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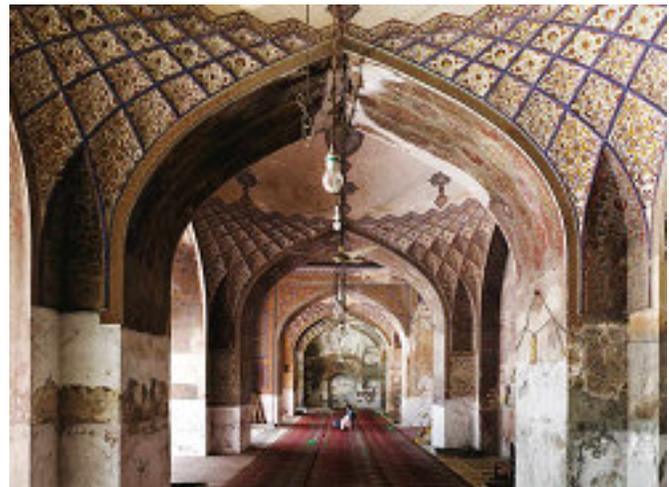
This book, *Heritage of the Mughal World*, is based on the work of the Historic Cities Programme (HCP) of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) in three countries. Pakistan, Afghanistan and India each possess unique examples of Mughal architecture. On the frontiers of the Mughal Empire, the Historic Cities Programme has also undertaken restoration projects in Hyderabad, and, further away, is today creating gardens in Canada that echo these traditions in a contemporary language.

The creation of the Mughal Empire was not the result of a grand scheme, but, rather, developed on the basis of geography, time and events. Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babur (1483–1530), who descended from Timur and perhaps also from Ghengis Khan, was the first Mughal emperor, capturing Kabul in 1504, occupying Delhi and Agra in 1526. He came from the north, where his own father, Omar Sheikh Mirza, had been ruler of the Fergana Valley, located in modern Uzbekistan. From these lands once conquered by Alexander the Great, Babur and his men brought their own Timurid heritage as well as familiarity with the Persian-influenced architecture of Samarkand and Herat. Babur's son Humayun (r. 1530–40/1555–56) and his grandson Akbar (r. 1556–1605) stretched the empire from Kandahar in the west, to Kashmir in the north and Bengal in the east, leaving in their wake such monuments as the ephemeral capital Fatehpur Sikri (1571–85).

The development of the empire at its outset recalls the military traditions of Islam, not a massive armed advance, but a series of rapid interventions. Timur termed himself a *ghazi*, a warrior who carries out the military raids that are the origin of the more modern term *razzia*. From the early conquest of Kabul to the actual creation of the empire, the march of the Mughals may also recall that of Alexander the Great, who probably did not set out to conquer such a large part of the globe. In both



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- [1] Wazir Khan Mosque, Lahore, Pakistan, view along the entrance to the prayer hall.
- [2] Detail of the colourful painted and *kashikari* (glazed tile work) interior of the Wazir Khan Mosque.
- [3] The arched portico surrounding the courtyard of the Wazir Khan Mosque.

cases, conquests themselves generated the idea of creating a greater political entity. A final historic parallel, though not a source of Mughal thought in any direct sense, is that of the Roman Empire, which carried the art of consolidating conquered territories to new heights. The Mughals placed a high value on social cohesion and sought to assimilate their new territories or to become assimilated by them. Their gift was one of pragmatism, expressed by tolerance for other beliefs and races. Made up of many heterogeneous parts, the Mughal Empire achieved an equilibrium founded on coexistence and tolerance, which was the secret of its longevity. As did the Romans before them, the Mughals created an architectural paradigm, based in large part on the absorption of local traditions in India, and in Central Asia, where the models of Greater Persia gave them sources of inspiration.

The involvement of AKTC in the heritage of the Mughal Empire was also one that developed in several phases. A first step in this direction did not actually concern the lands of the former empire, but, rather, the Northern Territories of Pakistan. The remote valleys of Gilgit-Baltistan, which were once a part of the ancient Central Asian Silk Route, were inaccessible to vehicular traffic until the construction of the Karakoram Highway in 1978. Increased accessibility, coupled with the impact of tourism, introduced a rapid transformation of local customs and economic patterns, which called for new strategic development visions and adapted procedures capable of steering ongoing change. The conservation of Baltit Fort, whose earliest elements date back more than seven hundred years, and the stabilization of the historic core of the village of Karimabad in the Hunza Valley were HCP's first major interventions, completed in 1996. The

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renovation and reuse of historic monuments for modern purposes and the creation of new, sustainable resources for local populations became the modus operandi of the organization.

A first opportunity to work in India, which was to lead to others, came beginning in 1997, with the restoration of the gardens of Humayun's Tomb in New Delhi. This first privately funded restoration of a World Heritage Site in India was completed in March 2003 through the joint efforts of AKTC and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), under the aegis of India's National Culture Fund. The objective of the project was to restore the

gardens, pathways, fountains and water channels surrounding Humayun's Tomb according to the original plans of the builders. The preservation of historic elements required substantial research, as well as close attention to the living and renewable landscape elements. Site works encompassed a variety of disciplines, including archaeological excavation, the application of conservation science and hydraulic engineering.

As circumstances would have it, a further step towards involvement in the Mughal world came in January 2002 when AKTC signed an agreement with the Interim Administration of

[4] The restored Lakkarwala Burj in Sunder Nursery, Delhi, India.

[5] The central axis in Sunder Nursery, with Sunderwala Burj on the right, Delhi, India.



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Afghanistan to restore and rehabilitate a number of significant historic buildings and public open spaces in the city of Kabul. Since then, a range of conservation and urban regeneration efforts, living condition improvements, community development programmes and planning initiatives have been implemented in war-damaged neighbourhoods of the Old City of Kabul. A similar initiative commenced in the Old City of Herat in 2005. In early 2003 conservation began of the sixteenth-century Bagh-e Babur in Kabul, where the first Mughal emperor Babur is buried. Now managed by an independent Trust, the restored almost eleven-and-a-half-hectare Garden not only re-establishes the historic character of the site with its water channels, planted terraces and pavilions, but also provides the population of Kabul with a space for recreation and cultural events. These efforts were all part of the larger Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) initiatives to assist the reconstruction process in Afghanistan with coordinated, broadly based projects.

These successful interventions in Pakistan, Afghanistan and India were at the origin of a request received by AKTC in 2004.

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) proposed a large number of potential restoration projects in the country. During a visit to Hyderabad in that year, discussions returned to the vicinity of Humayun's Tomb. A Google Earth view of the vicinity showed clearly the wealth of potential points of intervention around the Tomb, including Sunder Nursery and the Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti area, which was to become the focus of an urban renewal project. Although this district was not initially among those proposed by ASI, it was clear that the area offered not only a large number of significant tombs and other monuments in need of restoration but also potential for a significant social dimension in this densely populated district of the nation's capital.

The work of the Historic Cities Programme has clearly established the value of achieving a kind of 'critical mass' for such projects in order to create a real social and economic impact, but also to persuade other participants to join the effort. The result of the initiatives of AKTC teams was the development for the first time in India in a cultural context of a 'Public-Private Partnership Agreement' (PPP), which united partners such as the

[6] The tomb of Hyat Bakshi with the minaret of the Great Mosque visible on the right, Hyderabad, India.

[7] The arcade of Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah's Tomb, Hyderabad, India.

[8] Cluster of Unknown Tombs at the south-west edge of the Qutb Shahi Heritage Park, Hyderabad, India.

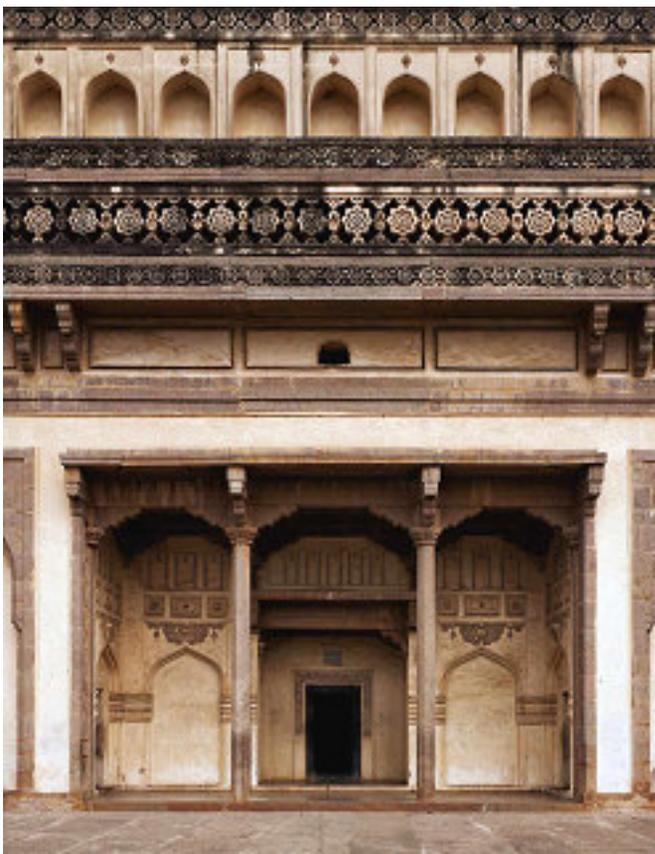
Central Public Works Department (CPWD) and the Delhi Development Authority (DDA). Other public and private institutions joined AKTC in contributing in a significant way to the projects. These included the Ministry of Tourism of India, the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, the European Commission, the World Monuments Fund, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Embassy of the United States and many others. Conceived for AKTC initiatives in Cairo around Azhar Park, both the method and the style of intervention used by HCP in New Delhi represent a significant new development in India. Serving to overcome what can be called a point of inertia, the work in New Delhi has, indeed, created the kind of critical mass that makes such projects economically and socially self-sustaining, while also reinforcing the cultural heritage of the city and the country.

The early work of HCP in Pakistan, but also that in India, led to the more recent projects in Lahore, whose walls were built during the Mughal era. Lahore was capital of the empire from 1585 to 1598. The Walled City of Lahore project was initiated in 2007 by the Government of the Punjab and the World Bank. AKTC entered a 'Public-Private Partnership Agreement' with

the provincial government to provide technical and financial assistance for the project and to build capacities in urban heritage conservation. So, too, the revitalization project of the Qutb Shahi Heritage Park in Hyderabad, which began in 2013, can be considered a result of the success of earlier HCP projects in India and elsewhere.

Although today's concern is no longer one of empire building, the progressive development of AKTC projects in and around the countries that were once part of the Mughal Empire has reached a level of coherence and an extent that is more fully explained in the pages of this volume. The lessons of tolerance and social cohesion that can be learned from the heritage of the Mughal Empire are precious ones, to which monuments such as those in the area around Humayun's Tomb in New Delhi stand witness. Far from being a hindrance to modern society, these traces from the past are, in fact, keys to the future. Restored but also placed in their societal context and made into sustainable sources of income, the monuments of the Mughal Empire regain relevance in a time of doubt and change.

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