Chapter - III
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Techniques, Binding Material and Decoration of the Mosques of Firuzshah Tughlaq.

Before the reign of Sultan Firuzshah Tughlaq, many Mosques were built which were based on pure Islamic technique.

The monuments of Firuzshah Tughlaq’s reign have perfect arches and domes. But they had gradually evolved and were a long way from the first original Islamic structure made on the Indian soil in 1199 A.D in the form of an arched screen seen in the Quwwat-al-Islam mosque basically to separate the courtyard from the sanctuary. The arch made in the screen is a corbelled arch. It is not used perfectly, the arches built with the help of lintel and beam, which was the trabeate technique. In India, the method of construction was conveniently trabeate.

In India the foremost monuments to be connected with the Muslims as builders were the mosques. In the early hours, the builders faced severe problems in the matter of structural and architectural forms, building material and the method of ornamentation. The early Muslims, in fact had only defense force and clerics (old fashioned). They were completely dependent on the artisans who were present in the surrounding area.

1 S.M. Azizuddin Hussain, Shams Siraj Afif’s Tarikh-i-Firozshahi, Medieval India 2. Essay in Medieval Indian History and culture, Edited by Shahbuddin Iraqi, CAS, Department of History, A.M.U, Aligarh, 2008, p. 212
2 Ziyauddin A. Desai, Mosques of India, Ministry of information and broadcasting Government of India, 1971, p. 15
These artisans did not know the technique of true arch and dome. In other words, we can say the technique of Islamic architecture. The material used in its construction came from the plunder of Hindu and Jain temples and moreover, the expert engaged were Hindus who were not familiar with the techniques of arcade architecture, with the effect that the entire building with its walls, pillars, architraves, ceiling etc, is chiefly Hindu in character.\(^3\)

In *Qwдут-al-Islam* mosque, the plinth of the principal Hindu place of pilgrimage (temple) was selected by Aaibak. Substance of the demolished temples was freely utilized, for example- sculptured pillars, lintels, and corbelled technique and lantern ceilings. The screen of five arches testifies definitely its construction by the builders who were familiar with corbelling technique of the *trabeate* type. Indian artisans did not know the method of scorching arch. The Ogee shaped arch has a little S curve at the apex. The dome in the mosque is also not a true dome, it is made on the simple principle of *trabeate* order in which the beam and columns hold up the stone slabs and make cup formed.\(^4\) The arch as well as the dome got more sophisticated with gaining of more skilled in construction technique by the masons and we find the first true arch in Balban’s tomb.

The ogee shape working in the screen by Qutbuddin was misrepresented when the first extension was accepted by Iltutmish. The ogee cusp was replaced with a simple pointed arch configuration.\(^5\)

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But here simple pointed arch used in place of ogee arch was not very similar to the pointed arch of *Gothic* style decoration prevailed in England during these days.  

A true arch means an arch made of voussoirs laid in a mode that it can take the load by means of tension and compression of the load above it. From the stand point of technological achievement, we see a productive involvement of arches and domes in the structures of the Khaljis and Tughlaqs. *Adhai Din ka Jhonpra* mosque also has similar structural features. It was constructed on the site of a Hindu temple; it was a great Vaisnava temple. This building was originally a Sanskrit college. Qutbuddin Aaibak demolished the upper part of this building.

Iltutmish was not paying attention in the construction of buildings. He built *Jami masjid* in Badaun, it have similar facial appearance of the Aaibak's mosque. Alauddin khalji was a good administrator but not an architect. He built *Hauz-i-Shamsi, Jamat khana* mosque and extended the *Quwwat-al-Islam* Mosque. With the transfer of throne of Delhi from Khalji to Tughlaqs, the architecture of the imperial capital entered on a new and more rigorous phase. The tense political situation is reflected in massiveness and the extreme simplicity of the architecture of Tughlaqs.

With the twist of the thirteen century, we find Islamic architecture took new shape in the erection of buildings. In this

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6 Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic period)*, op. cit., p. 13* Here *Gothic* style means pointed arched style prevalent in Western Europe during the twelfth century to sixteenth century.

7 S. M. Azizuddin Hussain, op.cit., p. 212

8 Ibid., p.13

9 *Encyclopedia of Indian society and culture*, Edited by Rajkumar Pruthi, Rameshwari devi, Vol.3, Delhi, 1972, p. 78

10 Ibid., p. 7
century we saw the mosque architecture blossoming and taking a new shape which was totally different from those which were constructed earlier. The causes of this change are economy, religion, transfer of capital and death of skillful craftsmen and contact of the south with the north. The Tughlaqs were not as good as the Khaljis and they had not sufficient money for their architectural plans. So the result was that the buildings of the Tughlaqs looked less graceful and artistic than those of the Khalji rulers.

After Khalji rulers Tughlaq Dynasty appeared on the throne of Delhi Sultanate. Tughlaq rulers in contrast to Khalji rulers were more interested in the activities of art and architecture. Of the three rulers of Tughlaq dynasty, Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq (1320-1325A.D), his son Mohammad Bin Tughlaq (1325-51A.D) and the most prolific of all in his building projects, was Firuzshah Tughlaq (1351-88A.D).

The first of the dynasty, Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq, was an old man when he came to the throne, reigned for nearly five years. A soldier more than a statesman, as his work testifies, his effort in the field of architecture during his limited period were concerted on the formation of the third city of Delhi known as Tughlaqabad. Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq was not interested in buildings and he had no time, he ruled only five years. All the three Tughlaq Sultans invested money for the architectural purposes at the centre of their ruling (capital city Delhi) besides it they also focused for some regions outside Delhi for the purpose of architectural centers. The Multan region was another focus of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq's architectural attention and the mausoleums of the saints Rukn-i-Alam in Multan and Faridud-din-

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11 Ibid., p. 79  
12 Percy Brown, op.cit., p. 20  
13 Ibid., p. 20
Ganj-i-Shakar in Pakpatan are closely related to his tomb in Tughlaqabad in architectural design and form. Ghiyas-ud-din’s former fief of Dipalpur lay directly on the classical route of western invasions into India. Khusrau Shah’s armies were unceremoniously defeated by one Ghazi Malik, who was governor of Dipalpur, near the city of Multan in north-western India. Ghazi Malik ascended the throne of Delhi, at the same time Sultan Ghiyas-ud-din established one of the most prolific building dynasties of Delhi, that of the Tughlaqs. Ghazi Malik had become the traditional “warden of the marches” hence he had urbanized a distinctive notion of architecture, more parallel to that of fortresses and military establishments than to seraglios of pleasure and places of worship.

Mohammad Bin Tughlaq ascended the throne after the death of Ghiyas-ud-din-Tughlaq. He was not interested in raising buildings. During the reign of Mohammad Bin Tughlaq, it was his impulsive policy to remove the capital from Delhi to the distant city of Daulatabad, in the Deccan, six hundred miles away. Apart from the sadness that this forced resettlement caused, for the transportation of the entire population entailed universal suffering. Abandoned and isolated as the city of Delhi is recorded to have been about the year 1340 A.D, its inhabitants dispersed, the rich lands around abandoned by their cultivators, the skilled workmen compelled to seek service

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16 Ibid., p. 31
17 Percy Brown, op. cit., p. 22
18 Ibid., p. 22
elsewhere, as for as the imperial capital was concerned the building art for the time being had come to an end.

Only through the passionate investment of Mohammad Bin Tughlaq’s successor, Firuzshah was a movement against the trend emerged, and the style revived. Mohammad Bin Tughlaq’s greatest mistake was that he repudiated the theoretic occupation of the state aggressively and without observe to that process of the “Ulema and the Saints”. It was not a matter of a religion oriented sociology as well, which the late Sultan did not recompense any attention too. Firuzshah enthroned in 1351A.D after Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. He was interested to erect buildings. Firuzshah mentioned himself in Futuhat-i-Firuzshahi that

“One of the favoritism of God, gifted on the modest servant; he was enabled to construct works of civic utility. I built numerous Mosques, Madrasas, and Khanqas.”

Firuzshah was a religious man, he erected many mosques. The description of the mosque as the “House of God” and its broad function as a place for worship of God only, was laid down in the Quranic verses. And verily the mosques are for the God only hence invokes not anyone else with God therein. It is praiseworthy that inside a mosque there is no discrimination high and low castes, black and white skins.

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19 Ibid., p. 22
21 Ibid., p. 58
22 FiruzshahTughlaq, Futuhat-i- Firozshahi, (Edt.) Sheikh Abdul Rashid, A.M.U, 1904, p. 11
23 Abha.Rani, op. cit., p. 24
24 Quran, Chapter. LXXII, Verse. 18
In the contemporary sources, we do not have detailed information of materials used by the builders of the Turk Afghan period including that of the Tughlaq period. The primary sources do not mention about the technique and material which were used in the buildings of Firuzshah Tughlaq or Tughlaqs period. Accepting that the great periods of Islamic architecture almost all predate the recorded clarification of European visitors, we are forced to rely on inadequate Islamic sources and inscriptions. Although buildings might have been fashionable, architecture was infrequently considered a subject worthy of the concern of the literate; the historians and poets. The architects themselves do not seem to have recorded much about their work and most of the craft men could hardly write more than their signatures and a few words.

As for as the architects of Tughlaq’s period are concerned we do not find any information in the inscription of the buildings but contemporary literary and historical sources provide valuable information on architects about “Khwaja Jahan”. Zahir-ud-Din and Malik Ghazi Shahna. Malik Ghazi was the chief of the department (shahna Mir), who worked with great energy and effort in the building work. The Sultan had awarded a golden staff to this Malik. Abdul Huq alias Jauhar Saundhar was also awarded a golden staff. The Sultan had appointed a clever and qualified superintendent (Shahna).

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26 Abha Rani, op.cit., p. 87
28 Shams Siraj Afif, Tarikh-i-Firozshahi, op. cit., p.329 see also Ziyauddin Barni, Tarikh-i-Firozshahi, (Edt.) Sir Syed Ahmad khan, Sir Syed Academy Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, 2005, p. 572
for every group of artisans like stone cutters, wood cutters, carpenters etc.\textsuperscript{29}

We know very little about the formal training of an architect in the History of Islam at any period. Architects were the sons or nephews of established architects, following the conventional Islamic civilization of the inheritance of occupations. Sometimes the profession of architects existed in a family for some generations.\textsuperscript{30} In the \textit{Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi} of Shams Siraj Afif has given information about the Khan-i-jahan. The name of khan-i-jahan was Maqbul Tilangani, he belonged to Tilangana. When he was Hindu his name was Kannu. During the period of his unawareness (before conversion), he was trusted aristocrat of the Rai of Tilang, after the death of Rai, he submitted to Mohammad Tughlaq, recited the \textit{Kalima} and accepted Islam. After conversion the Sultan named him Maqbul. Sultan assessed the wisdom, deftness and aptitude of Maqbul and appointed him deputy Prime Minister at Delhi\textsuperscript{31}. Khan-i-jahan had earned name and fame during the time of Mohammad Bin Tughlaq, after the death of Sultan, Firuzshah became Sultan of Delhi Sultanate. In the beginning, Khan-i-Jahan opposed him but after some time he joined Firuzshah. He was appointed \textit{Wazir} by Sultan.\textsuperscript{32} When Khan-i-jahan grew old and attained the age of eighty years, his frame and body were afflicted, the death of khan-i-jahan took place in the year

\textsuperscript{30} Abha Rani, op. cit., p.87
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., Pp.396-397
770A.H/1368-69A.D, after eighteen years of the accession of Firuzshah.33

When khan-i-jahan Maqbul died, all people in Delhi mourned. Every soul who was in banquet went to the mosque or tomb in mourning. Moreover, khan-i-jahan was a wazir with wisdom and fear. He managed the affairs of the state and the army with great effort. All the time he worked for the welfare of the subjects.34

Shams Siraj Afif also gave information of khan-i-jahan junan Shah (son of Khan-i-jahan Maqbul) when he was born when Khan-i-jahan was Muqta of Multan. The sultan directed that the new born be named Junan shah; hence Khan-i-jahan second was named Junan shah. On seeing the child, the holy sheikh said, Qewam-ul-Mulk, your son should attain fame and bring distinction to your family.35 In concise after the death of Khan-i-jahan Maqbul and his last rites, the family members of the departed khan went to the Sultan. Firuzshah expressed enormous grief. Every descendent and family member of Khan-i-Jahan was rewarded and Junan shah was bestowed the robes of the prime minister’s post and his title was to be Khan-i-Jahan bin Khan-i-Jahan. Junan shah was also intellectual, sensible and comprehending. He remained prime minister for twenty years and advised the Sultan in matters of administration of the country. During his presence of him, the Sultan would not address anyone except him.36

During the reign of Mohammad Bin Tughlaq Zahir-ul-Jaiush his architect, the court poet Badrud-din-chach reports that he was also

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33 Ibid., Pp. 401-402
34 Ibid., Pp. 402-403
35 Ibid., Pp. 415-416
36 Ibid., Pp. 420-421
responsible for the design of the Sultan’s *Jami Masjid.* If so, he was an architect of great ability and notable creativity, and his use of the four *Iwan* plan implies that he was one of the many Iranian in the royal service.

During the time of Firuzshah Tughlaq, Malik Ghazi Shahna was his chief mentions the architects in charge of the Sultan’s projects. Malik Ghazi Shahna was the chief architect and was very capable. He apprehended the Gold Staff (of office) and held the golden axe. A clever and qualified superintendent was appointed over every class of artisans. During the time of Firuzshah Tughlaq, he was manifestly a man of architectural and administrative skills who enjoyed both royal and ample funds. He was responsible for the design and construction of most of the building projects from 755A.H/1354A.D through 791A.H/1388A.D; He is clearly a figure whose position in the development of Sultanate architecture can be compared to sienna’s role in Ottoman architecture.\(^{40}\) Abdul Huq\(^{41}\) his deputy architect, he was transformed from Hinduism, like so many other Tughlaq officials.

Anonymous work *Sirat-i-Firuzshahi* has mentioned an extensive description of the Lat pyramid project.\(^{42}\) The pages are rich in technical detail and indicate that the anonymous author must have been assisted by someone with a substantial knowledge of engineering and architecture, an official high in the rank of royal employees. It


\[^{38}\] Abha Rani, op. cit., p. 88

\[^{39}\] Shams Siraj Afif, op. cit., p. 329

\[^{40}\] Abha Rani, op. cit., p. 88

\[^{41}\] Shams Siraj Afif, op. cit., p.329 also see A.Welch and H.Crane, op. cit., p.126

seems likely that a project of such importance as the lat pyramid would have been assigned to the chief architect, working here under the active direction of the Sultan. There seems to be every reason to suppose that the author of the text was aided by Malik Ghazi Shahna.\textsuperscript{43}

Tughlaq Architects were very intelligent and they have ability to build quickly and in short time. An important advantage enjoyed by Tughlaq architects was that even the biggest mosques and tombs were usually erected during amazingly short time.\textsuperscript{44} The main feature of the Islamic architecture is the arch, dome, vault and the Minar, incorporated in square, octagonal or rectangular layout. The monuments of Firuzshah Tughlaq’s reign have ideal arches and domes. When Muslims came in India and started buildings in India. They were aware of the use of \textit{"astylar arches"},\textsuperscript{45} where screen walls were involved as in Maqsura of the Qutb Mosque, when ordinary mortar and stone construction were expanded. Muslims introduced true arch principal. True arch means an arch made of voussoirs laid in a manner that it can take the load by means of tension and compression of the load above it. From the standpoint of technological achievement, we see a productive contribution of arches and domes in the structure of Khaljis and Tughlaqs.\textsuperscript{46}

The true arch domes weather of the sphere-shaped or apsidal domes type are also incorporated into the linear rhythm of the interior and exterior as on the top opening of the stair Minars of Khirki

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Abha Rani, op. cit., p. 89
\item \textit{Sirat-i- Firozshahi}, op. cit., Pp.188-89
\item Abha Rani, op. cit., p. 91
\item S.M. Azizuddin Hussain, op. cit., p.212
\end{enumerate}
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Masjid, rectangles and smooth curves prevail over squares and bulbous domes stand all too, Prominently over a high drum.47

The organization of the Mihrab had also been undergoing various forms even in West Asia. The recess of the Mihrab had been mostly pentagonal (or octagonal and circular rarely) and the exterior projection on the back side had been either circular or rectangular. The Qibla or the religious orientation of the mosque is essentially designated by the back wall of the prayer chamber and did not have more than one central Mihrab, curved recess.

For nearly three centuries in India, right from the beginning and in later times, a very deliberate multiplication of the Mihrab, all along the mosque wall in front of every axial way or of the façade arch, besides a separate Mihrab for the zenana gallery at one end, usually north was provided for in a congregational Mosque as at Jami Masjid at Kotla Firozshah.48

During the time of Firuzshah, the arch structure arrangements was by the cross beam at the springing level. During his long reigning era, Firuzshah Tughlaq constructed different types of buildings in a specific style. The architectural character is fundamentally different and is a reflection of the political conditions.

The materials and method of construction employed by the builders of Firuzshah Tughlaq naturally reacted on the character of the architectural style.49 In the random rubble masonry, additional measures were adopted to give it strength and stability by building portions thicker at the base than at the top, an expedient which gives

47 Abha Rani, op. cit., p. 91
48 Ibid., p. 91
49 Percy Brown, Indian Architecture(Islamic period), op. cit., p. 23
the illusion of greater power, although no such angle of batter is really structurally necessary. This effect of slope is emphasized in many of the examples by the attachment of tapering turreted buttressed at the quoins, and by projecting conical bastions like towers crowned with low domes from the four corners of the building.

The resemblance in its general appearance, of this architectural style to the brick-built toms of Multan of a slightly earlier date is something more than a coincidence, and it is clear that the influence of this force full and independent development in the southern Punjab, already noted in the tomb of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq, was being maintained by his successor Firuzshah.50

Thick walls of mud or bricks may have been borrowed by the Tughlaqs from Sindh, Punjab or even Afghanistan, where mud and bricks were in use.51 In certain parts of the building, features like lintels, doorposts are used, the uniqueness of Khirki and kali Mosque plan lies in the four inner courts and large spacious aisles on all sides without the formal disposal of a sanctuary. It is not correct to associate it in any way with the plan of the Jami Masjid of Gulbarga dated 1367A.D.52 The later is entirely covered and has no inner courts, besides, the sanctuary has three domes the central one over the nave being monumental in dimensions proclaiming its positions, emphatically, a feature all together absent in the Delhi examples. Though Tilangani also belonged to the Deccan, he does not seem to have gone to Gulbarga afterwards, where an independent and

50 Ibid., p.23
51 Abha Rani, op. cit., p. 89
52 Percy Brown, op. cit., p. 23
sovereign state under Hassan Bahman Shah Gangu had been established in the life time of Mohammad Bin Tughlaq.\textsuperscript{53}

Khan-i-Jahan senior mostly remained in the capital in charge of the government whenever Firuzshah went out on expeditions. There is no record as to source of its inspiration has come down to us. It is curious, though in no way useful, that the Chaumukha Jaina temple of Ranpur (Ranapur) in Sadri pass (Rajasthan) has a similar plan of four inner courts.\textsuperscript{54} There is no evidence to indicate that the Telangani derived inspiration of this plan from the ancient India. But Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul Telangani, was a genius. Contemporary historians Afif had mentioned that he had no knowledge of reading and writing; he was a man of great commonsense, acumen and intelligence and was an ornament to the court.\textsuperscript{55} It seem, this plan have devised him. The tropical sun shone scorching on the open courtyard. And particularly in summer season rendered the cloisters uncomfortable.

The believers were required to take off their shoes and in summer the hot stone pavement on the courtyard troubled them. But in the rainy season an altogether open courtyard afforded no protection. To the people who assembled in the mosque for prayer.\textsuperscript{56} Hence, it may be conjectured that Tilangani did not approve the conventional planned instead, devised his own architecture. We know for certain that he chose the octagonal plan as against the conventional one for his own tomb. This way he pressed not only a genius to devise but also an initiative to experiment upon innovations. By providing four small courts in the interior with \textit{chajja} protecting the arcades on all sides, he

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{53} R.Nath, \textit{Studies in Medieval Indian Architecture}, op. cit., p.30
\item \textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p. 30
\item \textsuperscript{55} Shams Siraj Afif, \textit{Tarikh-i-Firouzshahi}, op. cit., Pp.329-30, Elliot and Dowson, Vol.3, Pp.354-55
\item \textsuperscript{56} R.Nath, \textit{Studies in Medieval Indian Architecture}, op. cit., p. 31
\end{itemize}
brought the climatic factors under control. Now a hot wind, the most scorching sun or torrential rain would not trouble the gathering. The interior moreover, would remain extremely cool and comfortable as the cupolas over square bays assured, without the loss of light or air.

On the other hand, there would be no direct glare and dazzle of a tropical sun but a tempered light soothing and comfortable, would be received in the interior. The inner court thus provided immense comfort in Indian environment and, as it appeared, it was with these advantages in mind that Tilangani devised or accepted this plan.57

But this plan was not continued after Firuzshah Tughlaq. Later on after Firuzshah the builders fell back the art of building as that of *Ekangna* mosque (one quartered) building construction. We should now consider the resources, by way of building materials that were at the disposal of the patrons of this new order. Delhi being located at the terminal outlier of the Aravalli hill chain, abounds in ridges of low hillocks of a rather metamorphosed variety of quartzite which does not fracture well, is indeed found in massive blocks and terminated lumps, and is an all too poor a material for working for decoration or detailed covering. Without anticipating this special phase of the Tughlaqs in so far as Islamic architecture around Delhi goes, we may just add that these and many other constructions of that of that period any even the earlier and later ones were built of Delhi quartzite.58

A very characteristic feature of Indian Architectural design from the fourteenth century onwards was the combination of the arch with the bracket, the bracket generally playing the constructive part in

57 Ibid., p. 31
58 Abha Rani. Op. cit., p. 89 (*Ekangana was actually a mosque building having single courtyard. Such type of mosque construction was in vogue after Firuzshah’s period.*)
accordance with Hindu tradition, the arch being used as a symbolic and decorative element.\textsuperscript{59} We have found this combination very frequent in the Tughlaq buildings.

Though the Tughlaq builders built their \textit{Liwans} over bays composed of stone columns and Tudor arches, the ceremonial pylon, not unlike in intention to the ‘screen of arches’ became a popular innovation. The most striking example of this is in the Begumpuri Masjid near modern Malviya Nagar.\textsuperscript{60}

The total slope of the exterior of this in rubble and plaster was a non-Indian feature which seems to have been inspired from some extraneous sources.\textsuperscript{61} Hence it is the indication to maintain its unique individual identity.

We have not found much information about the binding material of the Mosques of Firuzshah Tughlaq in the sources. Contemporary sources do not give detail information of binding material of the buildings of Firuzshah Tughlaq. So we have depended on survey work and secondary sources. The binding material which were used by Firuzshah Tughlaq in erecting his mosques, were ‘Lime and sand stone’.\textsuperscript{62}

The common quartzes and sand stone found in the immediate is neighborhood of Delhi. This stone, which is in masses of various sizes, some especially those towards the foundation, being of considerable dimensions, is unhewn and paved \textit{Chunam} of the best eminence, indeed so excellent that the strength of the domed roof.

\textsuperscript{59} Havell. E.B, op. cit., p. 93
\textsuperscript{60} Satish Grover, \textit{The Architecture of India(Islamic)}, op. cit., p. 40
\textsuperscript{61} R.Nath, \textit{History of Sultanate Architecture}, op. cit., p. 72
\textsuperscript{62} Sir Syed Ahmad khan, \textit{Asar-us-Sanadid}, op. cit., Pp. 380-381
seems to depend entirely on its adhesive properties, there being no attempt at placing the stones of which it is constructed throughout, into anything like the arrangement now adopted in the building of arches or domes, crowned by a centre or key-stone. This cementing *chunam* in this, and it is believed in all other buildings of the period, with a view probably of saving the expenditure of lime, is mixed with a great proportion of brick *surkhi*, of which many pieces are upwards of an inch in diameter. The whole of the edifice, both inside and outside, has been plastered over with *chunam* of the best description to judge by what remains, and parts about the doorways show that the outside has been at sometime or other coloured of that peculiar blue-black produced by the ground charcoal of coconuts, and other similar substances.

Very little however, of the plastering remains, except in the body of the mosque, where some care appear to have been taken for its preservation by repeated white washing. Zafar Hassan also mentioned that lime and stone are used to erect the mosques. Unlike their *Muizzi* (Slave Dynasty) and Khalji predecessors, the Tughlaqs did not make lavish use of architectural epigraphy, and the corpus of Tughlaq religious inscriptions is surprisingly limited.

Tomb of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq completely lack epigraphs, the small adjacent tomb of Ghias-ud-din Tughlaq’s son Zafar Khan is inscribed in its interior with verses from five different *Suras* from the Quran, verses are about the divine Omnipotence. God’s support and

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64 Ibid., p.150
65 Ibid.
67 Abha Rani, op. cit., p.94
promise of paradise for the faithful, a plea for absolution from sin and God’s power to give and take life. In the tombs epigraphs emphasize both God and the deceased individual who aspires to paradise. Firuzshah was a religious man. He was a follower of shara and Hadith. We do not find much religious epigraphs in the mosques of Firuzshah Tughlaq, apart from Begumpuri mosque, where we find an inscription, the word “ALLAH” and ALLAH is sufficient for me. The small mosque in the tomb mosque complex of Makhdum Shah Alam also uses roundels* inscribed with short quotations from the Quran. On its central Mihrab is an incomplete rendering of the throne verse.

Only ruined mosque in the Firuzshah city was substantially inscribed, not however, with verses from the Quran or with Hadiths, but instead with the whole of Firuzshah’s Futuhat. This is the only Tughlaq mosque with extensive epigraphy, which was limited to a highly personal, though piously Sunni statement.

In the Islamic world, calligraphy is considered the most important of the arts because of its role in recording the word of God in the Quran. Calligraphy, like all Islamic decorations, is closely linked to geometry. In Arabic it is referred to as “the geometry of line” implying that the proportions of the letters including the curved strokes are all governed by mathematical proportions. Inscriptions on all buildings are written in an angular, sober and monumental script, Kufi, or in later more cursive styles, Naskhi and Thuluth.

Presently the mosques of Firuzshah Tughlaq are in ruined condition. Some mosques like Kalan Mosque at Turkman Gate and

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68 Ibid., p.94 * a circular design that is used as a decoration.
69 Quran, chpter.II, Verse, 225.256
70 Abha Rani, op. cit., p.93
71 Ibid., p. 93
kali mosque at Nizamuddin Auliya’s shrine have been renovated. These mosques have been whitewashed and decorated in new pattern.