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Inasmuch as his [Akbar's] exalted sons had taken their birth in Sikri and the God-knowing spirit of Shaikh Selim had taken possession thereof, his holy heart desired to give outward splendour to this spot which possessed spiritual grandeur. Now that his standards had arrived at this place, his former design was pressed forward, and an order was issued that the superintendents of affairs should erect lofty buildings for the special use of the Shahinshah.(1)

With these brief words Abu'l Fazl, the imperial biographer of Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Akbar (born 1542; ruled 1556-1605), the third Mughal ruler of India, describes the foundation of one of the most extraordinary cities in all of India. Located twenty-four miles to the west of Agra, the monumental remains of Fatehpur-Sikri dominate the top of a rocky ridge, roughly two miles long and half a mile wide, that rises majestically from the dry bed of what was once a large lake.

Fortunately, most of Fatehpur-Sikri's buildings remain intact, and the city thus represents the most extensive early Mughal architectural complex extant. Its urban patterns provide us with a rare opportunity to study Mughal city planning in detail, and its buildings provide a basis for understanding how sixteenth-century Mughal architecture developed under Akbar's careful patronage.

In 1569 Akbar conveyed his pregnant wife Maryam az-Zamani, the daughter of the Hindu raja of Amber, to the monastery (khanqah) of Shaykh Salim ad-Din Chishti in the town of Sikri. There, on August 30 (17 Rabi^c I), she gave birth to Prince Muhammad Salim Mirza, his first son and heir, who would later succeed his father as the emperor Jahangir. The long-awaited birth was the first confirmation of Shaykh Salim's prophecy that Akbar would soon be blessed with the arrival of three healthy sons. Although the construction of Akbar's new city at Sikri was a celebration of this joyous event as well as a reflection of his ties with the Sufi order that had been brought to India at the end of the twelfth century by Khwaja Mu^cin ad-Din Chishti, work on it apparently did not begin for another two years. According to Muhammad^c Arif Qandahari, the official order was not issued from Agra, the Mughal capital at that time, until August/September 1571 (Rabi^c

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II, A.H. 979), just a few days after Prince Salim's second birthday, which Akbar had celebrated at Shaykh Salim's khanqah.² The new capital received the name Fathabad, "City of Victory," but the Indianized form "Fathpur" soon supplanted it through popular usage.³ Qandahari, however, continued to use the older form throughout most of his Tarikh-i Akbari and Jahangir's memoirs add the claim that Sikri only became known as the City of Victory after Akbar's conquest of Gujarat in 1573.⁴ The form "Fatehpur-Sikri" has become the standard anglicized name for the city.

Massive stone walls almost seven miles in length surround the city except on the northwest where the lakeshore once extended. Most of the imperial structures, however, were clustered together on top of the sandstone ridge. That is where the huge Jami^c Masjid and an equally grand palace complex are located. Except for the white marble tomb of Shaykh Salim in the courtyard of the Jami^c Masjid, all of the buildings at Fatehpur-Sikri are constructed of the same locally quarried red sandstone that Akbar had used in his reconstruction of the fort in Agra.

Although it is generally assumed that the palace complex is oriented in terms of the Jami^c Masjid, it now seems quite likely that it was actually the palace that was built first. Qandahari, who gives the most detailed description of the construction of Fatehpur-Sikri, remarks that the mosque was built in 1573-74 (A.H. 981) and specifically states that it was completed with the assistance of the sons and kinsmen of the late Shaykh Salim, who had died in February 1572 (Ramazan, A.H. 979).⁵ By this time work on the palace compound would have been well under way. The bazaar and marketplace (chahar suq) that stretches down from the palace complex to the Agra Darvaza was only commissioned in 1576-77 (A.H. 984), and the latter was still under construction while Qandahari's Tarikh-i Akbari was being written, around the year 1580.⁶

On September 5, 1585 (10 Ramazan, A.H. 993), less than fifteen years after the city was founded, Akbar set off from Fatehpur-Sikri for Lahore in the Panjab. The emperor was seldom to visit the city again. The most commonly accepted reason for this abrupt and permanent parting is that the city's water supply dried up, but that seems unlikely since no contemporary account gives that as the reason. Jahangir, writing in the early seventeenth century, was the first to raise the issue of problems with the water supply. From contemporary sources it appears that Akbar departed in order to deal with a series of political and military problems in the northwest occasioned by the death of his half-brother Mirza Hakim Muhammad, the gov-

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ernor of Kabul. Abu'l-Fazl mentions how surprised Akbar's followers were by his decision not to return immediately to Fatehpur-Sikri in favor of remaining in the Panjab in the hope of gaining additional territory for his empire and suppressing rebellious forces.⁷ Neither he nor any other source attests to any decision to abandon Fatehpur-Sikri permanently.

Fatehpur-Sikri's history is not limited to the fifteen years during which the new city served as Akbar's main residence. Muslims had settled in the area in the early thirteenth century, and in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries several buildings, including a mosque and a tomb, were constructed near the old town of Sikri in the area now known as Nagar. In 1527 Babur (Akbar's grandfather and the first Mughal emperor) set forth from there to win a crucial victory against Rana Sangram Singh of Mewar, the most powerful and politically important Rajput state, his scouts having earlier selected the banks of the lake at Sikri as the best-watered camping ground for the imperial army. Babur was so grateful for this victory--in many ways equal in importance to his defeat of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi in Panipat the previous year--that he changed the name of the town from Sikri to Shukri ("Thanksgiving"). For unknown reasons, this new name never caught on in either popular or literary usage.

Later in the same year Babur commissioned a "Garden of Victory" for Sikri, whose construction took well over a year, and apparently a number of stone structures as well, including a bath complex. After his death three years later, the revenue of Sikri and the neighboring center of Bayana was granted as waqf (endowment) for the emperor's first tomb in Agra (Babur was later buried permanently in Kabul). The Mughal's connection with Sikri continued, under less auspicious circumstances, when the emperor Humayun encamped briefly in his father's garden while fleeing from Sher Shah Sur (1540-45) on his way to temporary exile in Iran. The garden and lake at Sikri were no doubt used on many other occasions during this period, but neither Babur's memoirs nor accounts of Humayun's reign mention any meetings with the soon-to-be-famous Shaykh Salim who had settled there around 1500 but spent many years outside India on pilgrimages to Mecca. In 1545, however, ^cAdil Khan, the elder brother of Islam Shah Sur (1545-53), visited Shaykh Salim at Sikri during his campaign to wrest control of the Suri throne.

After Akbar's departure for the northwest in 1585 and during the reigns of his successors Jahangir (1605-27) and Shah Jahan (1627-58), Fatehpur-Sikri continued to play host to a steady stream of important visitors and

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also had a number of permanent residents. Akbar's mother Hamida Banu Begam (also known as Maryam Makani) appears to have spent much of her time there until her death in 1601. Jahangir's comment that "with the exception of the revered Maryam-zamani [his mother], who had become very weak, all the Begams and inhabitants of the enclosure of chastity and all the palace employees (sic) came out to meet me" when he arrived there in 1619, suggests that a considerable portion of Akbar's haram remained in Fatehpur-Sikri long after 1585.⁸ An outbreak of plague in Agra that year kept Jahangir there for a number of months, during which the birthday of his eldest son, the future Shah Jahan, was celebrated with the customary weighing ceremonies. Jahangir was also entertained by two high ranking courtiers, I^ctimad ad-Dawla and Asaf Khan, who kept mansions in the city.⁹

Both Jahangir and Muhammad Salih Kambu, one of Shah Jahan's historians, refer to the weighing ceremony in the elaborately decorated palaces of Fatehpur-Sikri as an annual event,¹⁰ which suggests that the city had acquired the status of a ceremonial dynastic center. Throughout his reign Shah Jahan often went there during hunting expeditions into the surrounding region and prayed at the magnificent white marble tomb of Shaykh Salim. He made sure that the saint's successors and others connected with the shrine had some degree of financial security. During this period many Europeans trading with the Mughals in Agra and Delhi also visited Fatehpur-Sikri, perhaps to take advantage of the thriving indigo production in the region. It was only in the reign of Aurangzeb (1658-1707), when the focus of Mughal ambition shifted southwards to the Deccan, that Fatehpur-Sikri lost its status as an imperial center.

Just as it is necessary to lengthen the commonly accepted duration of the Mughals' connection with Fatehpur-Sikri, so is it important to expand earlier assumptions about its true size. Apart from the ridge-top mosque and palace complexes, the Chishti quarters to the west of the mosque, the polo ground (maydan) down by the lake, and the precincts of both the old and new towns of Sikri that Akbar had incorporated into his new walled city, the environs beyond the walls also played an important role. Within a ten- to fifteen-mile radius were imperial gardens and resting places (where important guests were welcomed to the city according to the Timurid custom), houses and villas of nobles, a debauched drinking and gambling zone, and even an experimental school dedicated to the study of language acquisition in children (the gang mahal).

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This greater Fatehpur-Sikri was, in turn, part of an almost 300-mile-long royal corridor running from Agra, which continued to thrive as a major metropolitan center, to Ajmer in the west. Since 1561 Akbar had made an annual pilgrimage along this route to the tomb of Khwaja Mu^cin ad-Din Chishti in Ajmer. In 1573-74 (A.H. 981) he ordered towers to be set up at every kuroh (approximately two miles) between Agra and Ajmer and that rest houses be established every ten kurohs along the way.¹¹ In this larger picture Fatehpur-Sikri can be seen as a formal point of connection between the older political and spiritual poles of Agra and Ajmer.

In the imperial city itself the crucial urban relationship to be studied is that forged between the Jami^c Masjid, with the jewel-like tomb of Shaykh Salim set into its expansive courtyard, and Akbar's palace complex. The Jami^c Masjid, however, also served the town that expanded below it to the south, and its twin axis design can be seen as a brilliant manner of expressing its dual functions. One axis leads westward from the palace through the so-called Badshahi Darvaza ("Imperial Gate") of the mosque to the qibla wall, thus fulfilling the mosque's function as an imperial place of worship. The other axis leads up from the new southern expansion of Sikri through the extraordinary gateway popularly known as the Buland Darvaza ("Lofty Gate") to Shaykh Salim's tomb on the northern side of the mosque's courtyard, representing the mosque's function as the spiritual focus of the growing town.

The recent work of Attilio Petruccioli also makes it clear that the mosque and the palace, and in fact the whole walled city, were not only ideologically linked but formally related through the basic geometry of the proportional modules and ratios of design used in the city's planning.¹² The excellent state of preservation of the palace complex will allow study of the precise structural and functional relationships between the various parts of the imperial quarter, after the order of construction of the different buildings and groups of buildings has been well established.

It is this unity of design that distinguishes Fatehpur-Sikri from other fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Indian cities. Fatehpur-Sikri was built in a relatively short time by one ruler, in great contrast to centers such as Delhi and Agra which were constructed, altered, and added to over a number of centuries. Part of the city's design cohesiveness, however, must be attributed to a clearly conceived notion on Akbar's part as to how his new city should be structured and how the distinctions between its imperial, civic, and spiritual functions should be resolved.

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The decision to build Fatehpur-Sikri was made at a time when Akbar was just beginning to assert his power and define his character. A series of conquests (Chittorgarh in 1568 and Ranthambhor in 1569 being the latest) had given him control over an ever expanding tract of northern India, and his success in putting down a number of rebellions during the 1560s provided greater internal stability. With these military and political triumphs, Akbar and his followers began to lead more settled and courtly lives, aided, no doubt, by the recently replenished treasuries.

One result of this situation was Akbar's effort to develop a new relationship with the non-Muslim population at his court, using strategies that included a series of marriage alliances with some of the newly subjected Rajput states. Other politically astute moves, such as the abolition of the pilgrimage tax in 1562 and the poll tax (jizya) in 1564, both of which had been exacted primarily from the kingdom's majority Hindu population, had already established a basis for religious tolerance. It was at Fatehpur-Sikri that Akbar was first able to reap the benefits of this new social order. In 1575 the emperor ordered the construction of the famous ^cibadatkhana ("house of worship") to serve as a center for religious and philosophical debates, at first between opposing groups within the Muslim community but eventually also with the Hindus, Christians, Jains, Jews, and Zoroastrians who were present at his court. The pronouncement of the Decree of Infallibility (mahzar) in 1579 and the subsequent attempt to found a new code of political and religious behavior known as the din-i ilahi in 1582 are further evidence of the great progress towards social harmony that characterized Akbar's years at Fatehpur-Sikri.

All these developments must have exerted an influence in the planning of the palace complex and its relationship with the Jami^c Masjid and the various residential quarters. The internal organization of the residential areas must have been particularly complicated, as there were at least three different Muslim factions at Akbar's court--Turani, Irani, and Indian-born--as well as the newly allied Rajput Hindus.

This new political situation gave Akbar options that were unavailable to either Babur or Humayun, both of whom were almost constantly on the move. Compared with the wildly fluctuating fortunes of the Mughal dynasty in its early years, Akbar's spell of fifteen years at Fatehpur-Sikri appears remarkably sedentary. Although the Mughals remained inveterate campaigners in their tent cities through the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, it is clear that by the mid-1560s the almost nomadic mentality of

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Babur and Humayun was being supplemented by a new urban-centered consciousness. Akbar's rebuilding of the fort at Agra, commencing in 1565 (A.H. 972), and the construction of Fatehpur-Sikri from 1571 onwards were only the first stages of a process that ultimately led to the creation of the great imperial city of Shahjahanabad (Delhi) in the mid-seventeenth century. Although Humayun made a start with his new city of Din Panah in Delhi, it was really Akbar who turned the Mughals from mere urban dwellers into urban shapers with a desire to create their own urban environment based on their own political and cultural ideals.

The shift away from the partly nomadic way of life that characterized the Mughals in the early sixteenth century--when urban living still often meant pitching tents in a garden outside the city walls--is also evident in the difficulty Akbar's historians sometimes encountered when they tried to describe his new buildings. While their descriptions of the various Mughal tent types are precise and uniform, those of the permanent stone structures are both more general and less consistent. They describe structures or sections of the palace in terms more appropriate to tents and other portable dwellings. The haram, for example, is often referred to as the sara-parda (loosely translatable as "the screened-in area"); the main audience hall is occasionally described as a bargah (the large audience tent used on the road). When Abu'l-Fazl and Bada'uni set about describing the stone courtyards and pavilions at Fatehpur-Sikri that served as functional equivalents of the great bargah tent, they resort to conflicting terms such as dawlatkhana and divankhana (both translatable as "state hall"), with adjectives denoting whether they were private (khass) or public (amm). The strict rules to be followed in setting up the Mughal tent city described by Abu'l-Fazl in the A'in-i Akbari¹³ do not appear to have had counterparts for determining the layout of a new city in this same Timurid tradition.

A number of points need to be kept in mind concerning this transition from nomadic to urban mentality and the parallel transition from tent terminology to one capable of describing the new permanent structures. The first is that various kinds of tents and awnings were still used in the new built environment, as the illustrated manuscripts from this period clearly show. For example, in the context of Fatehpur-Sikri the term bargah-i amm could mean either a tent set up in one of the courtyards or a permanent structure. A second, more important, problem arises when trying to distinguish between terms that describe functions, administrative departments, or simply zones of access and those that describe actual structures or formal

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building types. In some cases the distinction is easy to ascertain, but when it comes to descriptions of ritual or political performances, such as private assemblies or public audiences, the terminology provided by Akbar's historians is more difficult to translate. Finally, even during the period Akbar spent at Fatehpur-Sikri he was often on the road, so descriptions of Humayun's tent camps, including the one left by Khvandamir of his curious "mobile palace" (mahall-i ravan),¹⁴ and the earlier Mughal ways in India are by no means inconsequential for understanding this somewhat later period. With respect to Akbar's views on tent living, it is revealing that according to Qandahari the rest houses along the route from Agra to Ajmer were built, among other reasons, so that Akbar would not need to haul his tents along when he went on pilgrimage to the tomb of Khwaja Mu^cin ad-Din Chishti.¹⁵

How much of Fatehpur-Sikri was Akbar's original conception and how much an elaboration of past traditions is another question. In terms of the city's overall plan, for example, how much weight can be assigned to the Indian cities--both Islamic and Hindu--that Akbar knew from experience and how much to what might be called the collective Mughal memory? By the time the emperor ordered the construction of Fatehpur-Sikri, he was familiar with a large number of India's greatest cities--including Ahmadabad, Jaunpur, Lahore, Mandu, Chittorgarh, and Ranthambhor--in addition to Agra and Delhi where Babur and Humayun had already made significant contributions; Kabul and Qandahar, where he resided in his childhood; and Central Asian cities such as Ghazna and Balkh, which he visited with his father during their exile from India. Several of these cities stand out as possible prototypes for Fatehpur-Sikri. The hilltop fortresses of Mandu, constructed in the early fifteenth century by the newly independent sultans of Malwa, and Chittorgarh, built up over the centuries by the Rajput ranas of Mewar, in particular seem to share many features with Fatehpur-Sikri. Akbar could also have drawn upon the written accounts of the major Islamic cities of Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Iran left by Babur and the relatives and courtiers who accompanied Humayun during his exile from India.¹⁶ Babur's memoirs are particularly detailed in their descriptions of Herat and Samarqand, and the images of the Timurid cities they elicit must have greatly impressed the young emperor. Akbar would also have been aware of the traditional Persian literary allusions to such legendary palaces as Khavarnaq and Sadir--comparisons with which were often made by the emperor's own historians when describing his buildings.

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While it is difficult to identify precisely the cities that served as models for Fatehpur-Sikri, it is even harder to identify the sources for the architectural forms of its buildings. Almost all of them share a number of features with the pre-Mughal architecture of the Indian subcontinent, most notably the use of beams rather than arches to support roofs and doorways. Earlier Indian prototypes can also be found for many of the ornamental motifs that adorn the buildings. The majority of these motifs as well as the commonly used trabeate system of construction are usually said to derive directly from Hindu sources, such as the early-sixteenth-century fort at Gwalior, about eighty miles south of Fatehpur-Sikri. Although the resemblances to several of the details at Fatehpur-Sikri are undeniable, most of them had already been incorporated into the Islamic architecture of India in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This is an important issue, for one popular theory portrays Fatehpur-Sikri as an attempt by Akbar to create an architectural synthesis of Islamic and Hindu forms.

In measuring the degree to which the emperor's interest in Hinduism might have been translated into a new architectural vocabulary, the pre-existing Islamic architecture of India must be taken into account. Hindu forms had already been assimilated into the architecture of the Delhi sultanate and the provincial sultanates of Gujarat and Mandu, among others. That India possessed its own distinct style of Islamic architecture was recognized by Akbar's forebears, though they did not always approve of it. Babur, for example, complained that a mosque in Agra was "ill-built in the Hindustani fashion."¹⁷ Another records that Akbar's aunt was questioned by Shah Tahmasp's sister about the nature of Indian tents when, in exile in Herat, Humayun set up his saraparda screens "after the Hindu fashion."¹⁸ In the A'in-i Akbari Abu'l-Fazl also acknowledges the existence of the Hindu science of building (vastuka), but this reference is introduced as part of an "offering to the curious, in the hope that it may prove interesting as well as an incentive to inquiry."¹⁹ Only two non-Persian, Indian terms are used by Akbar's chroniclers when discussing the architecture of Fatehpur-Sikri: hathi pol ("Elephant Gate") is persianized as hatyapul, and the jharokha window (from which Akbar would appear before his subjects in the early morning) as jharoka. Akbar's use of allegedly Hindu forms might be, therefore, not an isolated instance, but part of a longstanding tradition of Islamic architecture in India. If that is the case, then the emperor's combining regional styles and techniques from conquered lands--both Islamic

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and Hindu--was simply common practice and not an attempt to combine specifically Islamic and Hindu forms as part of a grand ideological scheme.

How much influence Akbar had over specific details in the designing of Fatehpur-Sikri is another important question. Although the emperor is on occasion addressed by epithets such as "architect of the spiritual and physical world"²⁰ and portrayed in the Akbarnama inspecting the construction of Fatehpur-Sikri,²¹ it is almost impossible to ascertain how large a role he actually played. Father Anthony Monserrate, one of the Jesuit missionaries who resided at Fatehpur-Sikri during the early 1580s, does record, however, that to prevent himself from being deafened by the hammering of the stone-workers Akbar "had everything cleverly fashioned elsewhere, in accordance with the exact plan of the building, and then brought to the spot, and there fitted and fastened together."²² He also added that the emperor "is so devoted to building that he sometimes quarries stone himself, along with the other workmen,"²³ which all suggests an unusually high degree of personal involvement.

Little is known about the architects who worked for Akbar, but what we do have gives us at least a glimpse of what they were like. Only two, Muhammad Qasim Khan and Mirak Mirza Ghiyath, are known by name, and these names are connected with projects other than Fatehpur-Sikri. Qasim Khan, who held the dual titles of "Master of the Land and Sea Routes" (mir-i barr o bahr) and "Master of Pyrotechnics" (mir-i atish), is credited with supervising the construction of the fort at Agra for Akbar²⁴ along with many other feats of civil engineering. Mirak Mirza Ghiyath designed Humayun's tomb in Delhi in the 1560s,²⁵ but might also have previously worked in Herat and Bukhara.²⁶ Both architects came from outside India and both appear to have served earlier Mughal emperors. Consequently, they would have been thoroughly familiar with the Islamic architecture of India as well as that of eastern Iran and Central Asia by the time they started to work for Akbar. Just as the Safavid painters Mir Sayyid ^cAli and ^cAbd as-Samad were guided by Akbar towards the formulation of a new, Mughal mode of painting, the varied backgrounds of these and other architects who worked for Akbar would in no way have inhibited the emperor in his search for his own form of architectural expression.

A remarkable amount of primary source material on Fatehpur-Sikri, including the various contemporary histories of Akbar and his successors, inscriptions on buildings, and accounts left by European missionaries, traders, and travelers, is available to historians. Although many of these

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sources have been at least partially utilized in earlier research on the city--especially Edmund Smith's monumental four-volume survey completed in the late nineteenth century²⁷ and the recent monograph by S. A. A. Rizvi and Vincent Flynn²⁸--we feel that even more information can be extracted by adopting a specialized focus, and this sourcebook has been prepared with that idea in mind. It presents as many references, both epigraphic and textual, as we could find that are relevant to the architecture, urban development, and subsequent patterns of usage of the site, from the advent of the Mughals in the early sixteenth century through the first art historical studies of the city in the second half of the nineteenth century. Taken as a whole, we hope they will establish a framework for identifying and understanding the city, its monuments, and its immediate environs. This material is presented as uncolored by art historical interpretation as possible so it can be used as both a source of background information and a stimulus for discussion. It will also form the basis for a symposium on Fatehpur-Sikri to be held in October 1985 under the auspices of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in cooperation with Harvard's Department of Fine Arts.

Fortunately, most of the Mughal sources for Fatehpur-Sikri have been edited and published and, in many cases, even translated into English. The pre-Akbari history of the Mughals in Sikri is well covered by Babur's autobiography (the Baburnama), the memoirs of his daughter Gulbadan Begam (Humayunnama), and the account of Humayun's water carrier Jawhar Aftabchi (Tazkirat al-Vaqi^cat). None of these early sources, however, goes into much detail. They do not, for example, even allow us to identify with any precision the location of Babur's garden at Sikri.

Contemporary Akbari references to Fatehpur-Sikri are far more numerous and detailed, if not always consistent in their terminology. Descriptions of buildings and related events are particularly abundant in the historical works of ^cAbd al-Qadir Bada'uni (Muntakhab at-Tavarikh), Abu'l-Fazl (Akbar-nama), ^cArif Qandahari (Tarikh-i Akbari), and Nizam ad-Din Ahmad (Tabaqat-i Akbari). While these four texts form the backbone of this sourcebook, Bayazid Biyat's Tazkira-i Humayun va Akbar also adds important information. Jahangir's autobiography (Tuzuk-i Jahangiri) provides a detailed account of his stay in Fatehpur-Sikri in 1619, and the histories of ^cAbd al-Hamid Lawhari (Padshahnama) and Muhammad Salih Kambu's Amal-i Salih cover Shah Jahan's surprisingly frequent visits to the city. We have used the standard English translations unaltered whenever they exist, even though they

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are often vague and inconsistent in their use of architectural terminology; we felt it was neither practical nor really necessary to re-translate them. At the risk of appearing pedantic, in our own translations of the passages from Qandahari, Biyat, Lahawri, and Kambu we have tried to avoid ambiguity by including the Persian terms in parentheses after the English words.

Jesuit missionaries who arrived from Goa at Akbar's invitation in 1580 provide the first European accounts of the Mughal court in Fatehpur-Sikri. The Commentary of Father Anthony Monserrate contains many important and useful observations and is a perfect complement to the descriptions found in contemporary Mughal sources. Additional accounts of life at Fatehpur-Sikri can be found in the letters written by the Jesuits that have been compiled and edited by John Correia-Afonso.²⁹ Starting with Ralph Fitch in 1584, a steady stream of European entrepreneurs, most of whom passed through Fatehpur-Sikri on their way to or from Agra and Delhi, left descriptions of the city. This traffic fell off in the eighteenth century but grew again in the first half of the nineteenth century when another group of European visitors--still mainly English--appeared. Since most of these people were tourists in search of the picturesque, a great deal of their information is misleading, especially when it comes to the names of individual buildings. The sources for many of the dubious attributions recorded by these Europeans were the tourist guides who sought answers to the questions of their curious patrons. While some of their responses were inspired by local traditions, others were distinctly creative. Part of the process by which these stories were transformed from legend to widely accepted fact can be seen in the career of one Shaykh Bashrat ^cAli who claimed to be a descendant of Shaykh Salim ad-Din Chishti. When Bishop Heber visited Fatehpur-Sikri in 1825, his guide was not able to identify a number of the buildings they viewed together. By the late 1850s, however, when Bashrat ^cAli guided Bayard Taylor and others through Fatehpur-Sikri, the shaykh was able to identify virtually every structure they saw. As visitors to Fatehpur-Sikri demanded more and more information, Bashrat ^cAli supplied it with a delicate combination of memory, local tradition, and imagination. His colleagues undoubtedly did the same. By the end of the nineteenth century the stories told by the guides were so widely accepted that historians such as Edmund Smith did not even question their validity. Today many of the buildings in the city still retain the names given them by Bashrat ^cAli and his fellow guides.

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If there appears in this book to be a preponderance of these questionable European sources, it is because Fatehpur-Sikri as an art-historical entity was created out of this cultural and literary tradition. It is where much of the myth surrounding the city first developed and consequently where study of the city must begin if the misconceptions of the nineteenth century are ever to be dispelled.

There are some unfortunate gaps in the sources provided here. Missing Mughal material includes the Nafa^cis al-Ma'athir of Mir ^cAla ad-Dawla Qazvini, which is only available in manuscript form and was not accessible to us, and, more regrettably, the collections of letters written by various nobles at Akbar's court such as Abu'l-Fazl (Mukatabat-i ^cAllami) and his brother Abu'l-Fayz, known by the nom-de-plume "Fayzi" (Lata'if-i Fayzi).

Collections of poetry written by Akbar's court poets are also not represented here, though works such as the Divan of Fayzi often include chronograms concerning imperial building projects and should be an important object of study in the future. The Chishti khanqah at Fatehpur-Sikri is, no doubt, an extremely rich source of documents and local histories, but the investigation of this material would be another whole project in itself.

The relatively large amount of information left by European residents at Akbar's court should not obscure the fact that other religious and ethnic groups were also active at Fatehpur-Sikri. A painstaking investigation of Jain and Zoroastrian texts from the period will probably prove rewarding. Only one Hindi (or more correctly Braj Bhasa) source has been used, the Caurasi Vaisnavan ki Varta, written by Gokulanatha (a prominent member of the Hindu Vallabhacarya sect) around 1630, but it at least hints at the contribution this type of material can make to the history of the period. At the beginning of the passage, for example, a performer at Fatehpur-Sikri is described as singing before Akbar in his dera,³⁰ a Braj Bhasa form of the Persian da'ira (meaning tents or encampment). Should this be taken as evidence for the continued use of tents inside the built structure of Fatehpur-Sikri? Or does it mean that for the local Hindus sixteenth century Mughal cities never appeared to be more than a purely transient phenomenon?

From the different chapters of this book, two categories of buildings emerge. The first category comprises those referred to in Persian texts, arranged alphabetically by their Persian names in the two core sections on mosques and sanctuaries (Chapter IV) and imperial and civic structures (Chapter V). Some of the names used for these buildings refer to adminis-

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trative departments, however, rather than to a complete structure, and others refer to one and the same building under different names. The second category of buildings comprises those that are identifiable--and thus locatable on a map--from the physical descriptions left by European visitors, but for which we have no Persian references. They are grouped together in Chapter VII, along with the bizarre and unidentified "Anannasi-Ghur" (the "pineapple cavern"?) which defies any categorization at all.

Chapter VIII, on the environs of Fatehpur-Sikri, includes references to both types of buildings; less specific descriptions of the city in general and of its palaces are gathered in chapter II and chapter VI, respectively. At this stage in the study of Fatehpur-Sikri, the strict separation of buildings into those with and those without Persian textual references seemed to us to be the best way to start ridding the field of the many fanciful attributions that have been accumulating since the early nineteenth century.

A vital part of the framework established here to aid in the correct identification of the individual buildings is the glossary of Persian architectural terms. It is, however, restricted to terms found in contemporary Akbari accounts (including those in Appendices C and D), so that a clearer picture of the terminology of this one period can be gained. Details of the glossary's structure are given at the beginning of the Glossary.

It is hoped that the range of information and the organization of this collection will encourage a new and fruitful round of study into the history and development of Fatehpur-Sikri.

Notes

1. Abu'l-Fazl ^CAllami, Akbarnama, tr. H. Beveridge (1902-39; rpt. Delhi, 1973), II, 530-31.
2. Muhammad ^CArif Qandahari, Tarikh-i Akbari, ed. M. Nadwi, A. A. Dihlavi and I. A. Arshi (Rampur, 1962), pp. 149-50.
3. Abu'l-Fazl, Akbarnama, II, 531.
4. Nur ad-Din Muhammad Jahangir, Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, tr. A. Rogers (1900-14; rpt. Delhi, 1968), I, 2.
5. Qandahari, Tarikh-i Akbari, p. 239.

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6. ^CAbd al-Qadir Bada'uni, Muntakhab at-Tavarikh, Vol. II, tr. W. H. Lowe (1899; rpt. Delhi, 1973), p. 112. Qandahari, Tarikh-i Akbari, p. 150.
7. Abu'l-Fazl, Akbarnama, III, 748.
8. Jahangir, Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, II, 66.
9. Ibid., II, 73 and 81.
10. Ibid., II, 77. Muhammad Salih Kambu, ^CAmal-i Salih, ed. Ghulam Yazdani (Calcutta, 1912-39), I, 127. The annual nature of this ceremony at Fatehpur-Sikri is corroborated by ^CAbd al-Hamid Lahawri, Padshahnama, ed. K. Ahmad and M. A. Rahim (Calcutta, 1867-68), I, part 1, 243.
11. Qandahari, Tarikh-i Akbari, p. 46. Abu'l-Fazl (Akbarnama, III, 156) gives a date of 982 (1574-75).
12. Attilio Petruccioli, "The Process Evolved by the Control Systems of Urban Design in the Moghul Epoch in India: The Case of Fatehpur Sikri," Environmental Design, 1 (Rome, 1984), 18-27.
13. Abu'l-Fazl, A'in-i Akbari, Vol. I, tr. H. Blochmann (1927; rpt. Delhi, 1977), 47-50.
14. Ghiyath ad-Din ibn Muhammad Khvandamir, Qanun-i Humayuni, tr. B. Prashad (Calcutta, 1940), p. 46.
15. Qandahari, Tarikh-i Akbari, p. 46.
16. Akbar would later commission a number of these accounts, such as those of his aunt Gulbadan Begam (Humayunnama) and Jawhar Aftabchi (Tazkira al-Vaki^Cat), to be written down on paper.
17. Zahir ad-Din Muhammad Babur, Baburnama, tr. A. S. Beveridge (1921; rpt. Delhi, 1970), p. 533; Zayn Khan, Tabaqat-i Baburi, trans. S. H. As-kari (Delhi, 1982), p. 163. The mosque in question was built ca. 1527-28 (A.H. 934) in the Bagh-i Bihisht.
18. Gulbadan Begam, Humayunnama, tr. A. S. Beveridge (1902; rpt. Delhi, 1972), p. 170.
19. Abu'l-Fazl, A'in-i Akbari, III, 274 and 235.
20. Abu'l-Fazl, Akbarnama, II, 530.
21. Akbarnama, ca. 1590 or earlier, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, VAM I.S. 2-1896 91/117.
22. Father Anthony Monserrate, The Commentary of Father Monserrate, S. J., tr. J. S. Hoyland (London, 1922), pp. 200-01.
23. Ibid., p. 201.
24. Abu'l-Fazl, Akbarnama, II, 373.
25. Bada'uni, Muntakhab at-Tavarikh, II, 125.

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26. Wayne Begley, "Mirak Mirza Ghiyath," forthcoming.
27. Edmund W. Smith, The Moghul Architecture of Fathpur-Sikri, 4 vols. (Allahabad, 1894-97).
28. S. A. A. Rizvi and V. J. Flynn, Fathpur-Sikri (Bombay, 1975).
29. John Correia-Afonso, ed., Letters from the Mughal Court (Bombay, 1980).
30. Richard Barz, The Bhakti Sect of Vallabhacarya (Faridabad, 1976).