

Lal Kot and Siri

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“History is a set of lies people have agreed upon”
Napoleon Bonaparte

Lal Kot, Qila Rai Pithora and Siri

Lal Kot, meaning Red Fortress was the first city to be constructed in the Delhi area since ancient times. It was founded by the Tomar Rajput leader Raja Anag Pal in 1060. Evidence suggests that the Tomar ruled the area from 700AD based mainly in the Suraj Kund area. There were several Rajput clans and Prithviraj Chauhan of the Chauhan Rajputs seized power in the 12th Century. Prithviraj extended the city and renamed the area Qila Rai Pithora.

Over the previous couple of centuries Afghans had led raiding parties into India for plunder, but this changed in the late 12th Century with the arrival of Muhammad Ghuri who wished to extend his kingdom here. In 1185 he took Lahore and began his campaigns against the Rajputs.

The Rajputs defeated Ghuri in 1191 in the Battle of Terain, but their code of honour led to Ghuri's release. The next year Ghuri regrouped and secured victory in the second battle of Tarain. Ghuri did not have the same battle code and kept Prithviraj his prisoner.

This enabled Ghuri to take control of Lal Kot and Qila Rai Pithora. His empire extended from Delhi through Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkestan.

Ghuri left one of his Generals and also his slave, the Turk Qutb-ud-din Aibak as Viceroy of Delhi. Qutb-ud-din Aibak started work on the Qutb Minar and the Quawwat ul Islam Mosque within the city of Lal Kot. More than likely this was on top of previous Hindu settlements and certainly part of old temples were utilised in the building.

In 1206 Muhammad was assassinated and Aibak declared himself Sultan of Delhi, establishing the Slave Dynasty that was to rule the city for over eighty years. One of his son-in-laws Shams-ud-din Iltutmish, who became Sultan in 1211, continued Aibak's work at the Qutb complex, finishing the tower and extending the mosque.

The next Dynasty was established by the Khalji family. They were an Afghan family and gained power in part due to dissatisfaction in the way the previously Turk dynasty had ruled.

The most powerful ruler of the Khalji Dynasty was Ala-ud-din Khaji, who assassinated his Uncle to assume power. Initially this alienated him from the citizens of Delhi but it is said that he won back their favour by scattering gold and silver coins as he entered the city.

During his time as Sultan he also extended the Quawwat ul Islam Mosque, started the Alai Minar, a tower that was to be double in height of the Qutb Minar, and built the Alai Darwaza. He also constructed the fort of Siri, which had previously been a military camp.

He was once to rely on the strength of this fort as he was besieged for over two months by Mongol armies. He was though eventually to defeat the Mongols and brought the army Generals back to the fort and had them executed by trampling them with elephants.

His other lasting construction for the city of Delhi was the water tank near Siri Fort known as Hauz Khas.

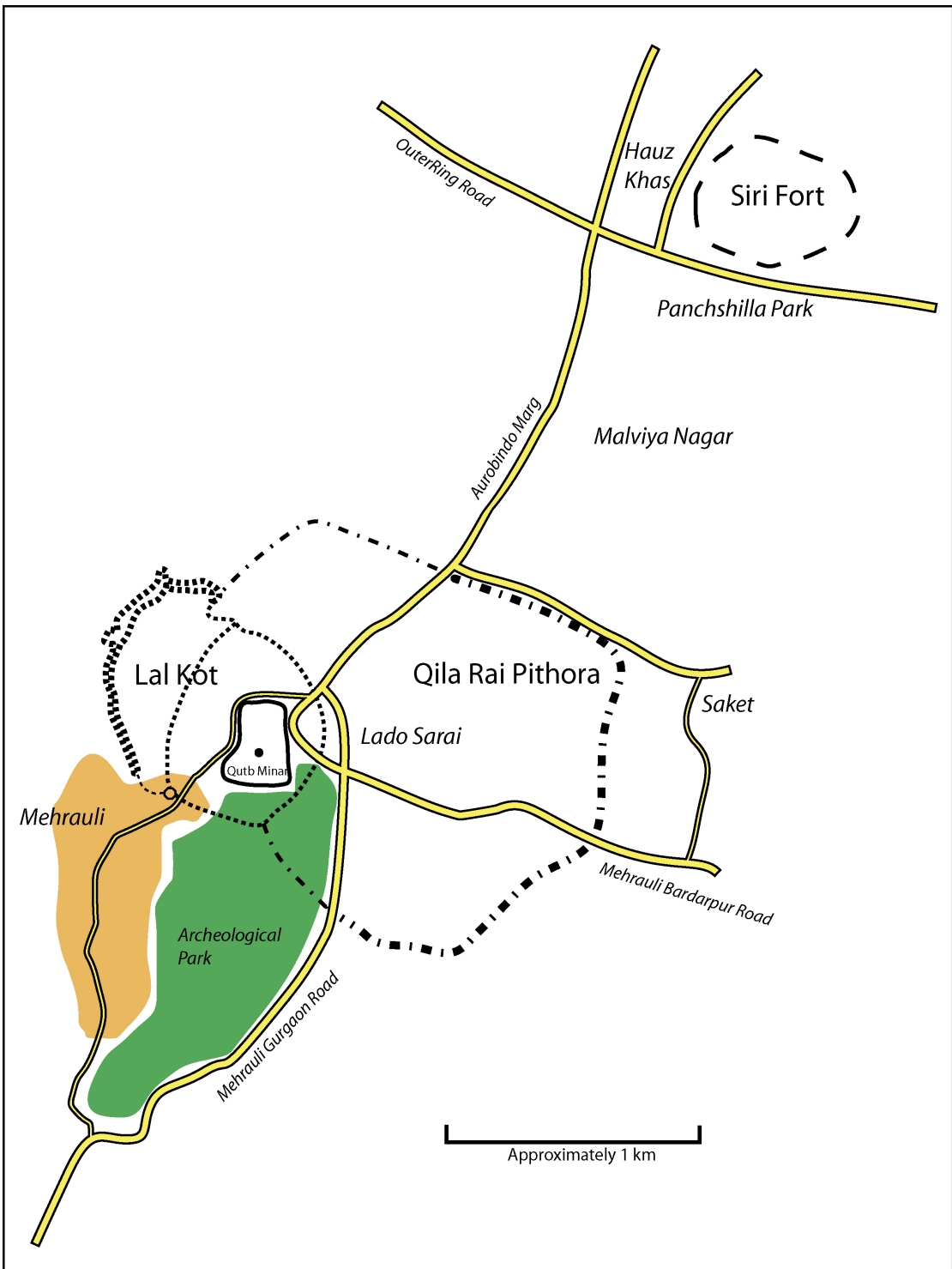
Key Rulers of Delhi

Ruler	Dates of Rule	Actions of Note
Prithviraj III Chauhan	c1179 - 1192	Extended Lal Kot and named it Qila Rai Pithora
Muhammad Ghuri	1192-1206	Afghan ruler who beat the Hindu rulers to take control of Delhi and North India
Qutb-ud-din Aibak	1206-1210	Slave General of Mohammad Ghur who established the Slave Dynasty of Delhi. Started the construction of the Qutb Minar and Quwwatul Islam Masjid
Shams-ud-din Iltutmish	1211-1226	Son in Law of Qutb-ud-din Aibak. Continued work at the Qutb complex, extending the mosque and completing the minar
Raziyyat-ud-din Sultana	1236-1240	Daughter of Iltutmish, first female ruler of India
Ghiyas-ud-din Balaban	1266-1286	Ex- slave and son in law of Iltutmish
Ala-ud-din Khaji	1296-1316	Extended the mosque and added Madrassa. Also constructed the Alai Darwaza and started the Alai Minar Constructed Siri Fort and the Hauz Khas water tank.

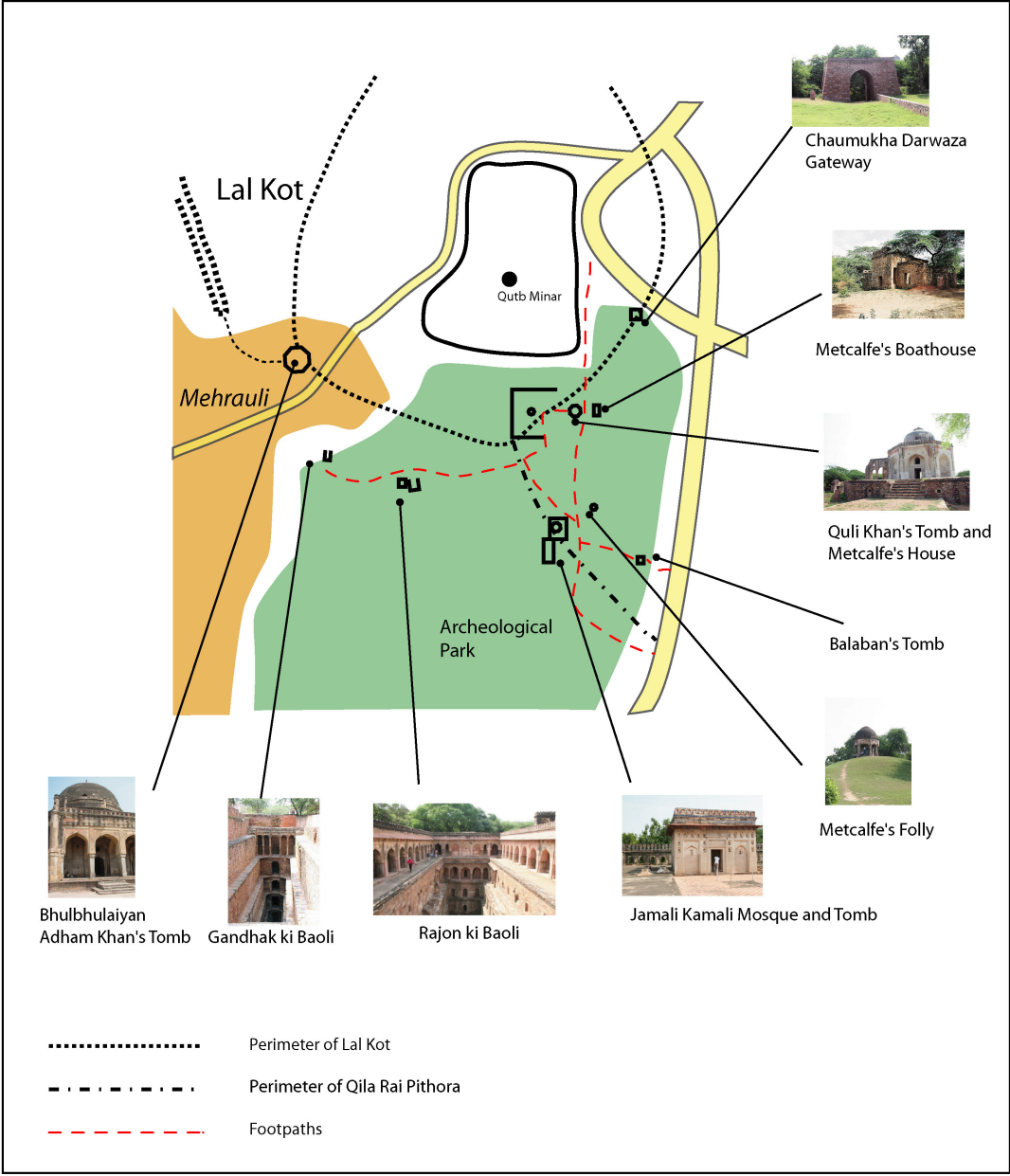
		Tughlaqabad 1321							
		Lal Kot 1060	Qila Rai Pithora 1150s	Siri 1304	Firozabad 1354	Purana Qila 1534 (Dinpanah)			
Cities of Delhi									
Monuments of Qutb Minar and Mehrauli		1000 Chamukha Darwaza	1100 Quwaat-ul-Islam Mosque 1192 Qutb Minar 1199	1200 Iltumish extends mosque 1230 Iltumish's tomb 1235 Gandhak-ki-baoli Balban's Tomb 1266	1300 Mosque extended again Alai Darwaza 1310 Alai Minar Alauddin's Madrasa 1317 Top two floors of Qutb Minar added 1368 Chamukha Darwaza repaired	1400	1500 Rajoli-ki-Baoli 1506 Jamali Kamali Tomb and Mosque 1528 Iman Zamin's Tomb 1539 Adham Khan's Tomb 1566 Quli Khan's Tomb 1560s		
Ruling Dynasties		Tomar Rajputs 700-1151	Chauhan Rajputs 1151-1192	Slave Dynasty 1192-1290	Khalji Dynasty 1290-1320	Tughlak Dynasty 1320-1414	Sayid Dynasty 1414-1451	Lodi Dynasty 1451-1526	Mughal Dynasty 1526-1803

		Shahjahanabad 1650s		New Delhi 1920s		
Cities of Delhi						
Monuments of Qutb Minar and Mehrauli		1600	1700	1800 Earthquake topples Qutb Minar Cupola 1803 Smith's Cupola added 1829 (removed 1848) Sir Thomas Metcalfe converts Quli Tomb into country residence 1830s	1900	2000 Restoration of Mehrauli Archaeological Park by INTACH
Ruling Dynasties		Mughal Dynasty 1526-1803	British Rule 1803-1947	Indian Independence 1947-		

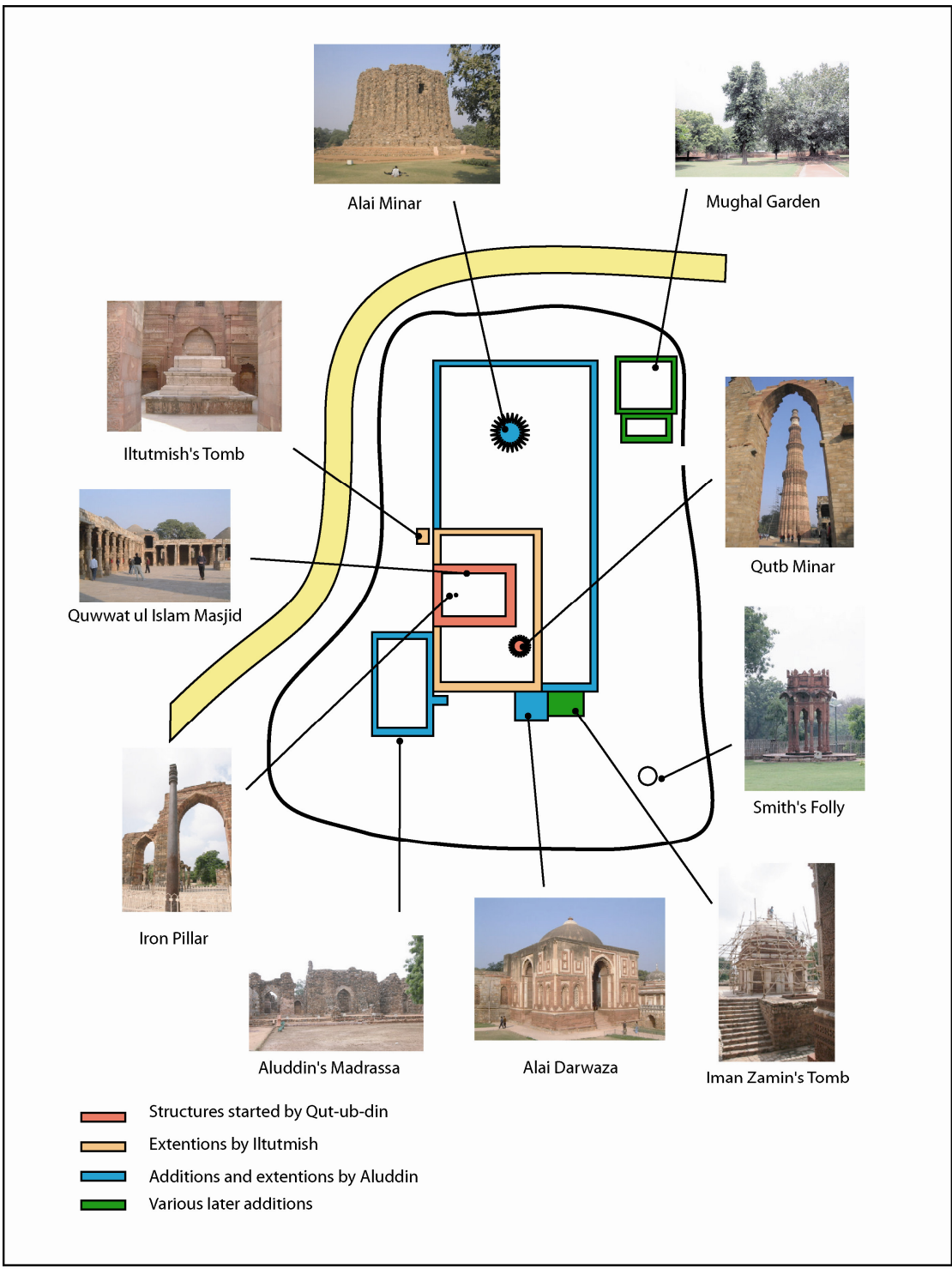
INTACH : Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage



Map Showing the locations of Lal Kot and Siri Fort in relationship to current roads and residential areas.



Map showing some of the main monuments within the Archeological Park and around the Qutb Minar



Map of Qutb Minar Complex

Principle Sights on the Tour



Chaumukha Darwaza 11thC & 14thC

This gateway sits on the line of the perimeter wall of Lal Kot. Much of what is seen today though was rebuilt during the Tughlak Dynasty (14th Century). Its name is derived from the fact it has four openings, which is unusual for a gateway.



Jamali Kamali Tomb and Mosque 1528

Jamali (which means loveable) is the pen name of Sufi Saint Sheikh Fazl-Ullah (also known as Jalal Khan). He was from a Sunnu merchant family and was initiated to Sufism by Sheik Samauddin.

He became a popular poet and travelled widely around Asia and the Middle East. He was Court poet during the late Lodi/early Mughal time. Popular also with Babur and Humayun.

Jamali is classed as one of India's outstanding poets. His poetry reflected the times in which he lived and followed the tradition of Persian mystical poetry. "The Sun and Moon" and "The Spiritual Journey of the Mystics" were two of his best sellers! but his writings; "The Mirror of Meanings", was what made him extremely popular in the Islamic world.

Kamali, thought to occupy the second grave in the tomb is unknown, variously considered as Jamali's brother, his son, spiritual guide or a fellow poet or maybe just used for alliteration.

Jamali had his tomb built between 1528-9 (Baburs time). However, some date the tomb as being constructed as late as 1535 (Humayun's reign), the year before he died. The tomb is in very good condition, though kept locked most of the time its worth finding the chowkidar to open it. Some of Jamali's verses are inscribed just underneath the ceiling, as well as some text from the Koran on the walls. The arrangement suggests that the tomb was set in a walled garden.

The Jamali Kamali Mosque is to the south of the tomb and also set in a walled enclosure. It has a large forecourt with a water tank or well, which was found 5 years ago. The Jamali Kamali

mosque is said to hold an important position in the evolution of the mosque design in India. It was built around 1528/9 in the Lodi style (although some say it was built between 1528 and 1556) and is said to be the first example of Muhgal architecture in Delhi. However, it has features that also appear in the earlier built Moth Masjid (also called Moth ki Masjid) near South Extension, built by Miyan Bhuwa, a minister of Sikandar Lodi (1488-1517). Some features of the Jamali Kamlai mosque can also be seen in the "Qal'a-I-Kuhna Masjid" and "Isa Khan Mosque" built inside the "Purana Qila"(Old Fort) in 1541.



Rajoli-ki-Baoli 1506

Step wells are a particular feature of Northern India, used as a means to store natural water for a population. The main tank would be used for washing and cleaning while a shaft well behind could provide drinking water. The Galleries around the tank provide a shelter and area to rest. It is said that sometimes young men would show off their prowess by diving into the tank.

The Rajoli-ki-Baoli was built in the Lodhi period and is adjoined by a Mosque. The name Rajoli comes for the term for (stone) masons. It has four tiers. An inscription on the Mosque states that it was built by Dalut Khan Khawaja Muhammad and it is thought he also built the step well. Thus providing for the welfare of his soul by building the mosque, and in helping those less fortunate by constructing the well.



Ghandak-ki-Baoli

Near by is the **Ghandak-ki-Baoli** (early 13th C) that was probably built by Illutmish and is thought to be the oldest in Delhi. It is much simpler in form than the Rajoli well but has five tiers. Its name (Ghandak) comes from the sulphur in the water, which can still be smelt.

Sir Thomas Metcalfe, Quli and Adham Khans' Tombs and Dilkusha 16th C & 19th C



Sir Thomas Theophilus Metcalfe was an employee of the British East India Company and his brother Charles was Resident to the Court of Delhi. While the information in the archaeological park refers to Charles most other documents state that it was Thomas who brought and converted the Quli Tomb into a country residence for the monsoon season.



The Boathouse

He used the main chamber of the tomb as his dining room and built two additional wings, only one of which is still partially standing. He converted other old city building into guest rooms, staff quarters and stables. He also created a formal garden which he called Dilkusha meaning 'pleasing to the heart' or 'happy heart'

Within his grounds he also built follies such as the canopy opposite the tomb and another on near the Jamali Kamali Mosque. Two further follies are near the Qutb Minar entrance, a spiral and square stepped ziggurats. Alternatively these may have already been present and just enhanced by Metcalfe.

Another building that he adapted on his estate was a dove cote from the Lodi period (16th C), which he turned into a boat house. He also diverted two streams to form a lake, and a set of steps from the boat house lead up to the tomb.

The British Library has a book of paintings compiled by Metcalfe with illustrations from various Indian artists including pictures of Dilkusha.

<http://www.bl.uk/collections/delhibook.html>

Quli and Adham Khans' Tombs (16th C)



Adham Khan's Tomb

Muhammad Quli Khan was the brother of Adham Khan both of whom were foster brothers of Emperor Akbar. Their mother had been the wet nurse of Akbar. They later became generals in the Army.

Adham Khan got into a dispute with a favourite general of Akbar and had him killed. This greatly angered Akbar who ordered that Adham be executed by throwing him from the ramparts of the fort in Agra. He survived the first fall so the Emperor ordered that he be thrown again and this time he died from his injuries.

Naturally Adham's mother was greatly upset by these events and went to Akbar and requested permission to build a tomb for

him. It was built in 1562. The tomb can be found next to the Mehrauli bus station. It is much larger than his brother's Qili's tomb, and was built over the ruins of Lal Kot's walls. It also was converted by a British Gentleman, Blake in 1830, as a residence and later it was used as a rest home. The tomb is also called Bhulbhulaiyan.

Quili's tomb is more modest in size, though the exact date of building is unclear. Recently restored there is evidence that Hindu temple remains were still being used for building in the 16th century.

Inside the Qutb Minar Complex



Qutb Minar 12th C.

The Qutb Minar is generally thought of as Qutb-ud-din's victory tower and while this is probably the case for the external structure seen today there is also evidence that it may have been built over or around a previous Hindu structure.

Local oral tradition was that Prithivijai Chauhan (ruler in the 11th century) constructed it for his daughter so she could stand on top and behold the Yamuna during her morning prayers.

It is also possible that it was used earlier for astronomical study. The total number of apertures for letting in light in the basement story is 27, the same as the 27 naksharta (star) constellations of the Hindu zodiac. At that time it was also surrounded by a body of water and stars were reflected in the water.

Viewed from a plane it resembles a 24 petal lotus flower in full bloom (the lotus being an important symbol in Hindu religion). There is also Hindu script inside the tower on the first storey. However at the time of Qutb-ud-din, Hindu masons would have worked on the tower, so it is possible that the result is a synthesis of both Hindu and Islamic influences.

Whatever the true origin only the first storey of the current structure was completed in Qutb-ud-din's lifetime. His son-in-law Iltutmish completed the next three. The construction

of the stones was similar to Lego, avoiding the use of mortar and providing protection against earthquakes.

However a lightning strike toppled the top storey in 1368 and Firoz Shah Tughlaq repaired it adding the top two white marble storeys.



Smith's Folly

An earthquake did cause some damage in 1803, toppling the then cupola. Englishman Major Smith added a replacement in 1829 which was later removed in 1848 as being out of keeping with the original tower. It is now in the gardens and referred to as Smith's Folly.

The tower rises to 72.5 metres, it is 14.3 metres in diameter at its base and 2.7 metres at the top. The tower was closed, sometime ago, to the public after a power cut caused a stampede and several children died.



Alai Darwaza 1311

This Darwaza was built as part of the mosque extensions by Alud-ud-din Khaji, three further gateways had also been planned. It was one of the first structures in India to combine white marble and red sandstone as a decorative feature. A style that was to become very popular over the next few centuries.

The building still retains many of its highly ornamental carvings. The structure also shows that the Indian masons had begun to master the construction of arches and domes.



Iron Pillar 4th C

The iron pillar is a unique item that has puzzled scientists for many years as it has no sign of rust while being 99.7 % iron. There is an inscription on the tower and a translation is shown on a nearby wall. This dates the pillar to about the 4th century. It was moved to Delhi by the Tomar Rajputs from 'Vishnupada Hill' a now unknown location. It is over 7m high with a base diameter of 40cm and a top diameter of 30cm.

While it is sometimes thought of as a flagpole its true purpose is uncertain. Whatever it was used for it evidently was considered important considering that the Rajputs moved it here and then the Turks retained it within the enclosure of the

Mosque.

Its ability to withstand rust is now thought to be due to a high phosphorous content that created a protective coating following its manufacture probably by forge welding. The exact method is uncertain and now lost to the ancients that created it.

A number of myths and fables surround the pillar including that you would have good fortune if you could clasp your hands after standing with your back to the pillar and reaching around it.



Quwwat-ul Islam Mosque 1192 to 14th C

The name of the Mosque means Might of Islam, though it may have originally been Qubbat al-Islam meaning Sanctuary of Islam. The central courtyard was built by Qutb-ud-din from 1192. It is believed that as many as 27 Hindu and Jain temples were destroyed to make way for the mosque and provide materials for its construction. This can be observed in the pillars around the courtyard which show carvings of Hindu deities and other animals etc.

Many have been defaced probably for being idolatrous and there have been theories that white plaster once covered many of the carvings, but that is uncertain. What the site does show is the change as masons adapted from previous Hindu requirement to Islamic ones, with more geometric and calligraphic carvings appearing over time.

The great arch screen at the rear was constructed in 1199. At the time the Roman methods of arch building used in West Asia had not reached India and the arches here show the lack of familiarity with the technique. Instead of having curved stones topped by a key stone purely horizontal slabs of increasing length are used to hold the structure together.

Iltutmish went on to extend the mosque and added more arches to the screen. In this area more usual Islamic carvings of calligraphy and geometrical forms became prevalent and show great skill in the masons. His extensions also brought the Qutb Minar within the boundaries of the mosque.

Later Alauddin Khalji, wanted to extend the boundaries even further with four large gateways but only the Alai Darwaza was completed, though the foundations for the walls are still in place.

The mosque continued to be used until the building of Shahjahanabad in the 17th century when many people moved to the new city.



Iltutmish's Tomb 1235

Iltutmish built his own tomb a year before he died. The exterior is fairly plain while the interior is highly decorated with inscriptions from the Koran

There is no dome over the tomb, and the thickness of the wall suggests that they were not strong enough for a dome. It is possible that one was never built.

Other Sights of Interest in the Area



Ala-ud-din's Madrasa 1317

Compared to the Darwaza this appears to have been a much simpler building. It consisted of a central courtyard and adjoining rooms. Built just over a hundred years on from the mosque it is noticeable that the Roman method of arch building was now being used.

It is thought that one of the chambers to the side was to be Ala-ud-din's tomb.



Alai Minar c. 1315

This structure was also started by Ala-ud-din as part of his scheme for the site. It was intended as a victory tower and to be twice the height of the Qutb Minar. Ala-ud-din died before its completion and the tower was abandoned at the first level.



Iman Zamin's Tomb 1539

Iman Zamin was a Turkish holy man called Mohammad Ali. He came to India during the reign of Sikandar Lodi and was a revered Iman.



Mughal Garden 18th C

During this period the Royal Family would spend some time in Mehruali away from the Red Fort. Gardens were popular as a place of retreat and rest. There are Chatris (covered pavilions) at three of the four corners of the square garden



Serai 18th C

The Serai stands in front of the Mughal gardens. Serai were built to provide shelter to travellers and their animals. A small mosque stands to one side of the area

Balaban's Tomb Late 13th C

This tomb is located near the Jamali Kamali Mosque and Tomb. Balban was the Son in Law of Iltutmish and an ex-slave. He was Delhi Sultan from 1266-1286, reign marked by the repulsion of Mongols and establishment of Delhi's rule over region up to Lahore.

It is believed that his tomb is in the central of three chambers, though actual evidence is weak. The tomb is said to be the first structure in India with true arches.

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Find 11 places or names relating to the 1st and 2nd Cities: spelt forwards and backwards, vertically, horizontally & diagonally.

First City, Qutub Minar, Iron Pillar, Quwwat ul Islam, Mosque, Mehrauli, Lal Kot, Adham Khans Tomb, Jamali Kamli Tomb, Rajon Ki Baoli, Siri, Sir Thomas Metcalfe