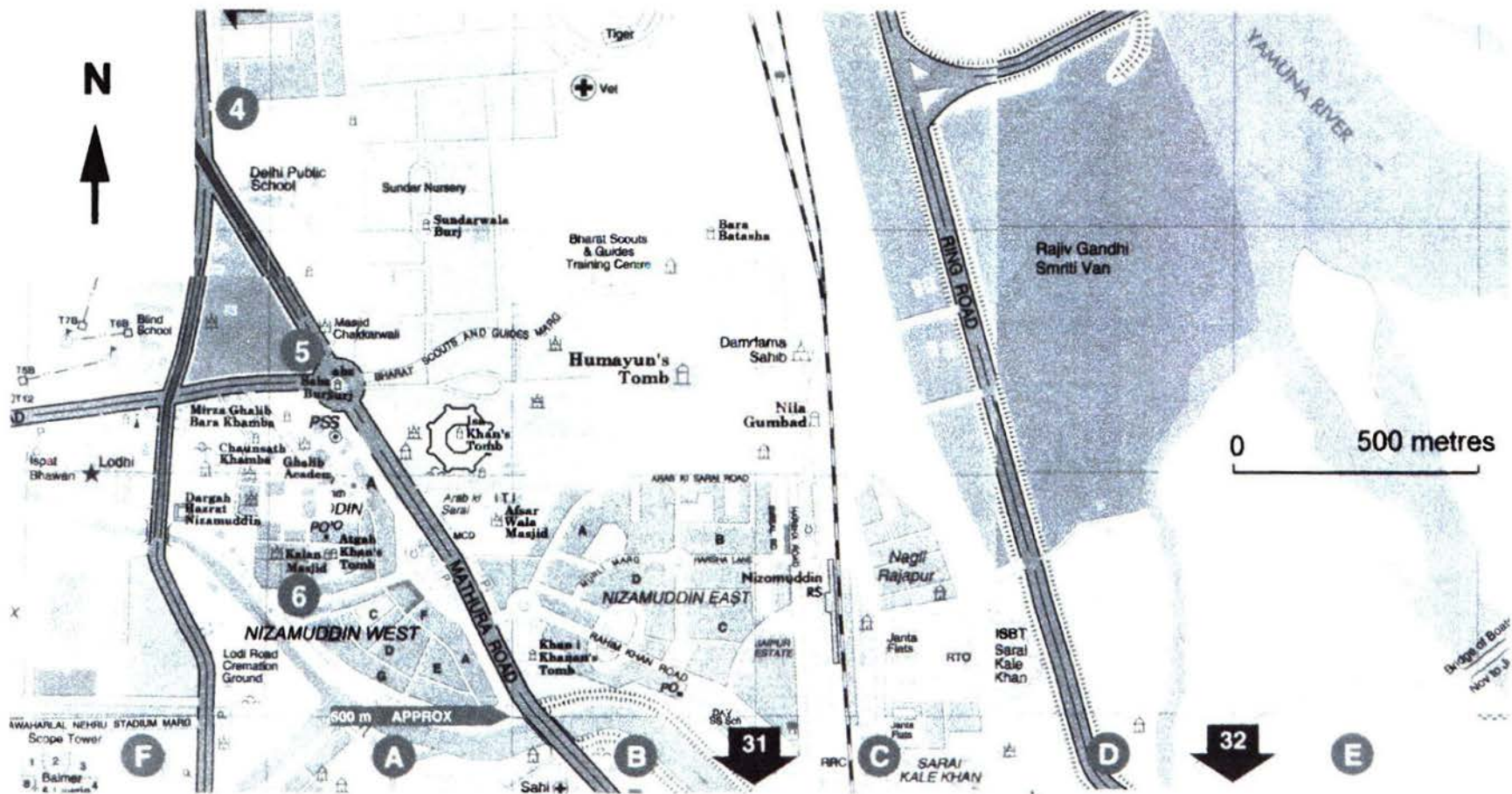


Figure 1: Map of Nizamuddin West, (Source: Lt. General S.M. Chadha (Rtd.), Delhi City Guide, New Delhi: Eicher Goodearth Ltd., 1998, Maps 22, 23).

Figure 2: Photograph of *dargah* of Nizamuddin. December 1998.

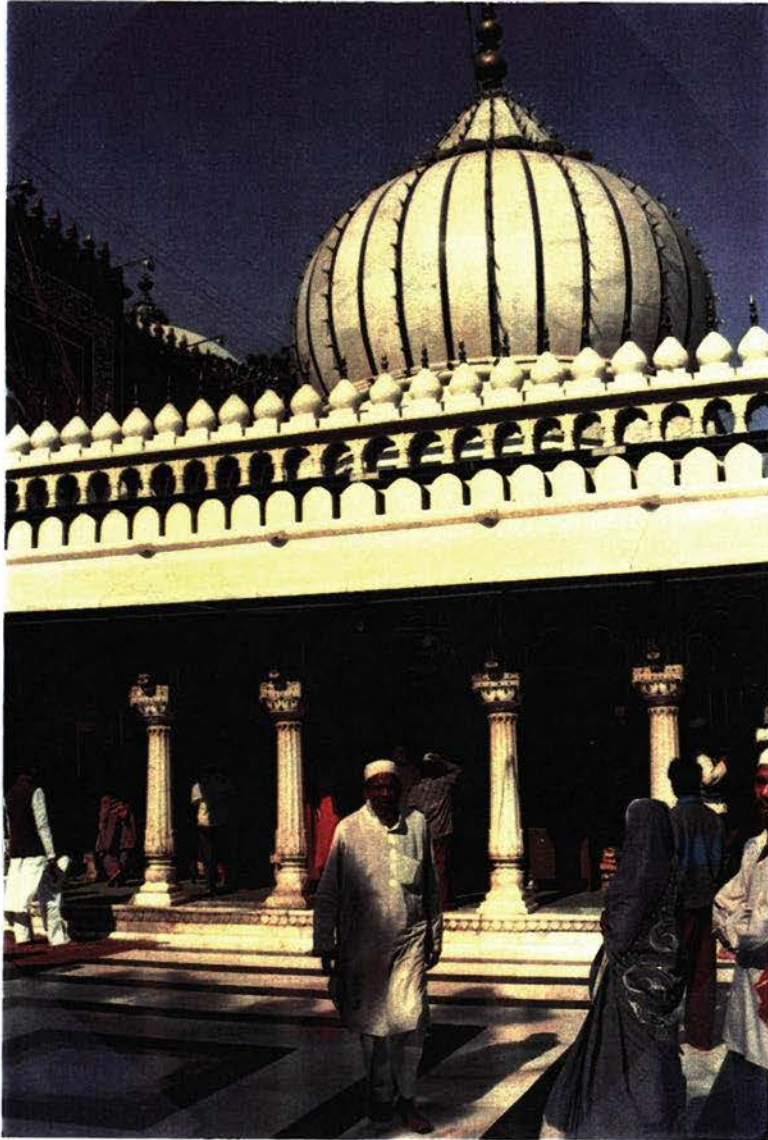


Figure 3: Photograph of *dargah* of Nizamuddin and “Khizri” *Masjid* in background. December 1998.

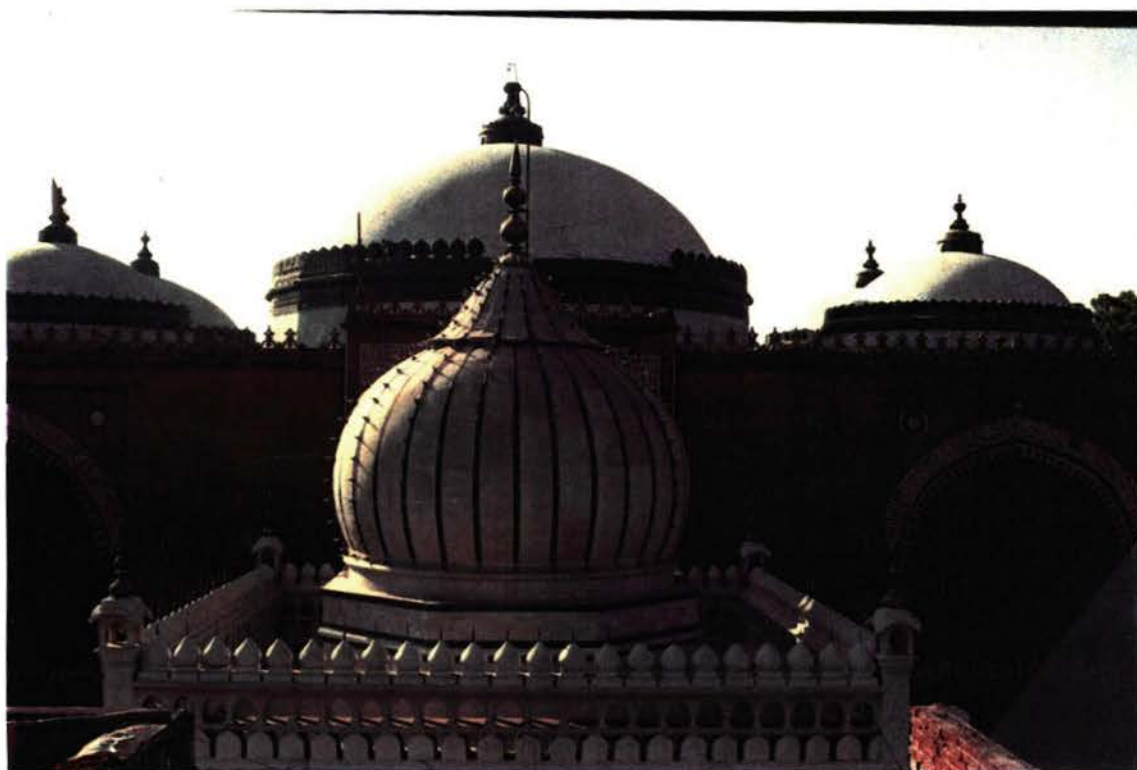


Figure 4: Map of Northern India

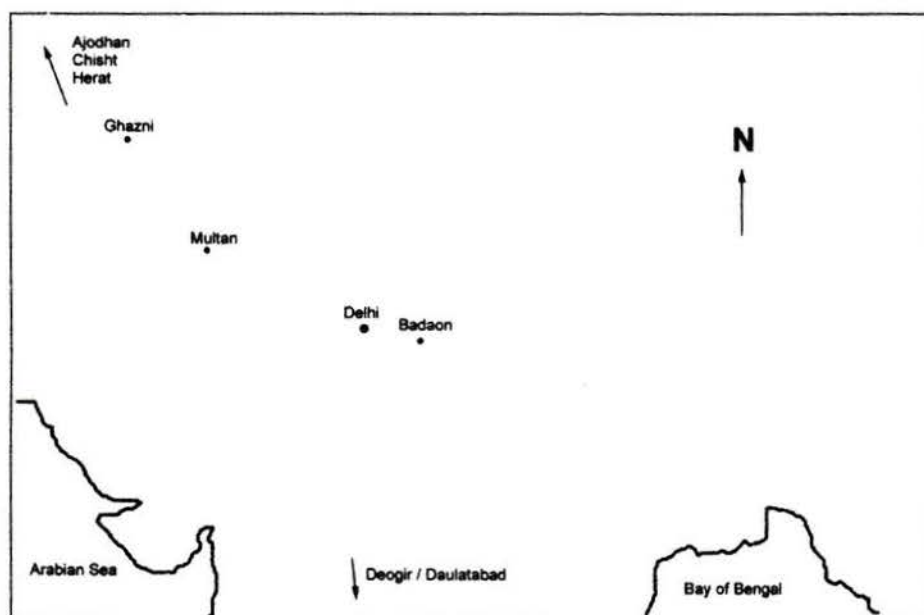


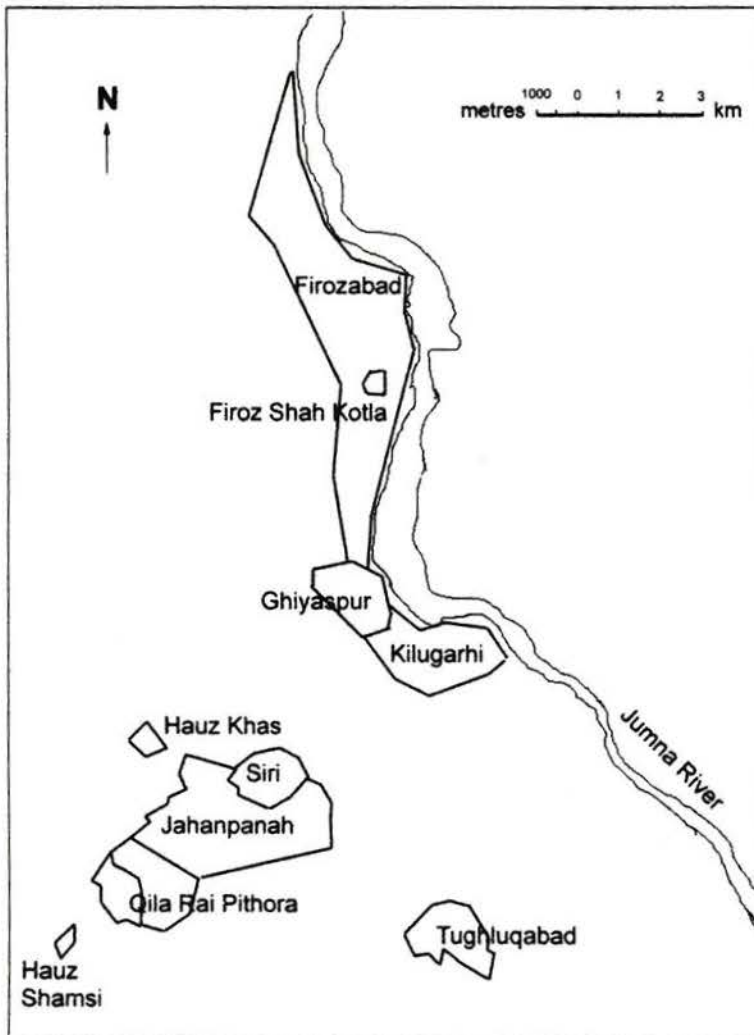
Figure 5: Photograph of epigraphs on exterior of main entrance to “Khizri” *Masjid*.  
December 1998.



Figure 6: Photograph of *Suraj Kund* (Source: Deepak Hiranandani, Delhi City Guide,  
New Delhi: Eicher Goodearth Ltd., 1998).



Figure 7: Map of Delhi region showing the location of Qila Rai Pithora, Siri, Hauz Shamsi (Based on: Faiz Habib, *Delhi Through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society*, ed. R.E. Frykenberg Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986, inside front jacket).



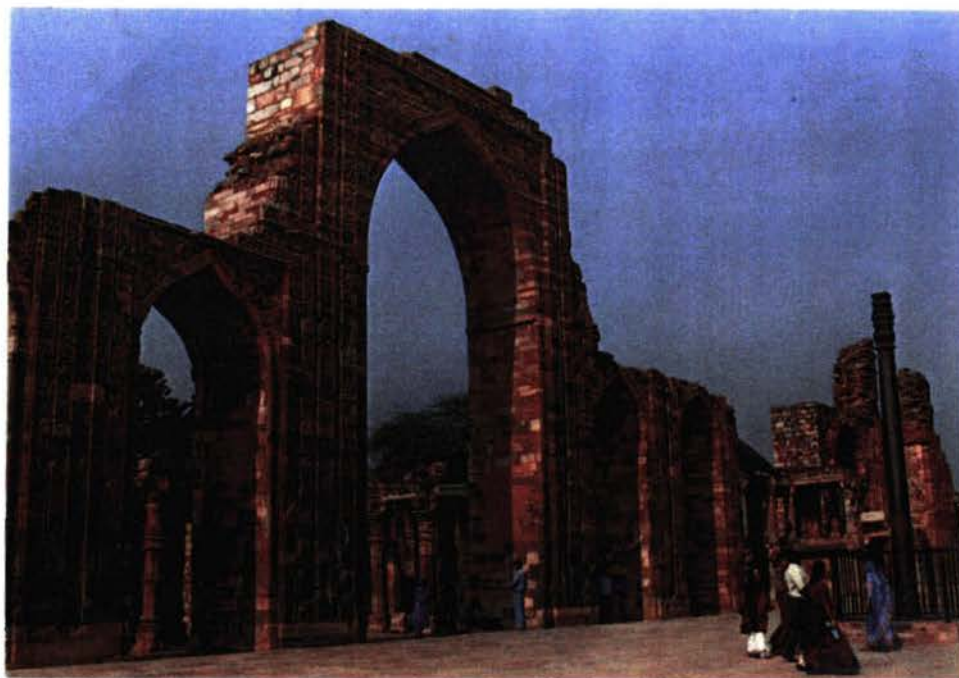


Figure 9: Photograph of the exterior of the *Alai Darwaza* (lower right) and *Qutb Minar*. December 1998.

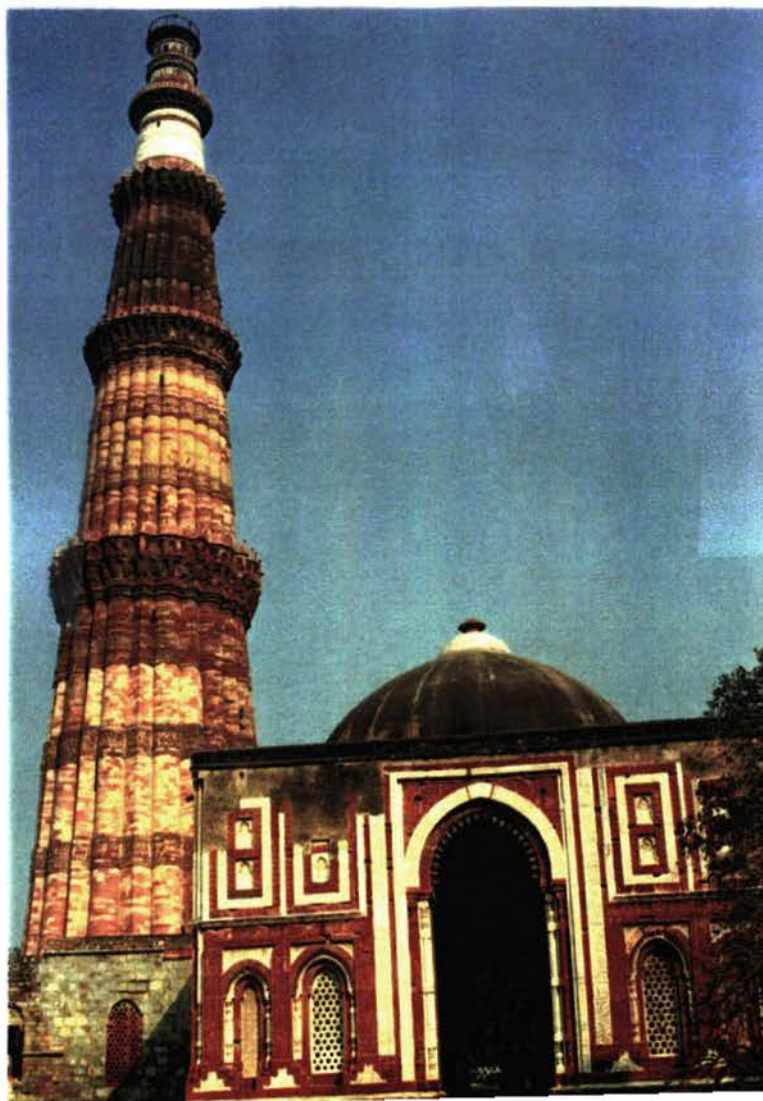


Figure 10: Photograph of calligraphy and lotus buds on exterior of Alai Darwaza.  
December 1998.



Figure 11: Photograph of the tomb of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq. December 1998.

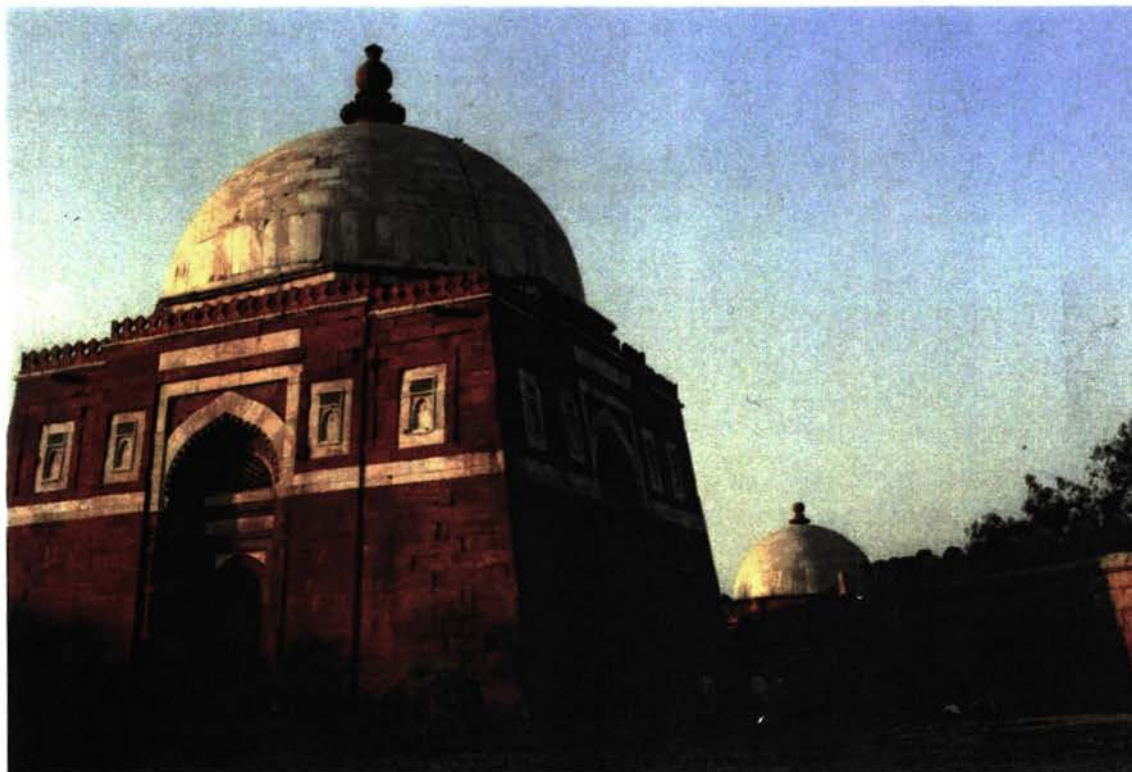


Figure 12: Photograph of court, “sanctuary” and north arcade Begumpur Mosque.  
December 1998.

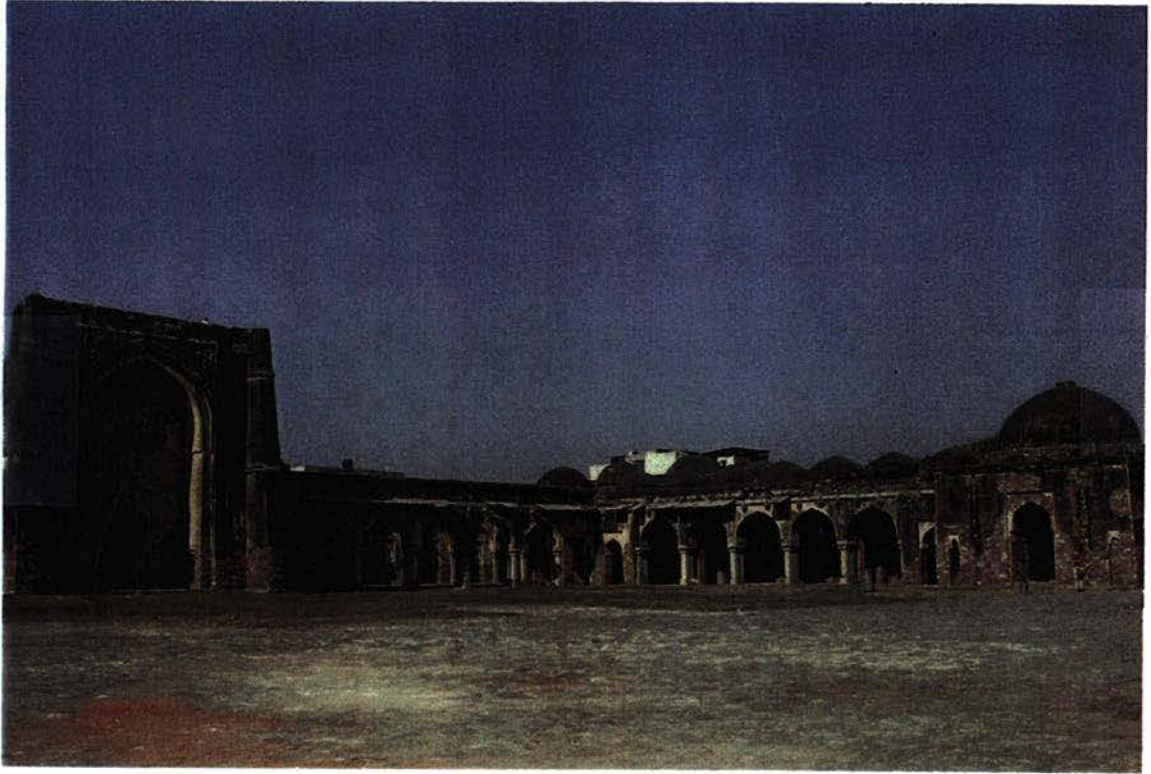


Figure 13: Photograph of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq's *madrasah* at *Hauz Khas*.  
December 1998.



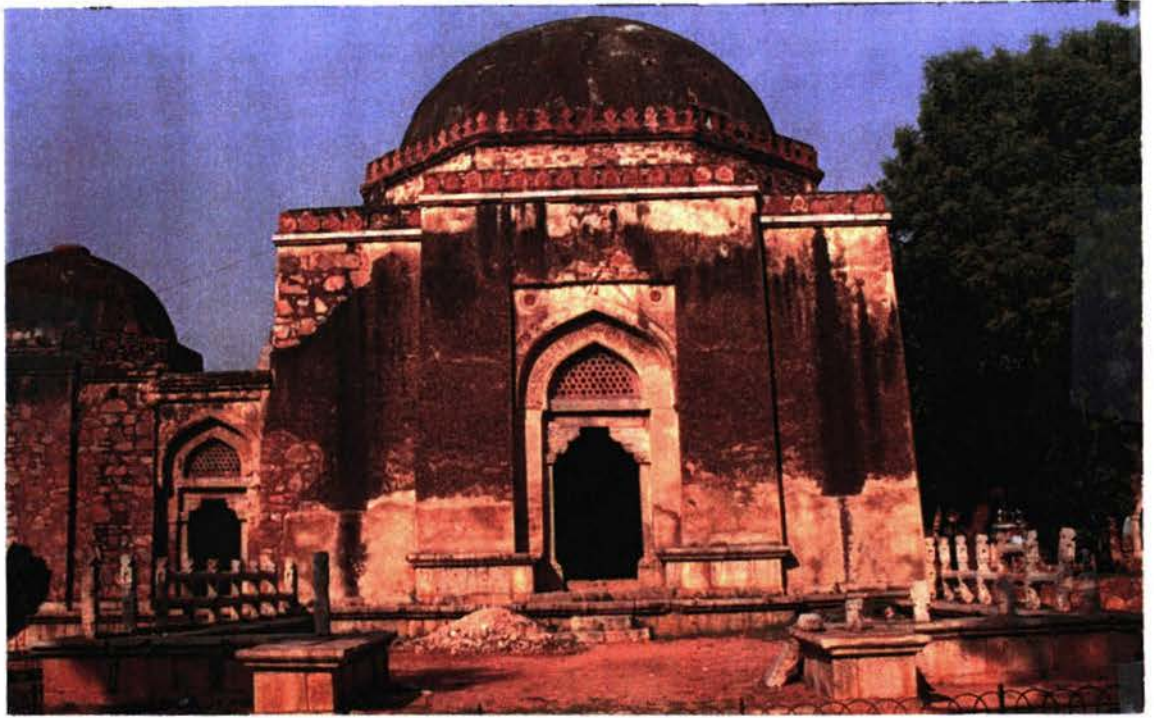


Figure 15: Photograph of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq's tomb showing inscriptions. December 1998.

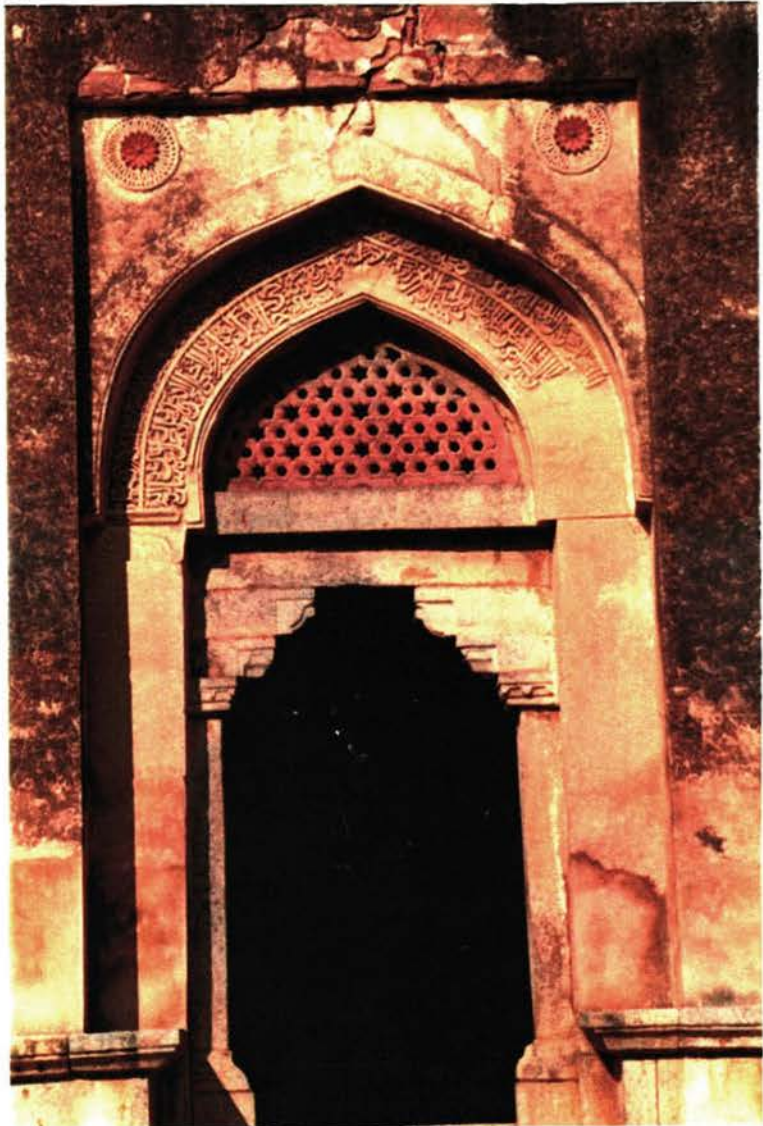


Figure 16: Photograph of a portion of the *Qadam Sharif* commissioned by Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq. December 1998.



Figure 17: Plan drawing of Delhi Sultanate buildings at Nizamuddin West (Based on: Zafar Hasan, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10: A Guide to Nizamuddin. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922, Plate I).

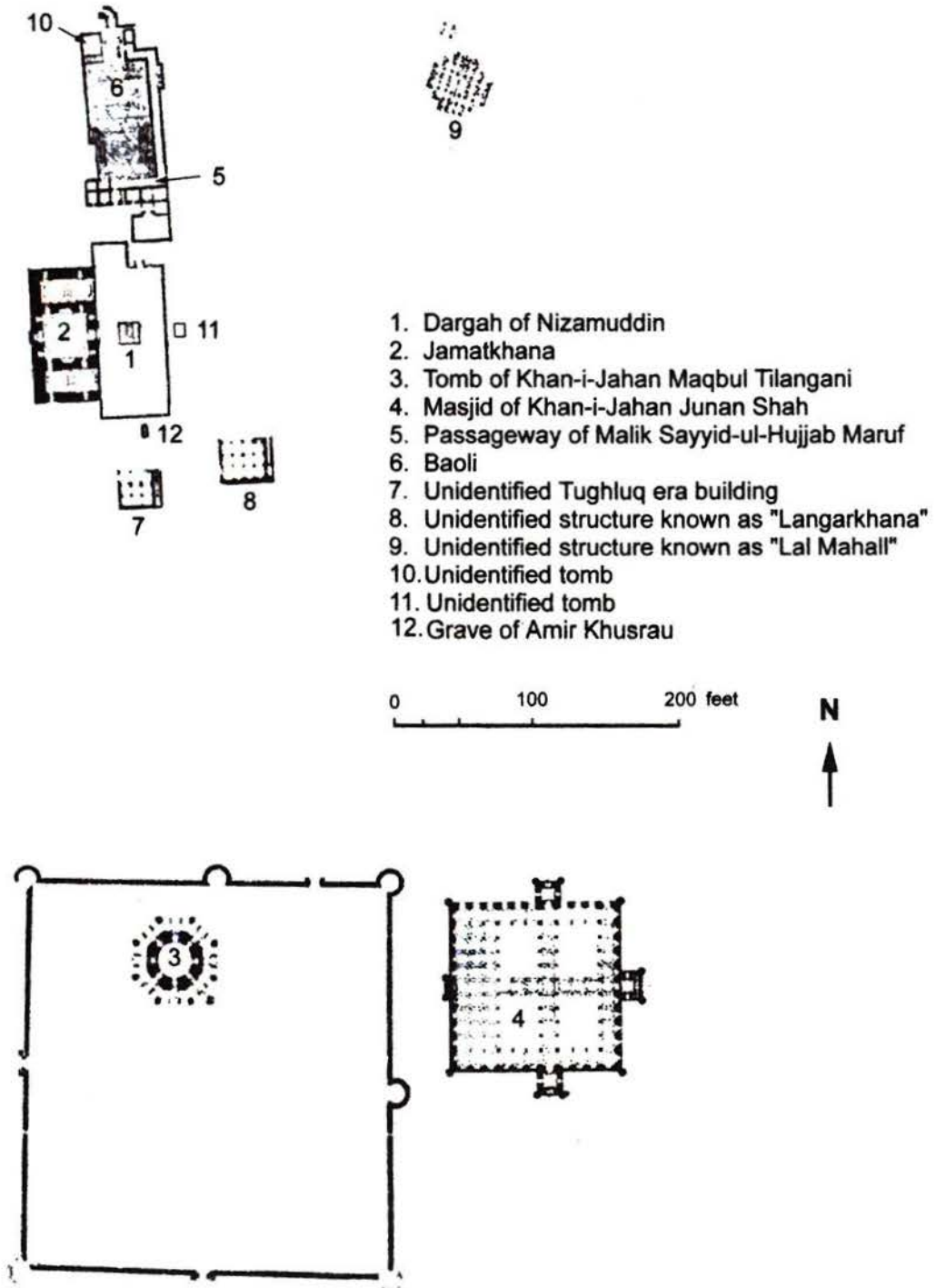


Figure 18: Plan of Nizamuddin's tomb, surrounding buildings and graves built during the Delhi Sultanate period.

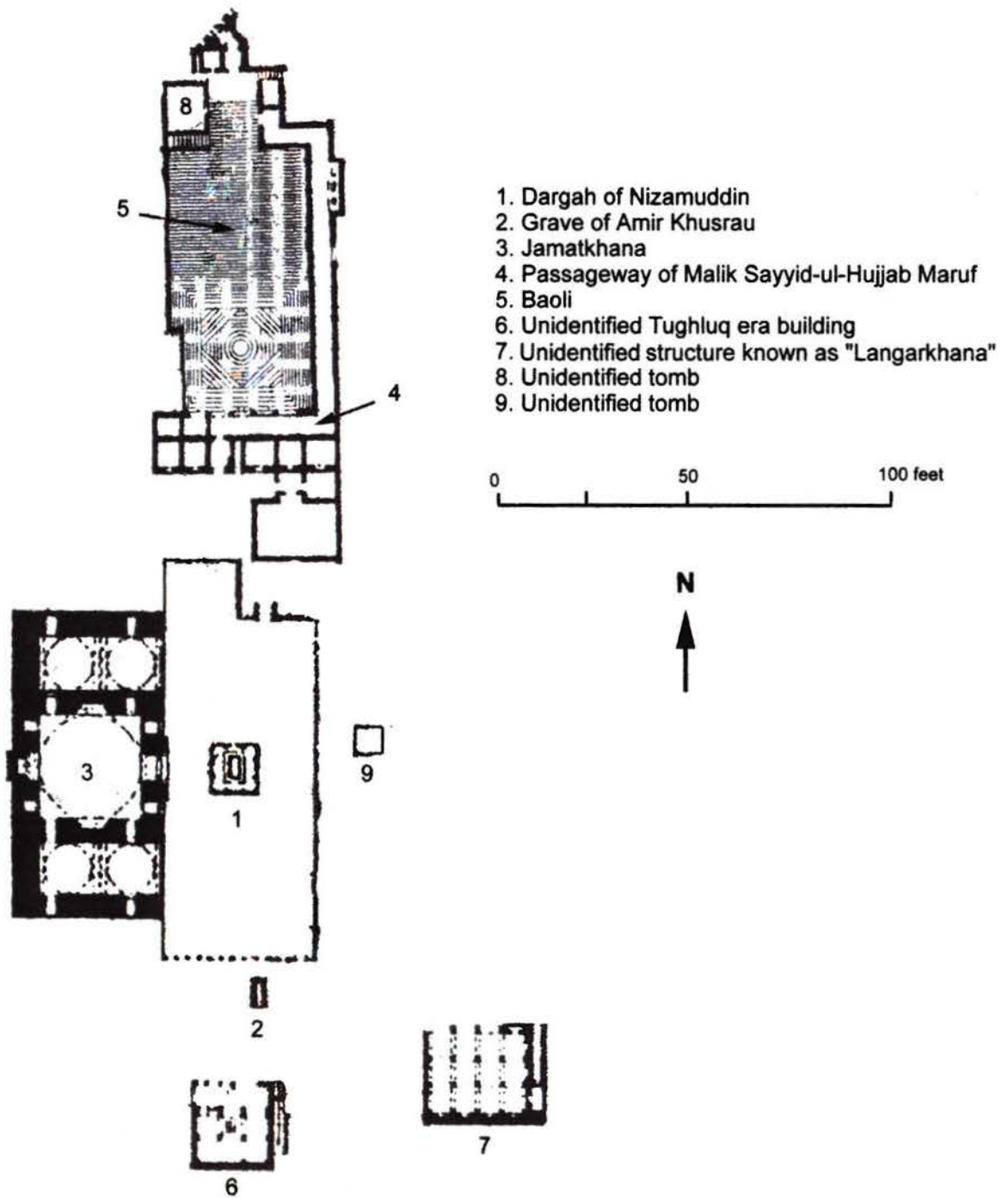


Figure 19: Photograph of *baoli* (stepwell). December 1998.



Figure 20: Plan of Humayun's tomb and chillagah of Nizamuddin.  
(Source: Archaeological Survey of India.)

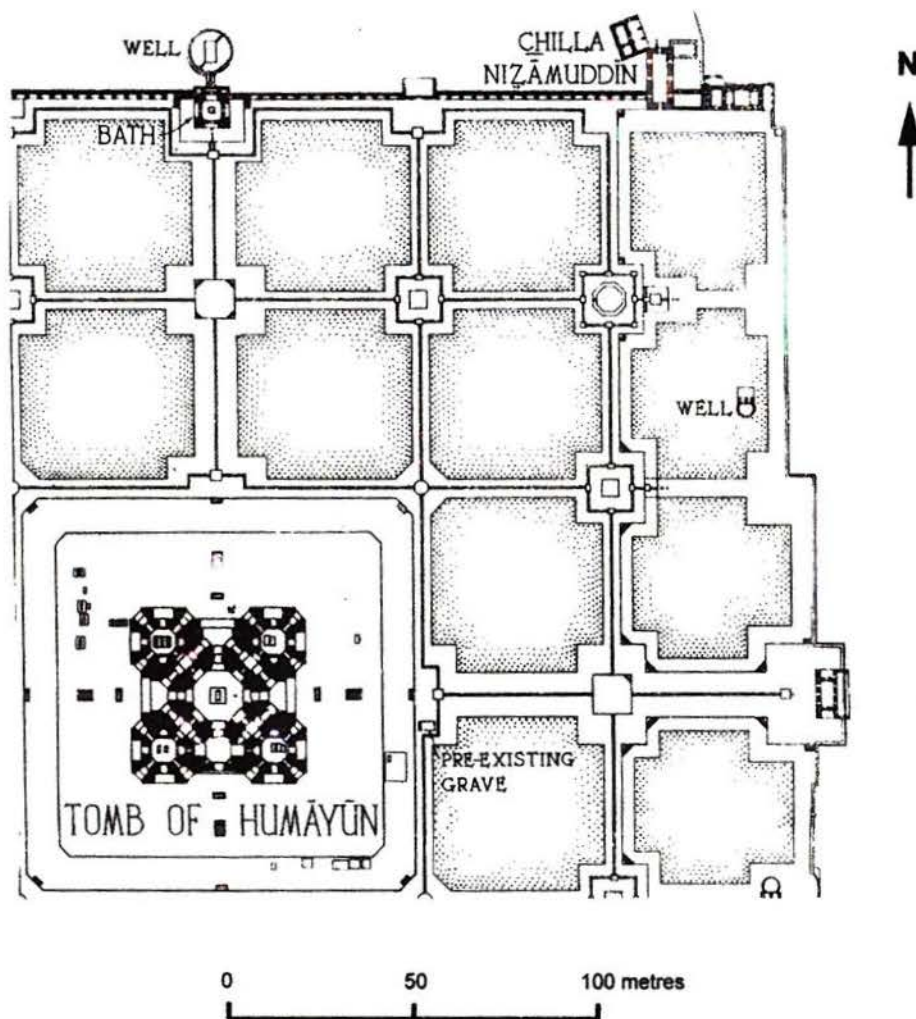


Figure 21: Photograph of *chillagah* of Nizamuddin. December 1998.



Figure 22: Photograph of Tughluq era building at Nizamuddin known as "*langar khana*" (Source: Zafar Hasan, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India: No. 10: A Guide to Nizamuddin. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1922, Plate V b.).

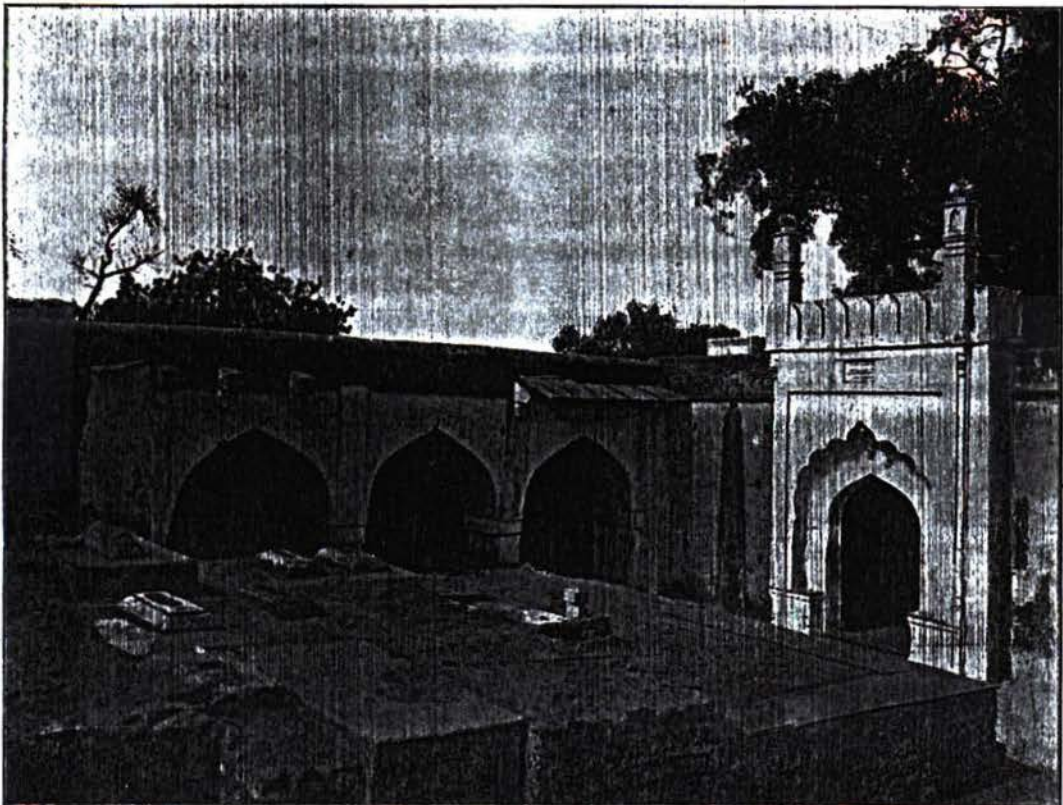


Figure 23: Photograph of Tughluq era building south of *dargah* of Nizamuddin resembling *chillagah* but with late Mughal additions. December 1998.

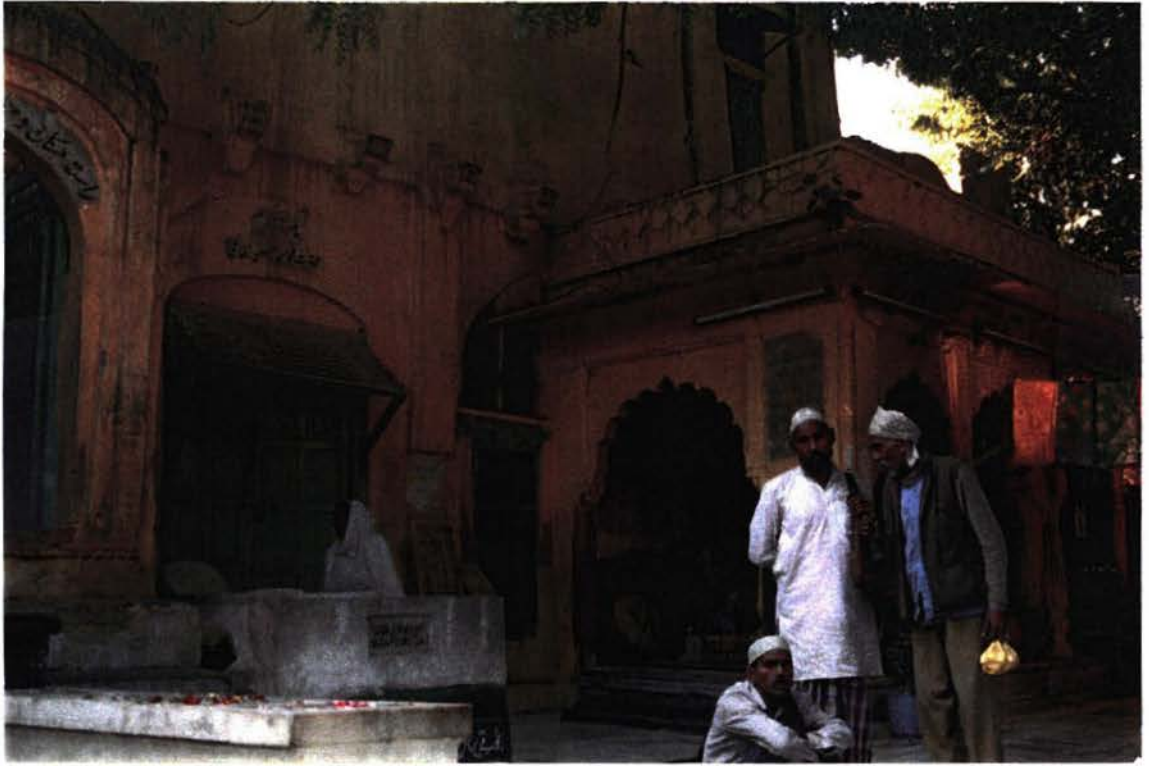


Figure 24: Photograph of main entrance to *Khan-i-Jahan Junan Shah Maqbul Masjid*. December 1998.

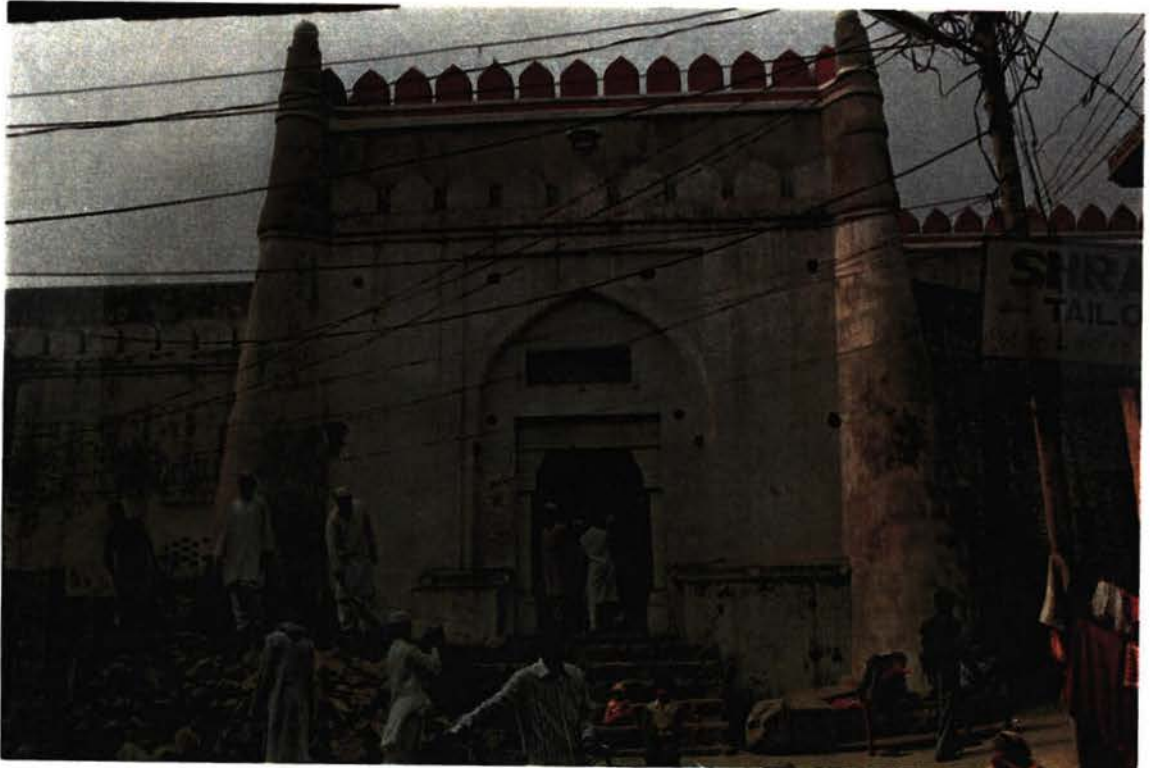


Figure 25: Photograph of interior of Maruf's passageway on south end of *baoli*.  
December 1998.

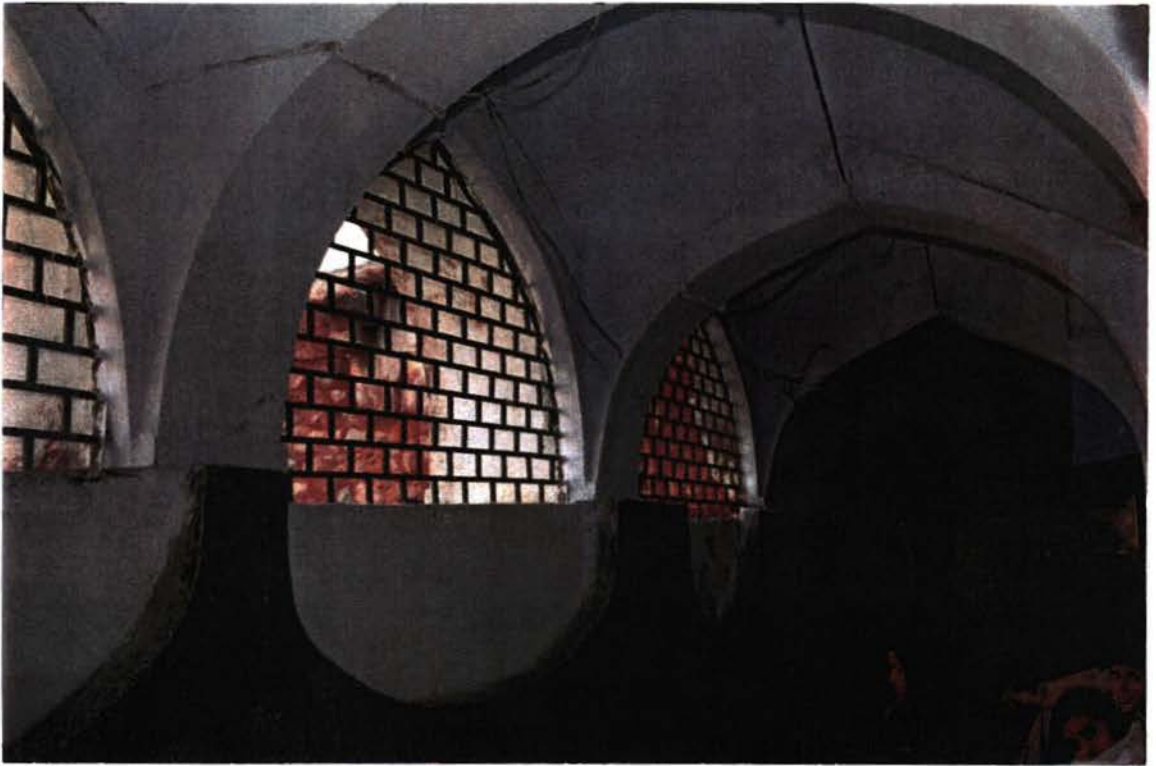


Figure 26: Photograph of exterior of unidentified building known as "*Lal Mahall*".  
December 1998.



Figure 27: Photograph of unidentified building known as "Bara Khamba". December 1998.



Figure 28: Photograph of unidentified building at Mahihpalpur, Delhi, resembling *chillagah*. December 1998.



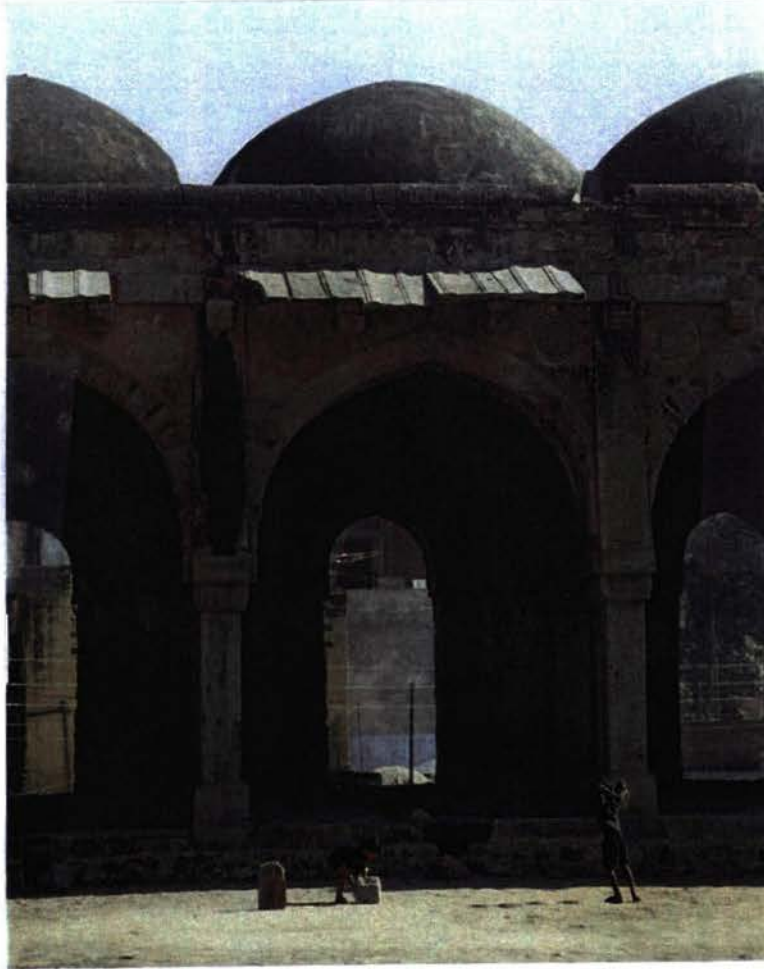


Figure 30: Photograph of arcade surrounding interior court of "*Kali*" Masjid commissioned by *Khan-i-Jahan* Junan Shah. December 1998.



Figure 31: Photograph of grave marker in tomb of *Khan-i-Jahan* Tilangani. December 1998. (Source: Welch, Anthony and Howard Crane. "The Tughluqs: Master Builders of the Delhi Sultanate." *Muqarnas*. (1983) 1: 148, Plate 19. <sup>244</sup>

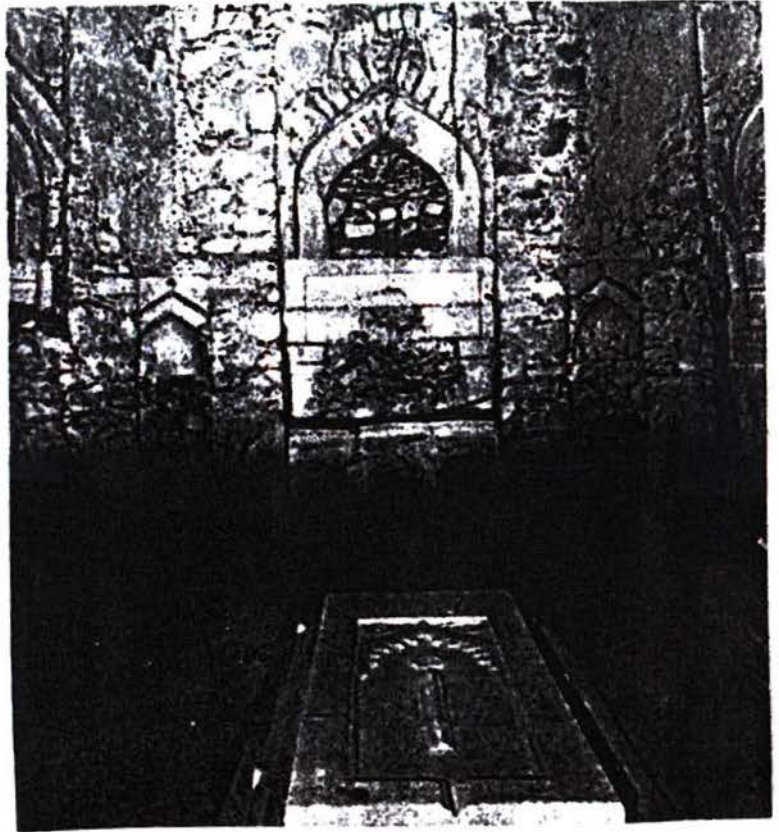


Figure 32: Photograph of small domed tombs on grounds of Sultan Firoz Shah's *madrasah*. December 1998.



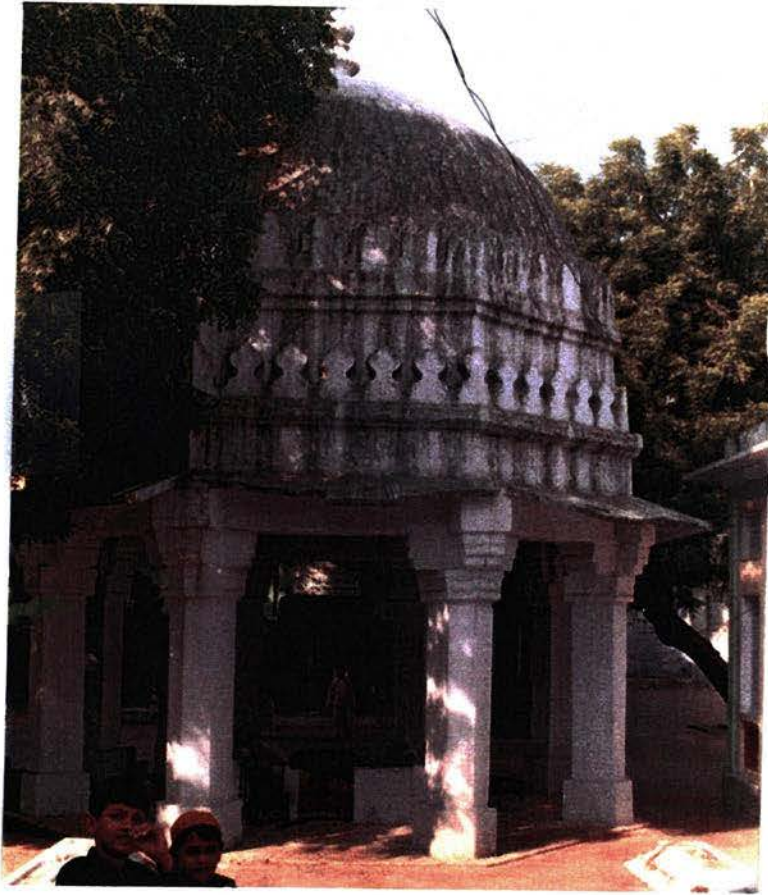


Figure 34: Photograph of interior of dome of Sultan Firoz Shah's tomb at *Hauz Khas*, Delhi. December 1998.



Figure 35: Photograph of interior side chamber dome in *Jamatkhana ("Khizri" Masjid)*. 246  
December 1998.

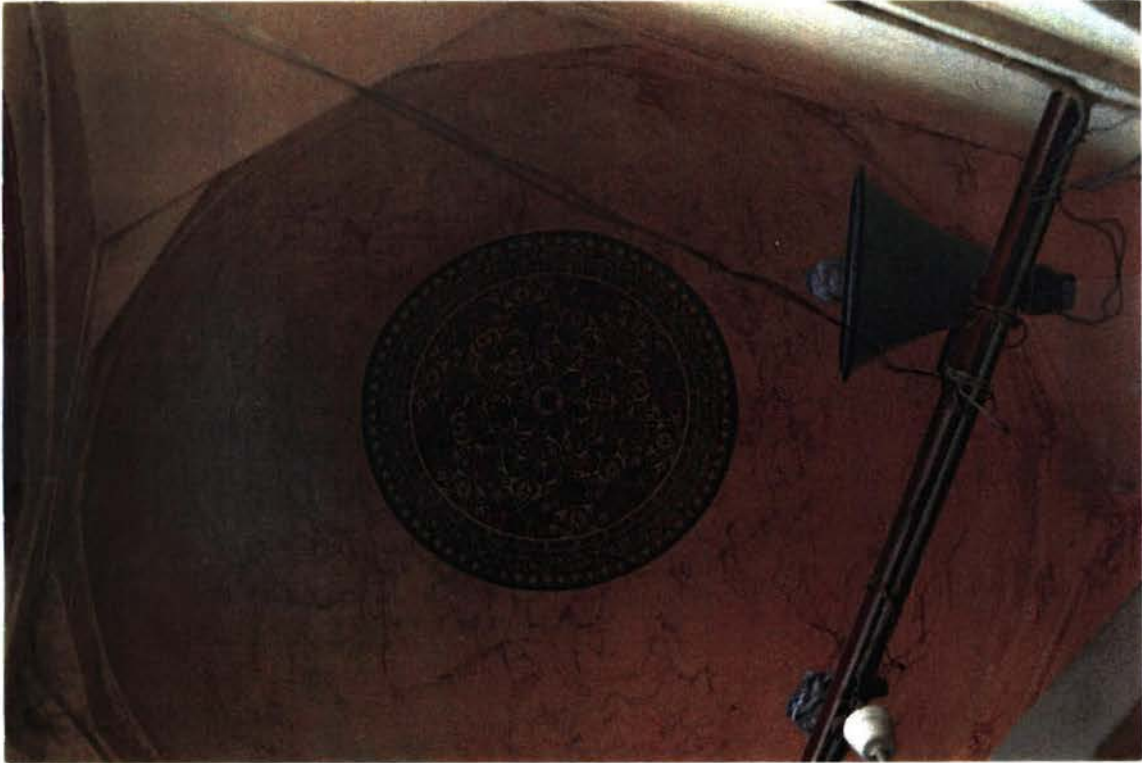


Figure 36: Photograph of entrance way to *Alai Darwaza*. December 1998.

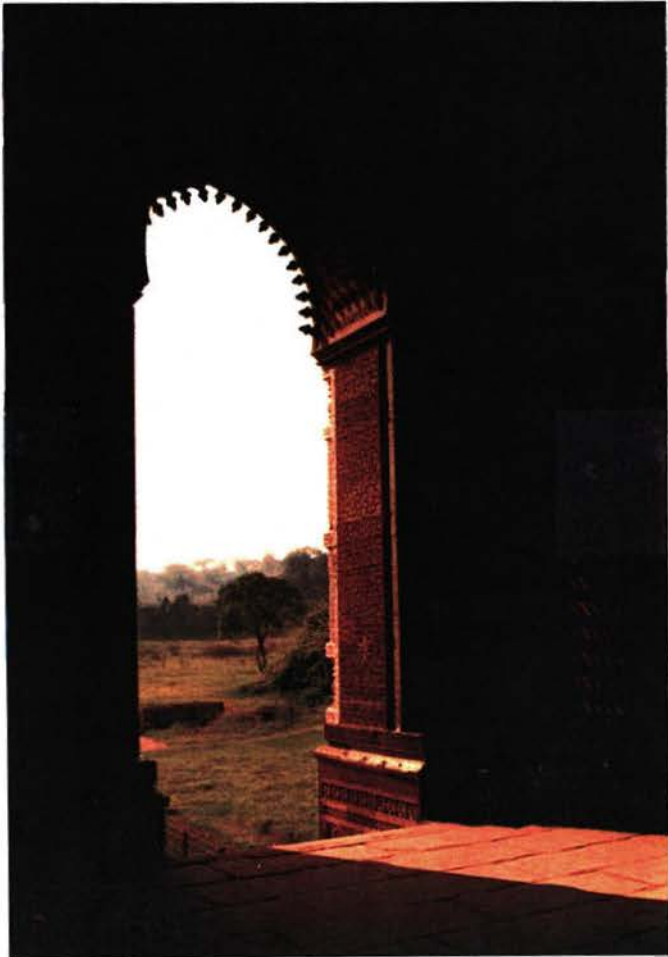


Figure 37: Photograph of squinch in Alai *Darwaza*. December 1998.

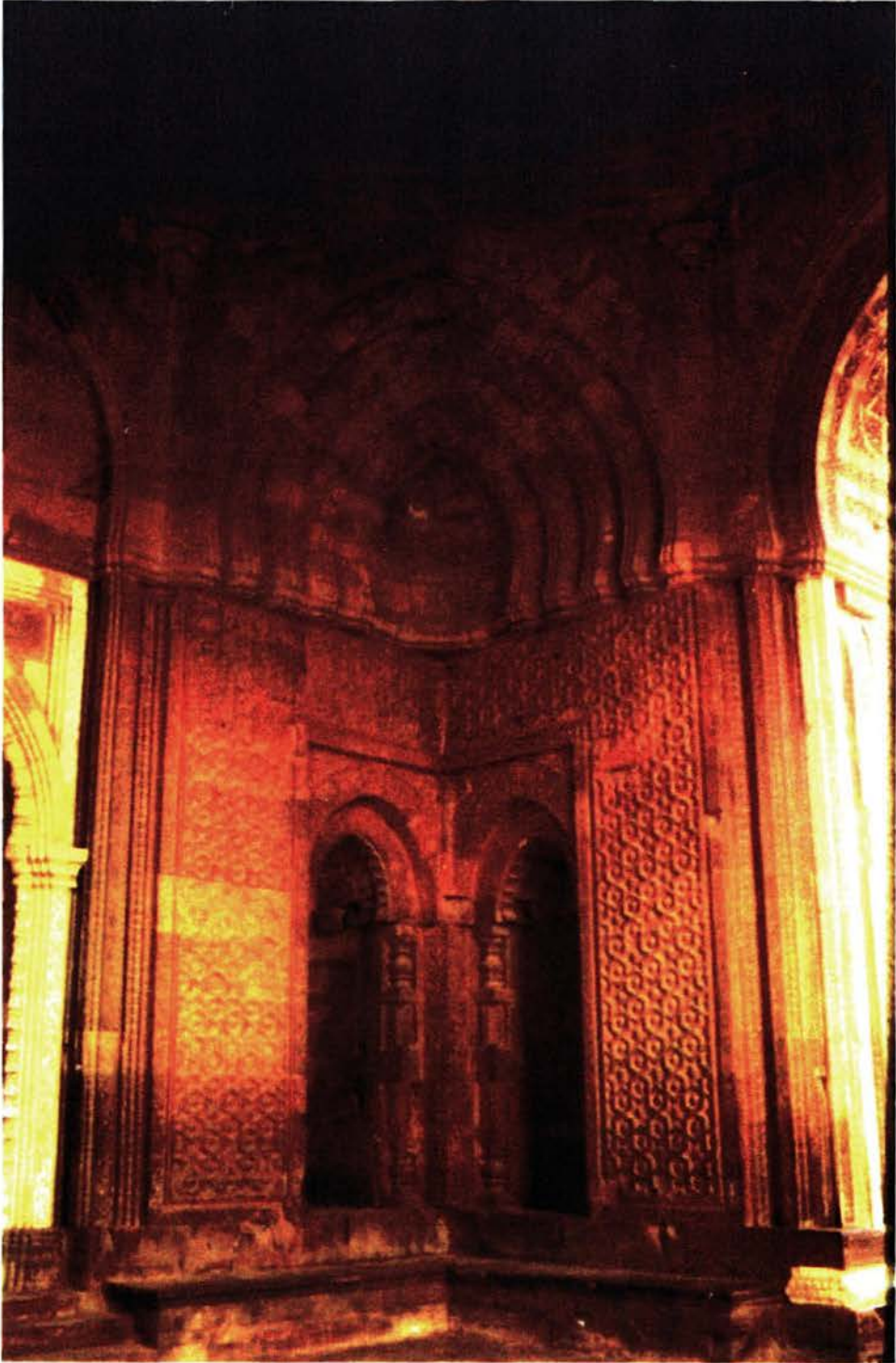
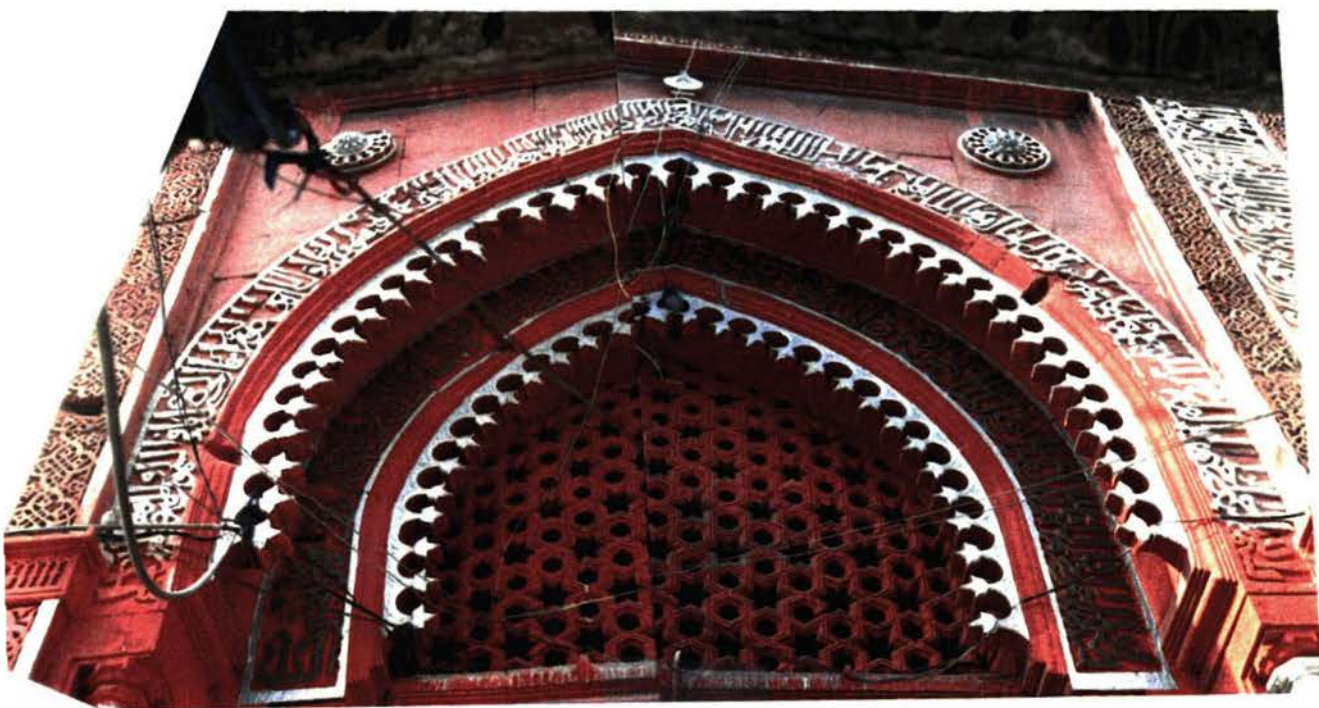


Figure 38: Photograph of main entrance arch to *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.



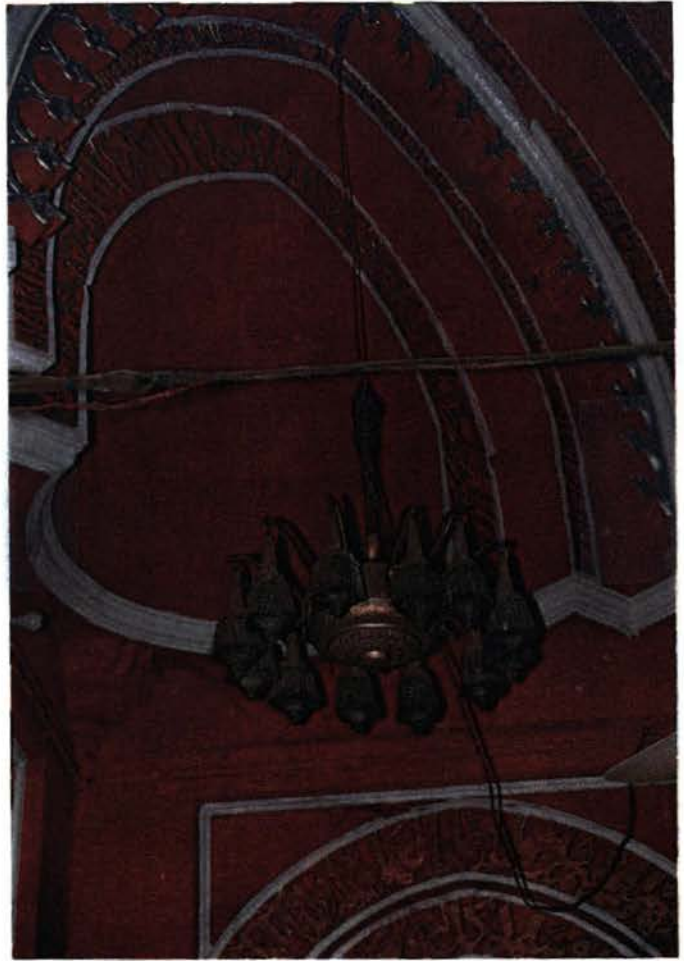


Figure 40: Photograph of lotus buds on *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.

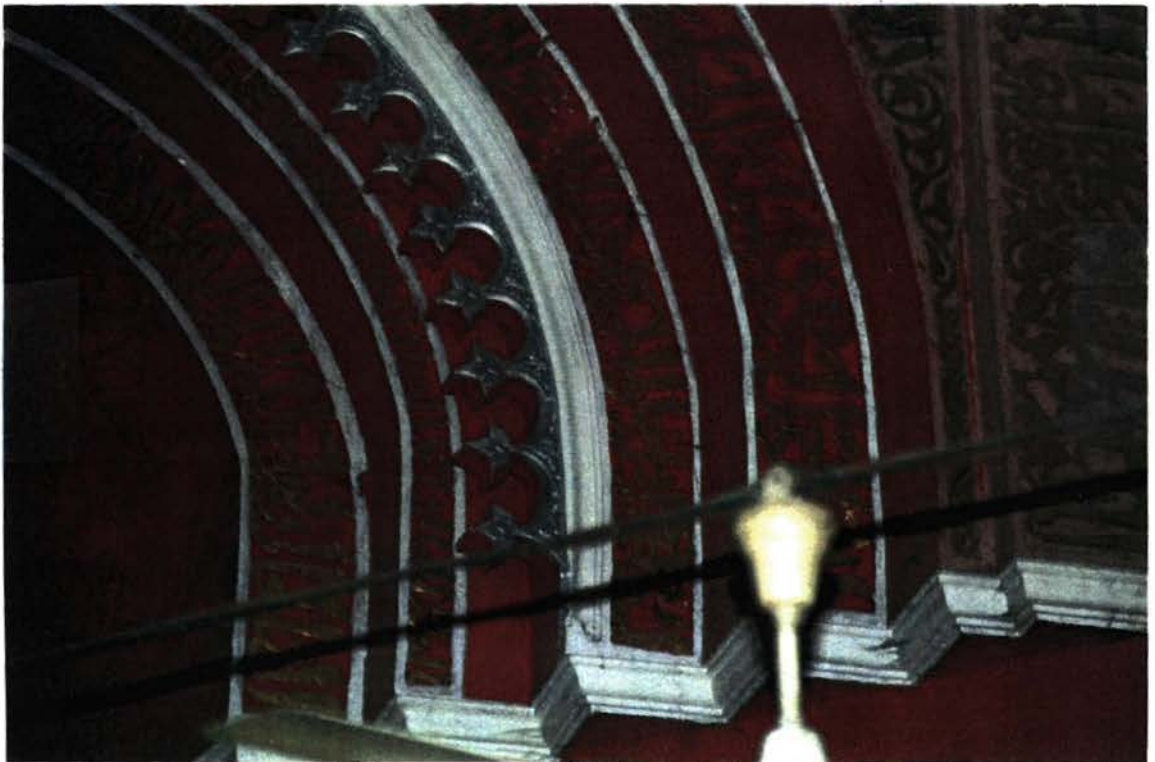


Figure 41: Photograph of arch over entrance to tomb of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq showing use of dressed red sandstone and lotus buds. December 1998.

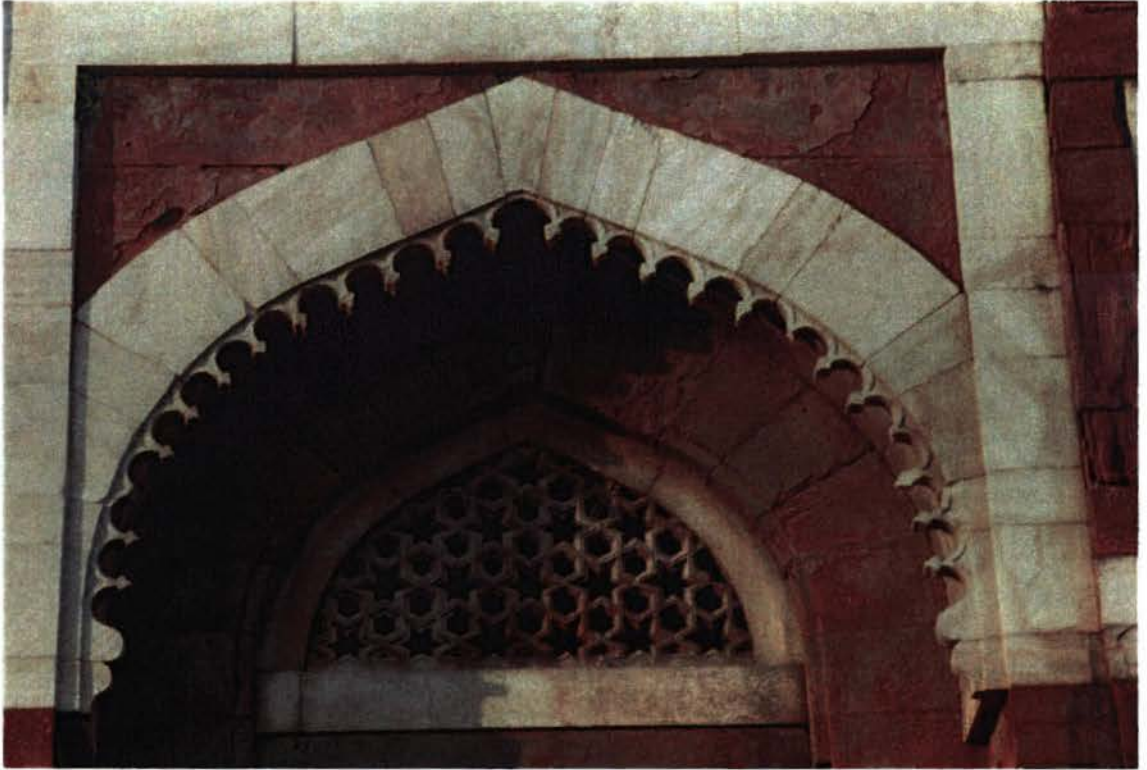


Figure 42: Photograph of exterior of "*Lal Gumbad*". December 1998.

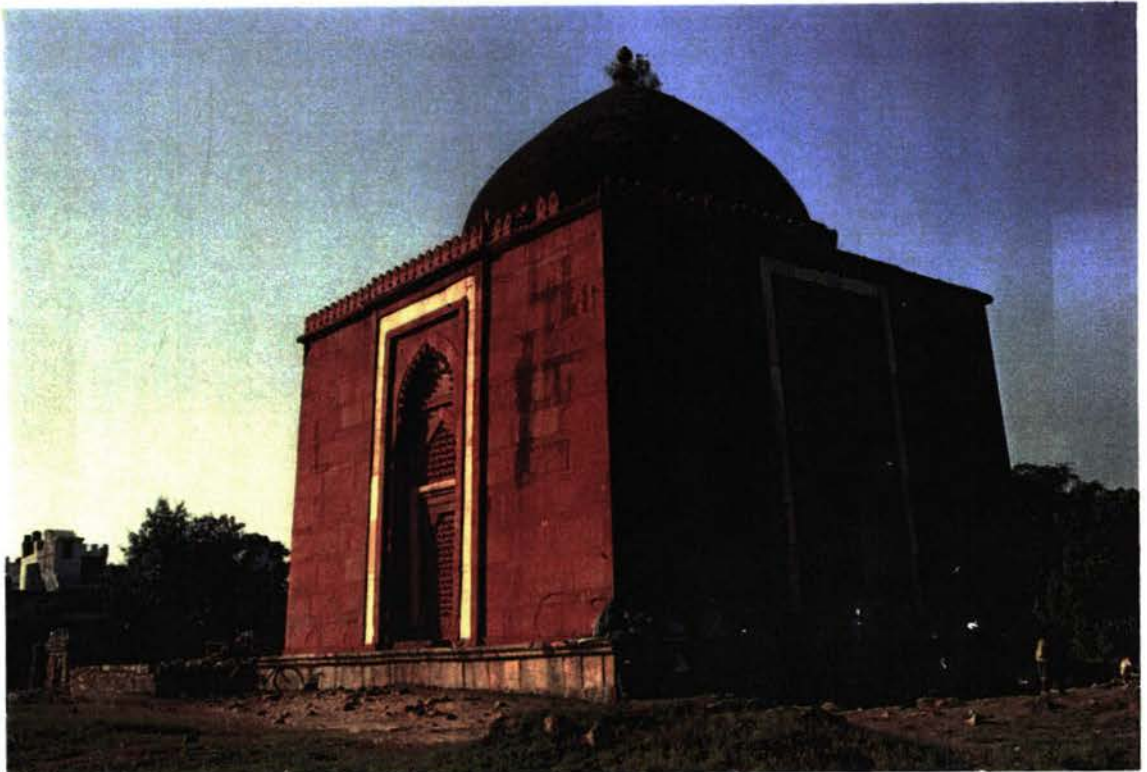


Figure 43: Photograph of small arch on exterior of *Jamatkhana* showing lotus buds.  
December 1998.

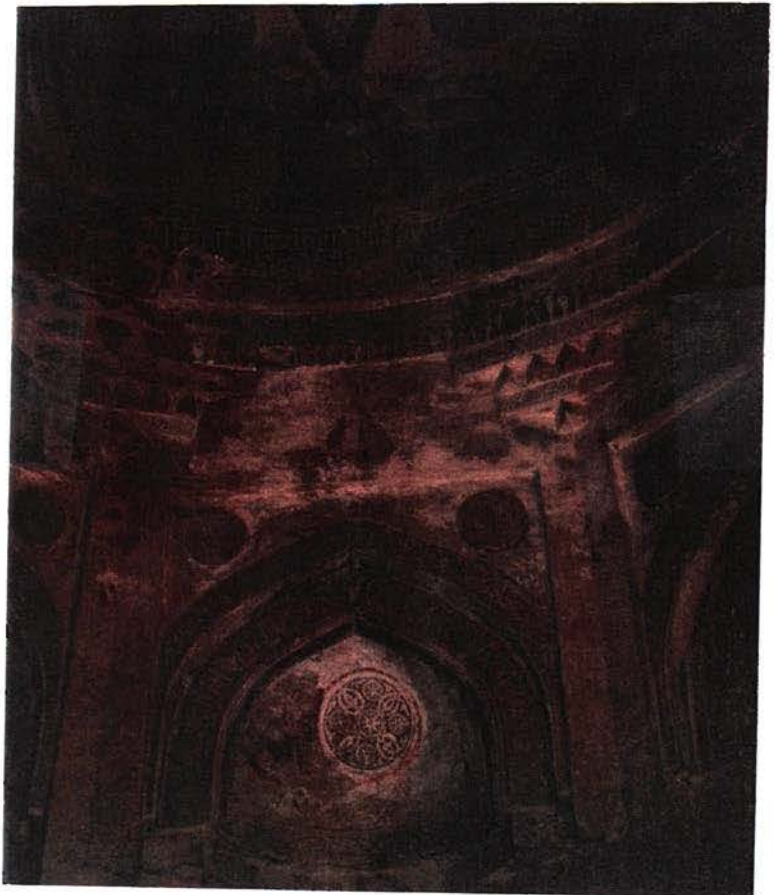


Figure 44: Photograph of lotus buds on *Jahanpanah Masjid* (Begampur Mosque).  
December 1998.





Figure 46: Photograph of squinch on Sultan Firoz Shah's tomb at *Hauz Khas*. December 1998.



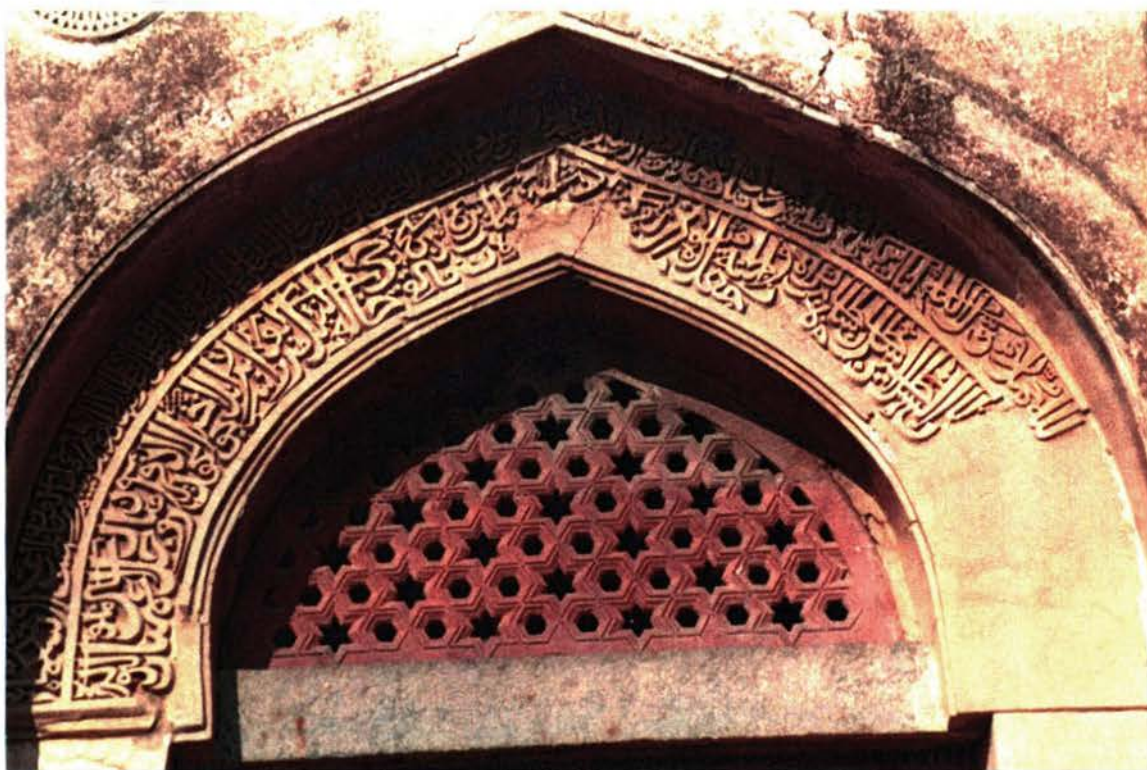


Figure 48: Photograph of interior of south *Jamatkhana* side chamber. December 1998.



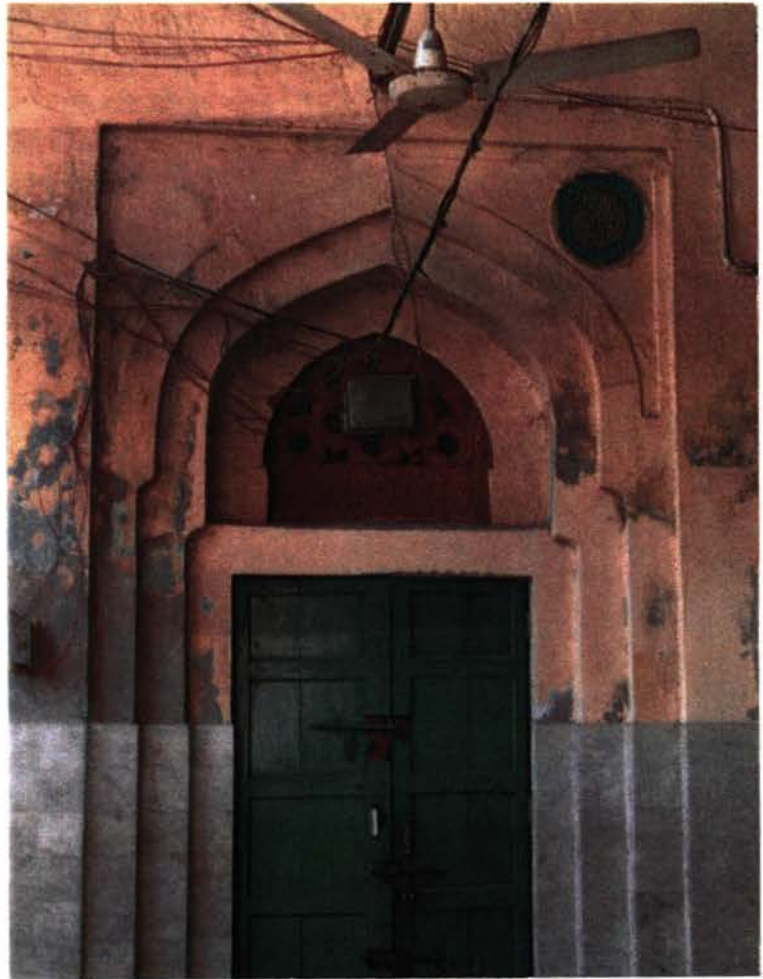


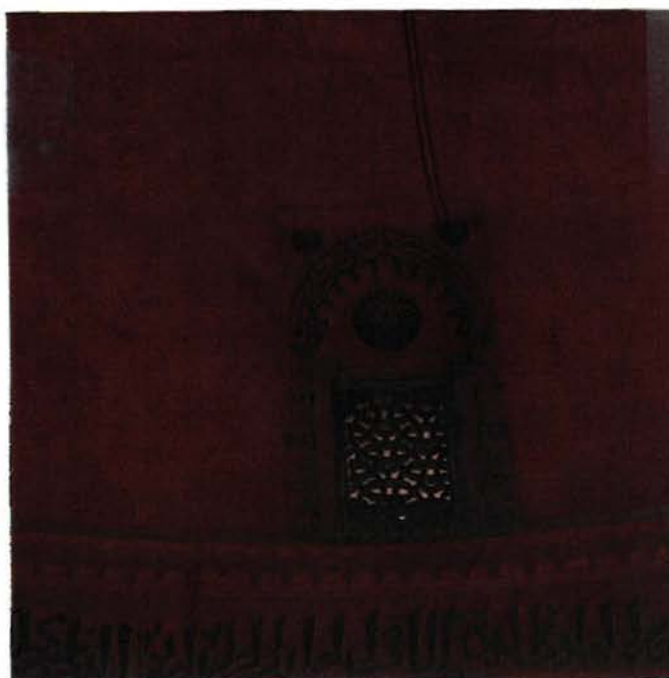
Figure 50: Photograph of arch on gateway to *dargah* of Nasiruddin. December 1998.



Figure 51: Photograph of posts and screens in *Jamatkhana* side chamber. December 1998.



Figure 52: Photograph of window in *Jamatkhana* dome. December 1998.



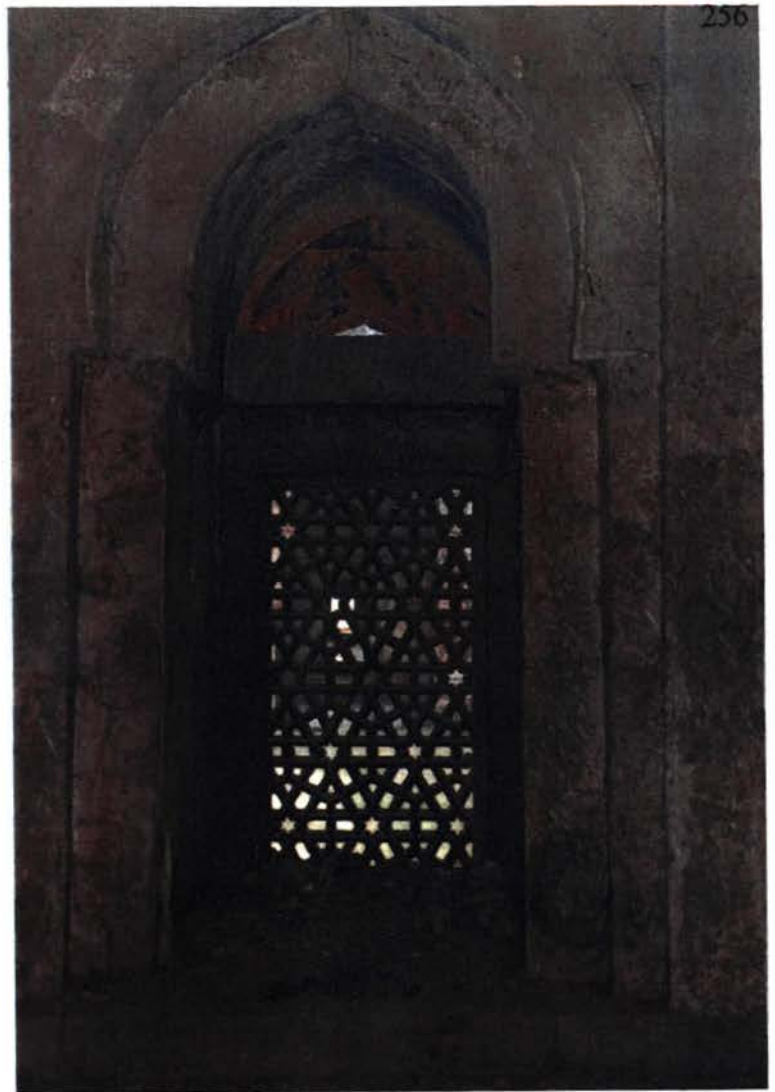


Figure 54: Photograph of screen behind Princess Jahanara's tomb. December 1998.



Figure 55: Photograph showing post and beams of original enclosure on east side of the *dargah*. December 1998. 257



Figure 56: Photograph showing north end of enclosure with inscription referring to Humayun. December 1998.

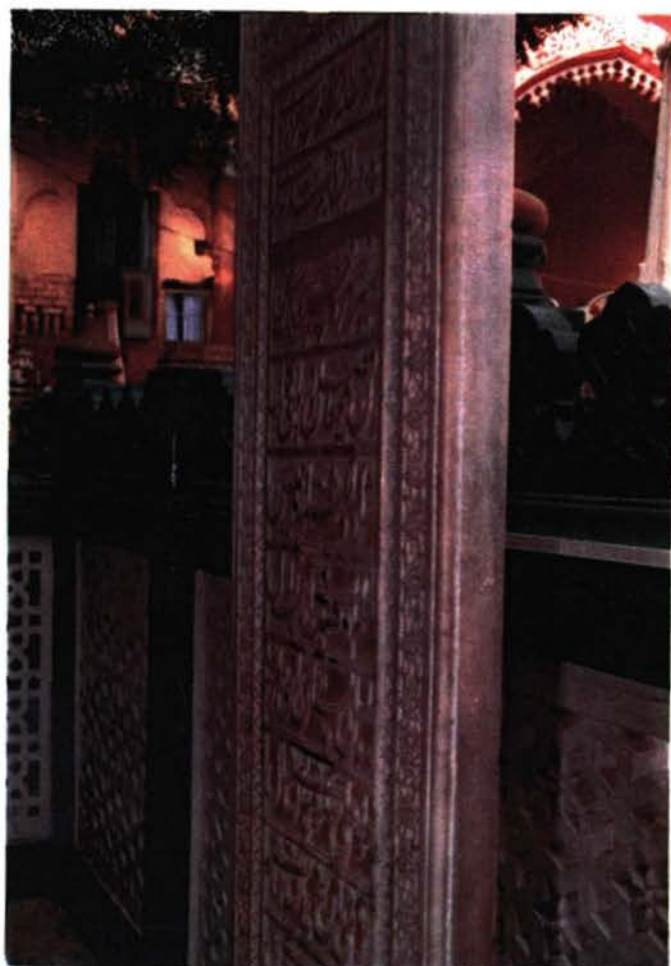


Figure 57: Photograph of exterior of *Khan-i-Jahan* Tilangani's tomb surrounded by modern development. December 1998.



Figure 58: Photograph of exterior east passageway on *baoli*. December 1998.

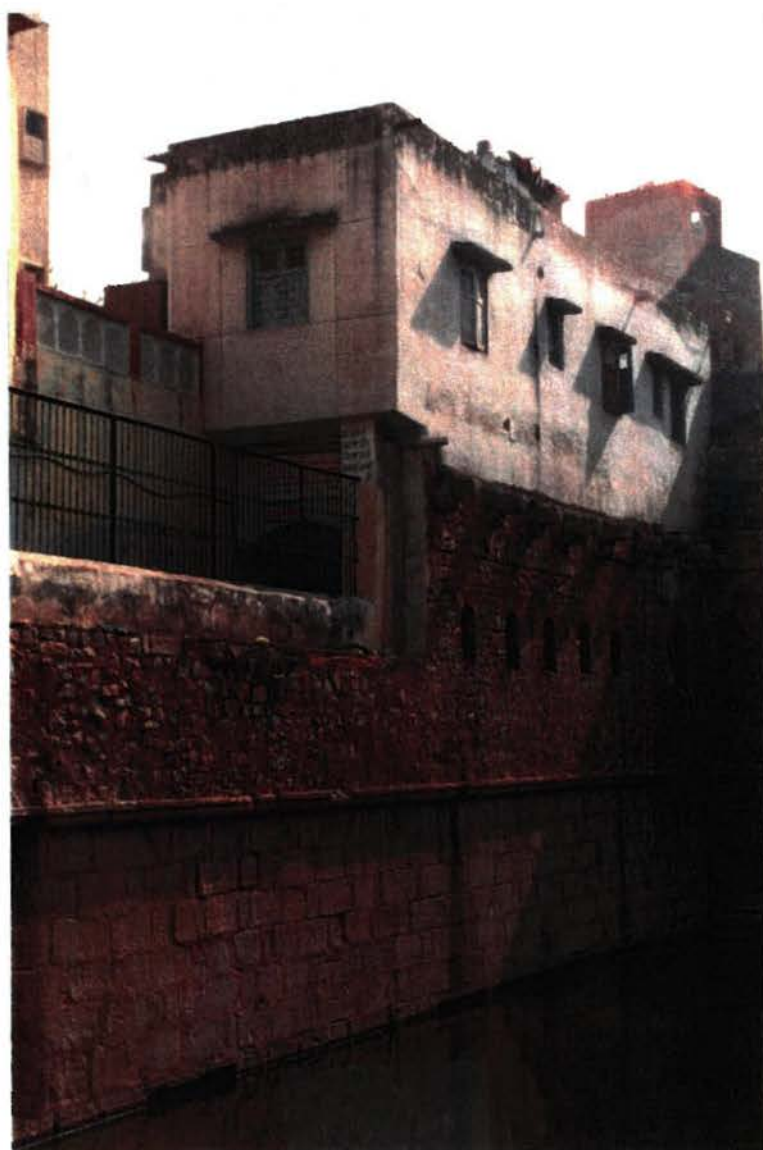




Figure 59: Daniell's drawing of the *baoli*. December 1998. (Source: Page, J. A., ed. Monuments of Delhi: Lasting Splendour of the Great Mughals and Others, Maulvi Zafar Hasan, compiler. 4 vols. in 3 bindings. [1917] reprint ed. New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 1997. vol. 3.

Figure 60: Photograph of *Gandak ki Baoli*. December 1998.



Figure 61: Photograph of two-storey *Masjid/tomb* ("*Chini Ka Buruj*"). December 1998.

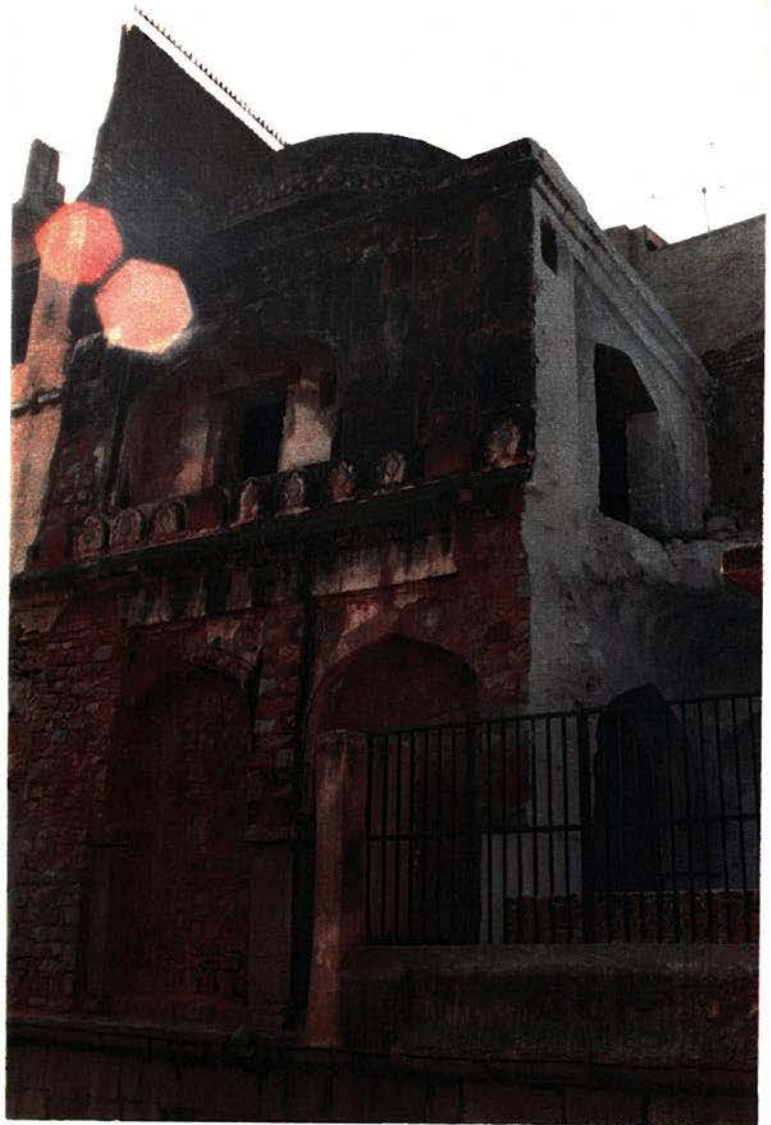


Figure 62: Photograph of unidentified tomb east of Nizamuddin's tomb. December 1998.



Figure 63: Photograph of Nizamuddin's grave with flower petals. December 1998.

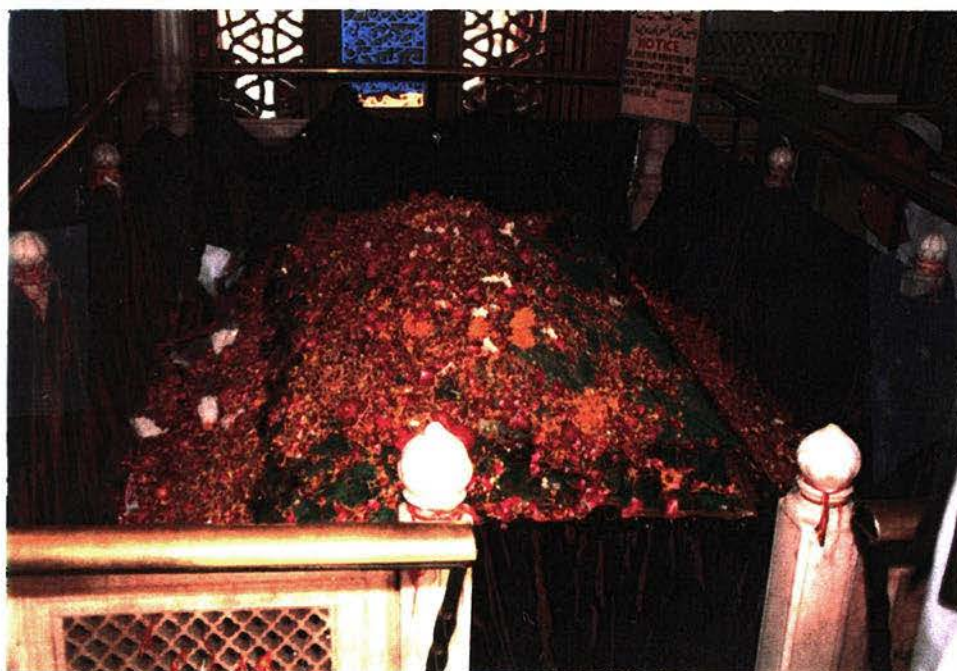


Figure 64: Photograph of interior central chamber of *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.



Figure 65: Photograph of medallion in *Jamatkhana* side chamber. December 1998.



Figure 66: Photograph of small arch on interior south wall of *Jamatkhana*. December 1998. <sup>265</sup>



Figure 67: Photograph of calligraphy on tomb of Atgah Khan. December 1998.



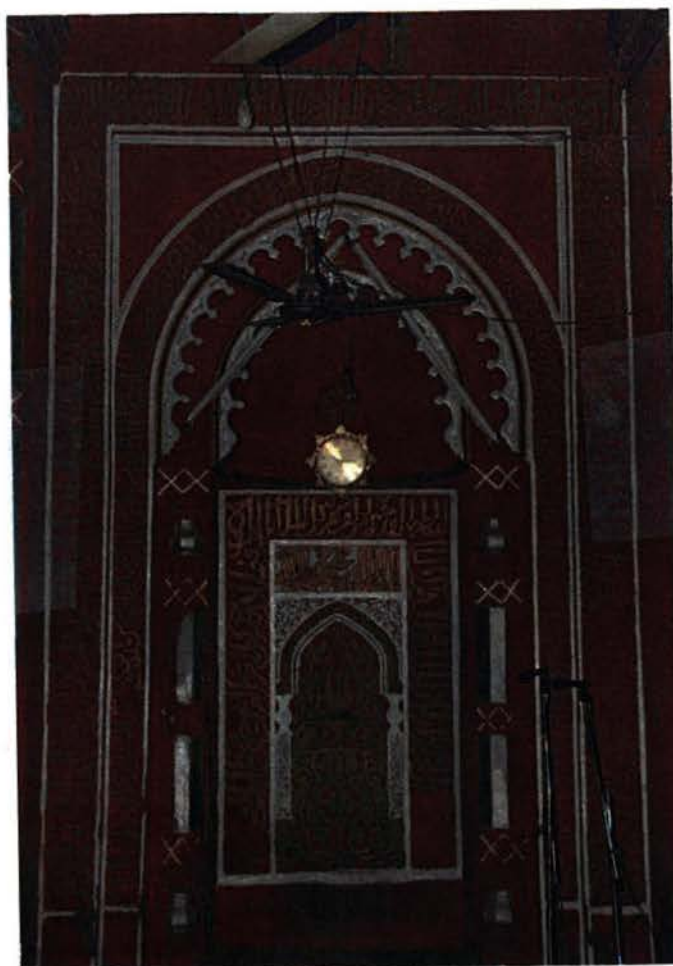
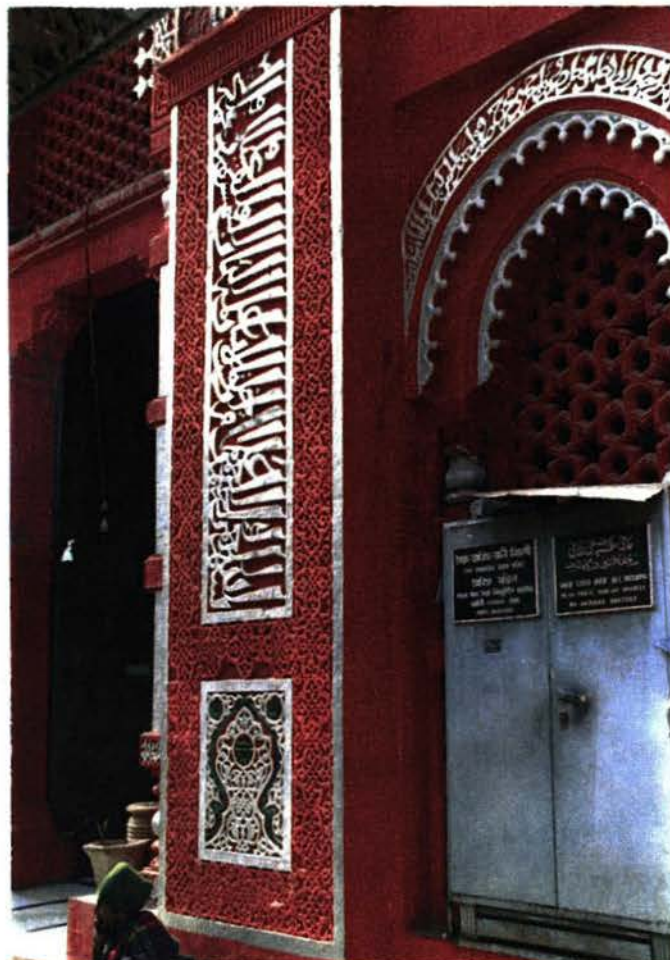


Figure 69: Photograph of epigraph on interior of base of dome in *Jamatkhana* central chamber. December 1998.





Figure 71: Photograph of the beginning of *Surah ar-Rahman* on exterior of main entrance to *Jamatkhana* and of small arch between main and north arches December 1998.



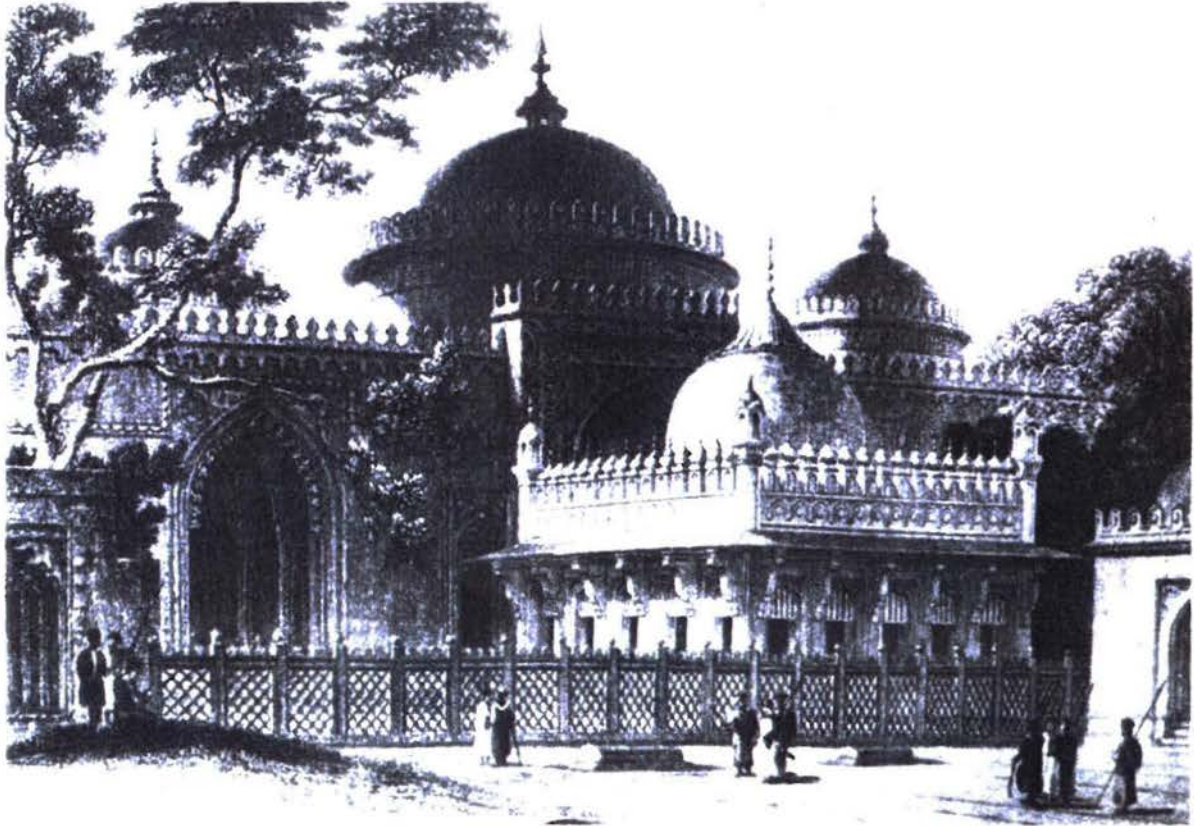


Figure 73: M.A. Khan's drawing of Nizamuddin's *dargah* and *Jamatkhana*. (Source: M.M. Kaye, ed. The Golden Calm: An English Lady's Life in Moghul Delhi. Exeter: Webb & Bower, 1980.

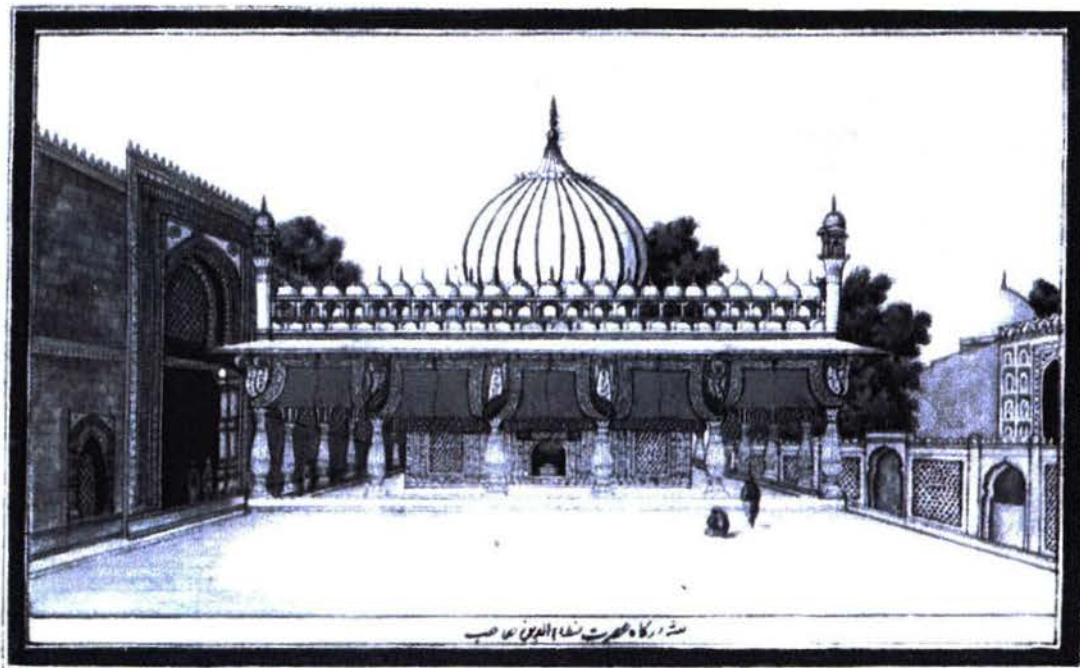


Figure 74: Photograph of exterior of Centenary Methodist Church. December 1998.



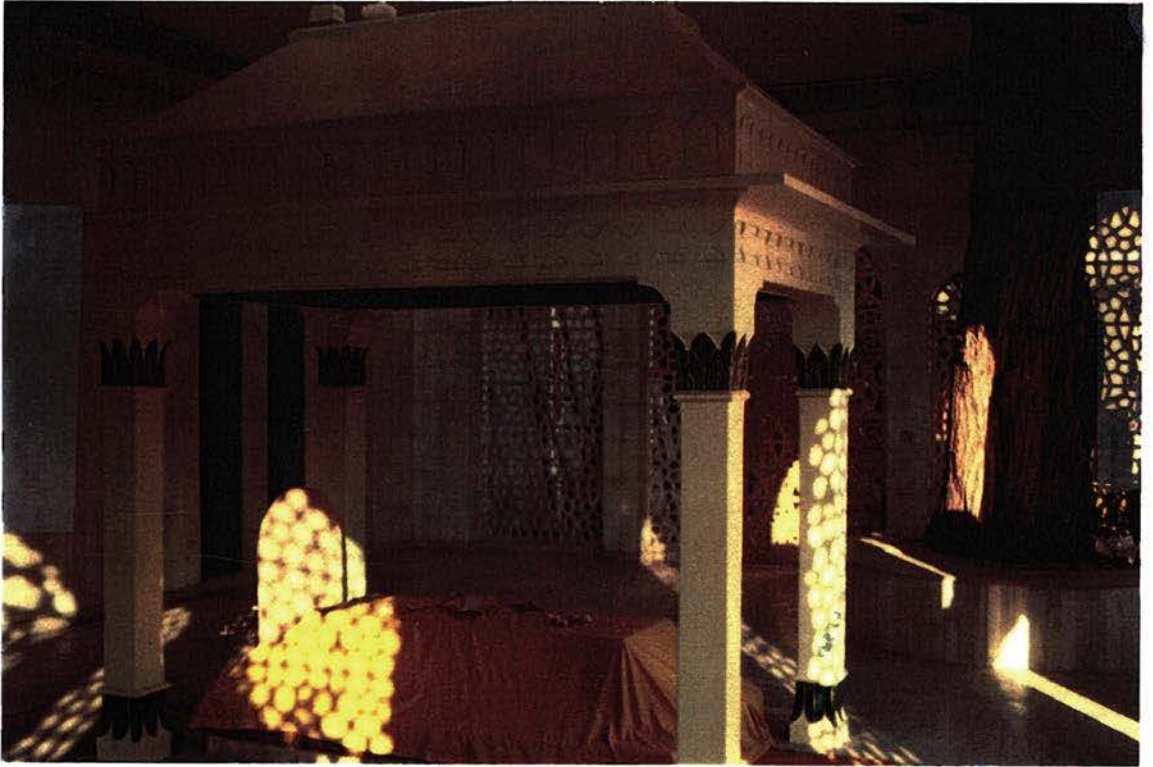
Figure 75: Photograph of Islamic Centre at Nizamuddin. December 1998.



Figure 76: Photograph of Hindu temple near the *Jamatkhana*. December 1998.



Figure 77: Photograph of interior of *dargah* of Innayat Khan. December 1998.



## VITA

Surname: Keshani                      Given Name: Hussein

Place of Birth: Nairobi, Kenya

### Educational Institutions Attended:

University of Manitoba                      1989 to 1992

### Degrees Awarded:

B.E.S.                      University of Victoria                      1992

### Honours and Awards:

### Publications:

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant the right to lend my thesis to users of the University of Victoria Library, and to make single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or similar institution, on its behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or a member of the University designated by me. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

TITLE OF THESIS:

Building Nizamuddin: A Delhi Sultanate *Dargah* and Its Surrounding Buildings

AUTHOR

  
Hussein Keshani

January 6, 2000