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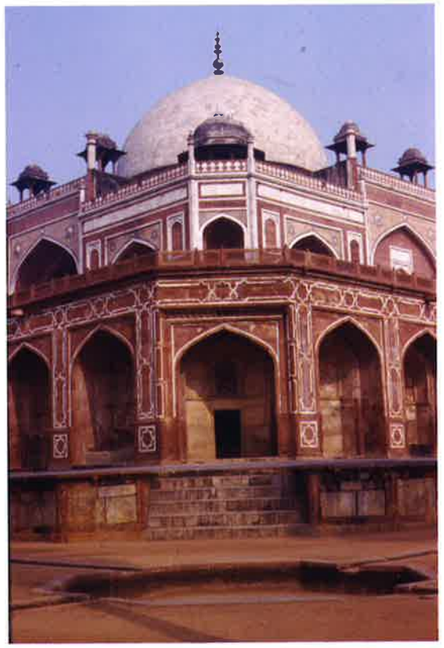

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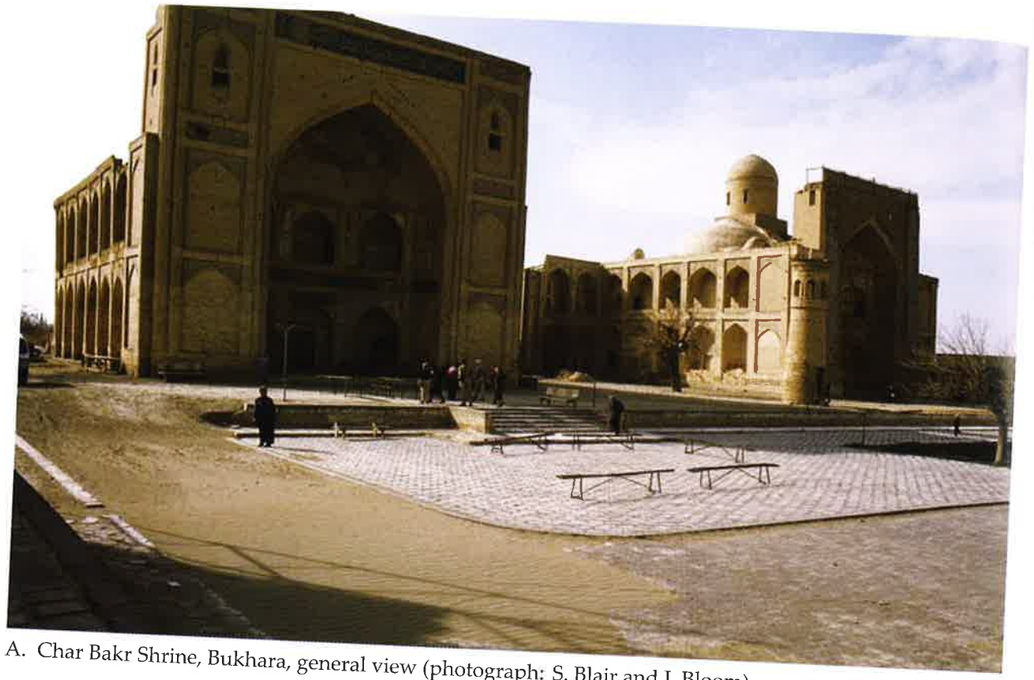

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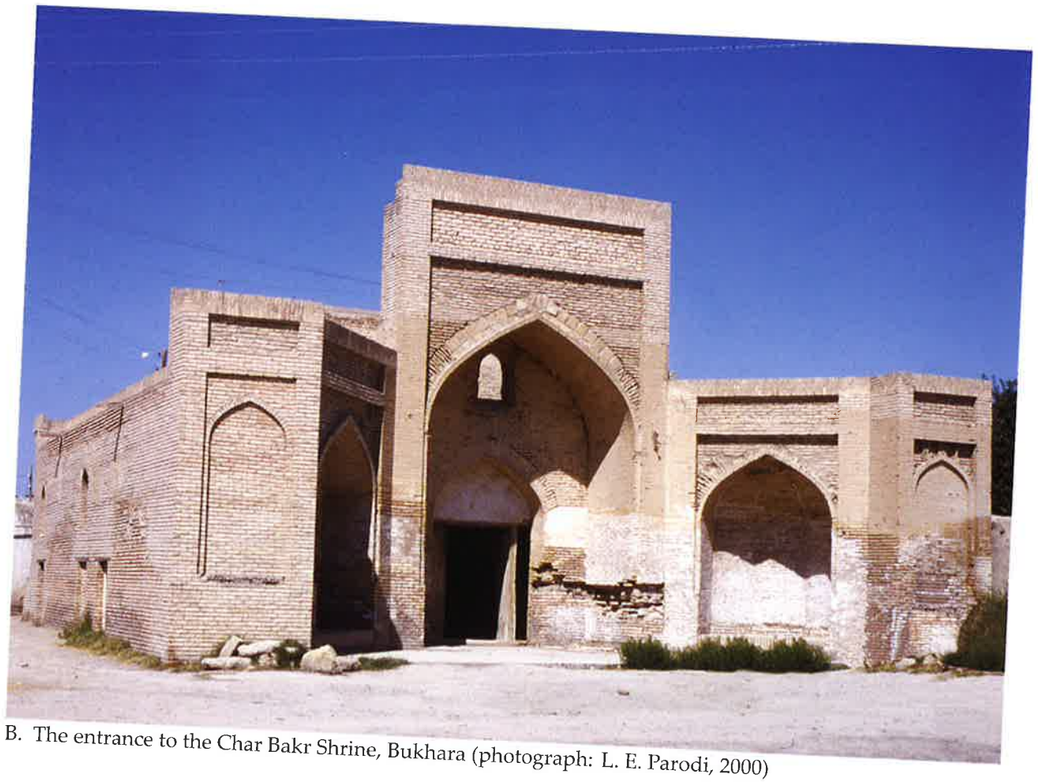

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THE POSTHUMOUS PORTRAIT OF *ḤAḌRAT JANNAT ᶜASHIYĀNĪ*: DYNASTIC, SAINTLY, AND LITERARY IMAGERY IN THE TOMB OF HUMAYUN

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The original version of this essay was written in 2000, based on research undertaken as part of my doctoral dissertation. Somewhat earlier, in 1993, the Tomb of Humayun, built in Delhi between approximately 949/1562 and 957/1570.[1] (Pls. XXX-XXXI, Figs. 1-2) was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site and in 2003 it underwent significant restorations. With water once more brimming in its channels and pools, a better sense of its original design may now be gained. A monograph has recently been published; it is illustrated with numerous photographs and contains relevant new information, most notably on lesser burials and secondary buildings, as well as a summary of restoration work.[2] While this is a welcome contribution to a fuller understanding of the tomb of Humayun, its authors explicitly admit not to being specialists in Mughal art history: their effort is flawed by a rather characteristic blend of naivety in historical reconstruction, and the repetition of certain stereotypes in the stylistic discussion. One is the idea, originating with Percy Brown in the 1940s, that Humayun's mausoleum is but an imperfect step in an evolutionary process culminating in the Taj Mahal; another is the obsession with tracing Mughal (when not Timurid) achievements back to the imitation of "Persian" prototypes. With reference to painting, I have elsewhere argued in favour of a more textured view, sensitive to the Timurids' complex Turco-Mongol, as well as Islamic-Iranian, legacy.[3] It is my hope that this essay will demonstrate the benefits of a similar approach in architecture.

Over the past two decades, scholarship on Islamic gardens has considerably expanded the traditional view, centred on paradise symbolism, to show that this "was often accompanied, and sometimes displaced, by political, economic, and dynastic meanings."[4] The funerary garden built for Humayun[4] (Pl. XXX, Fig. 4) is a particularly pertinent example, reflecting the growing importance of projects for landscape design as the "emblems of territorial authority"[5] witnessed in India in the course of the 16th century. But there is perhaps still more to Humayun's tomb than these "paradisiacal" and "political" meanings.

Humayun (r. 937-947 and 962-963/1530-40 and 1555-56), the second ruler of the Mughal dynasty, is a relatively little-known figure, over whom still hangs the bias of early 20th-century historiography, depicting him as a politically weak sovereign who lost the throne to a petty Afghan chieftain, Sher Khan Sur.[6] I shall attempt to demonstrate that several clues in contemporary sources show that Humayun was not only perceived in his time as a legitimate ruler who duly reconquered the throne, but also that he played a considerable role, both historically—as the first shaper of Mughal ideology and ceremonial—and in subsequent dynastic imagery, where he appears prominently as the dynastic ancestor beside (and, to some extent, as an *alter ego* for) Timur.

His tomb is the focus of the present essay, taking into account not only its form, in relation to Timurid and non-Timurid prototypes, and the historical and cultural circumstances of its creation, but

also relevant biographical data on both Akbar and Humayun. While Akbar's role in its creation has been pointed out before,[7] the monument would not seem to have been examined in relation to the ruler it commemorates.

Preliminary Remarks

The tomb of Humayun, in the Nizamuddin area south of modern Delhi and originally on the bank of the Jumna (Figs. 3, 4), is a square garden complex measuring about 348 x 348 metres (corresponding to 450 x 450 *gaz*), enclosed by walls with a gateway or pavilion on each side, and divided by walkways and channels (Pl. XXXIA, Fig. 4) into nine plots, of which the central one hosts the mausoleum.

The Mughals issued from a branch of the Timurids and perceived themselves as Timurids. Hence, an assessment of Humayun's tomb in the light of the Timurid tradition is not only appropriate, but extremely fruitful. In this essay, I shall occasionally use the word "Timurid" with reference to the early Mughals, particularly the first two rulers, Babur (r. 932-937/1526-30) and Humayun, whenever I deem it relevant to underline continuity.

From a formal point of view, while funerary gardens existed in the Timurid homeland,[8] Humayun's funerary complex would seem to be the first to host a mausoleum in a formal garden, a *chahārbāgh*.[9] Unless, of course, the tomb of ᶜAbd al-Razzaq in Ghazni (present-day Afghanistan), built by an uncle of Humayun's father around the end of the 15th century and very close in form to the Delhi mausoleum, constitutes a precedent, for its radial plan with stairs on all four sides may indicate it once stood in the centre of a (formal?) garden.[10]

The Tomb as a Visual Riddle

Glenn Lowry was the first to note the analogy between Humayun's mausoleum, which is strikingly devoid of inscriptions, and the visual style of manuscript illustration developed in Akbar's ateliers around the same years, suggesting that the tomb's decorations may convey symbolic meanings.[11] He singles out two examples: the six-pointed stars, recurring throughout the complex, possibly an allusion to the concept of Divine Light; and the *miḥrāb* shapes wrought in the grilled windows of the main hall, through which light filters over the cenotaph like a divine blessing at sunset, a refined version of the quotation from the "*Sūra* of Light" (24:35) found in many pre-Mughal Indian *miḥrāb*s. At least one more feature calls for attention: the perfectly proportioned dome rising over the western gateway as one enters the forecourt, soon revealing itself as that of the mausoleum (Pl. XXX, Fig. 2). In view of the peculiar stylistic character of the monument, this feature may be interpreted as a functional equivalent for the inscription customary in later Mughal mausolea, anticipating the themes developed in the tomb:[12] here, we may speculate, is an invitation to see through appearances, introducing the visitor to the complex visual riddle lying ahead.

The reading of Humayun's tomb as a visual enigma is corroborated by a parallel with late-Timurid poetry, where riddles *(muᶜammā)* were quite popular, and often of such complexity "that the solution was [...] provided beforehand and the object was then to demonstrate how it could be derived."[13] Lowry interprets the use of visual symbols in Humayun's tomb as "not entirely successful because many of the ideas Akbar was seeking to express [...] were either too complex or too new to be conveyed symbolically."[14] But if Humayun's tomb were a kind of visual *muᶜammā*, that is, a courtly game, involving a highly refined intellectual exercise between patron, architect and few other chosen participants—a game whose solution was known beforehand—its obscurity would have to be seen as the product of a deliberate choice.[15]

This hypothesis is especially plausible when we consider the stature of both patron—Akbar, one of the greatest figures in world history—and architect: the learned Sayyid Muhammad, son of Mirak-i Sayyid Ghiyas, a former *amīr* at the court of Sultan-Husayn, the last great Timurid ruler (r. 874-911/1470-1506), as well as a *sayyid* and a poet.[16] Substantial clues are also provided by an analysis of the mausoleum's proportions, revealing the existence of geometrical diagrams underlying both plan and elevation, with a selective use of the square and its derivatives (the octagon and eight-pointed star) on the horizontal plan (Fig. 6), and of the equilateral triangle and its derivatives (the hexagon and six-pointed star) in the elevation (Fig. 7). Besides their traditional symbolic associations, these figures possibly contain references to Akbar's and Humayun's personality and history, as I shall attempt to show, in an ideal progression from the visible *(ẓāhir)* to the hidden *(bāṭin)* levels of meaning.

The Tomb as an Image of Paradise

The octagon's most immediate symbolic implication is a reference to Paradise, based on the traditional Islamic belief in its division into eight levels, or its having eight doors, as proclaimed in a *ḥadīth*.[17] Humayun's tomb thus presents, at the most basic level, expectable funerary and paradisiacal associations; these are iterated with unusual consistency, almost manneristically, throughout the complex, as if the architect had wished to create a fully coherent system.

The perimeter of the mausoleum (Fig. 6a) appears to be determined on the basis of the central garden plot, by rotating the corresponding square and connecting the points of intersection. The octagonal outline of the cenotaph hall can be devised by similar means (Fig. 6b), as are also the recesses in the mausoleum's perimeter, which can be outlined with the aid of the eight-pointed star previously drawn (Fig. 6c).[18]

The eight-fold symmetry of the diagram is echoed at several levels throughout the complex: in the eight series of eight niches in the plinth, rythmically broken by eight openings (axial doors and chamfered corners); in the double set of four subsidiary rooms around the cenotaph hall; in the garden—where eight plots surround the building, four octagonal pools lie before the chamfered corners of the central podium, and eight platforms in a pseudo-octagonal disposition mirroring the shape of the mausoleum punctuate the walkways; and on the roof, where four octagonal and eight square *chatrī*s, eight larger, and sixteen smaller lotus-shaped pinnacles all surround the dome. The *hasht bihisht* ("eight-paradise") form, popular in Eastern Islamic gardens since at least the 15th century,[19] would seem to have been interpreted quite literally in Humayun's tomb; and indeed, the mausoleum's shape closely recalls that of a floating palace once devised by him, and styled *hasht jannat* in a panegyric included in Khwandamir's official chronicle of Humayun's reign.[20]

Humayun's tomb-complex, therefore, is in the most literal sense a visual allusion to the heavenly home of the deceased ruler, whose posthumous name is, appropriately, *jannat ᶜashiyānī*, one who lives in Paradise. But the equally consistent presence of another geometric figure, the six-pointed star, in the decorations, and possibly even in the proportions of the tomb (Fig. 7), points to deeper levels of meaning.

The Tomb as Royal Theophany

An interpretation of the six-pointed star—a motif whose use in Akbar's architecture is both selective and consistent[21]—has been proposed by scholars in the context of the Indian as well as the Islamic traditions.

Ram Nath[22] reads the star as a *yantra*, that is, a sacred diagram used in Brahmanical meditation, known as *ṣaṭkoṇa* (six corners), corresponding to the fourth *cakra* of the human body, and representing the moment when the Universe manifests itself, through the separation of the Transcendent from the Immanent. This reading is supported by Akbar's well-known interest in Indian philosophy[23] and by the frequent occurrence in its centre of a lotus or a circle recalling the *bindu* of sacred *yantra*s, representing the undifferentiated point of equilibrium between the two polarities. A Tantric text quoted by Nath claims that: "He who meditates on this Heart Lotus [that is, the *ṣaṭkoṇa yantra*] becomes (like) the Lord of Speech, and (like) Īśvara he is able to protect and destroy the worlds."[24]

This particular meaning will have deserved Akbar's attention. An alternative possibility was recently suggested to me: Deccani sources indicate that diagrams based on the equilateral triangle were considered to be related to the planet Mars,[25] which would make the six-pointed star a particularly appropriate motif for a shield for such "vulnerable" parts of buildings and fortresses as doors and gateways.

In the Islamic tradition, too, the six-pointed star has auspicious associations, and expresses the union of opposing elements.[26] The theme of the union of opposites appears as an appropriate visual symbol for the notion of the Golden Age once fostered by Humayun: "... under the protection and shelter of his justice, deer sleep in the lap of panthers, and fish fearlessly take rest near crocodiles; pigeons become friends of falcons, and sparrows chirp fearlessly in front of eagles ..."[27] Early in his reign, Humayun had conceived the project of a city, called Dīnpanāh, the Asylum of Faith, where the best minds of his time could gather and find protection against the political uncertainties and ideological pressures of other contemporary Islamic lands.[28]

Lowry notes that the star possibly also contains a reference to the "Divine Light" linking Akbar, through Humayun, to his ancestors Timur and Chingiz Khan. The concept of Divine Light (*farr-i izādī*) and its earthly emanation, Royal/Imperial Light (*farr-i shāhanshāhī/pādshāhī*), is an ancient Iranian one, adopted at an early date by *adab* texts, in the genre of the "Mirrors for Princes," so frequent in Islamic Asia.[29] Lowry proposes an intriguing parallel between the six-pointed star in architecture and the halo depicted around the ruler's face and shoulders in Mughal painting.[30] As descendants of Timur, the Mughals must have found this concept particularly appropriate, for they counted among their dynastic myths that of Alanqoa's supernatural conception by means of a Man of Light.[31]

The luminous connotation of Humayun's tomb is borne out also by the epithets applied to it in later Mughal sources: his grandson Jahangir (r. 1014/1605-1037/1627) calls it *rawḍa-i munawwara* (luminous tomb)—an epithet later attributed to the Taj Mahal;[32] and a panegyric from Shah Jahan's time (r. 1037-1068/1628-1658) eloquently proclaims:

> From the steep stairs of the building it can be found out that heavenly majesty has taken place in it
> From its podium men of vision have recognized that an enthroned one reposes there
> Imperial effulgence emanates from it—the splendour of the building proclaims:
> "Stand back!"[33]

The concept is reinforced by the revetments of the mausoleum, where white marble—the material typical of saintly tombs—complements red stone, recalling the colour of imperial tents and palaces.[34]

There are few grounds, on the other hand, to interpret the star as a dynastic emblem in the proper sense, in view of its appearance on buildings of the rival Sur dynasty.[35] Equally unlikely appears its reading as a symbol of mystical affiliations: if a peculiar version of the star, formed by intertwined snakes, does appear in the tomb of the influential mystic Salim Chishti in Fatehpur Sikri,[36] it should be remembered that the Mughals and Surs, though both familiar with the motif, differed in their religious preferences.[37]

Like the octagon, the six-pointed star recurs consistently throughout the tomb complex: as a freestanding motif, on the spandrels of the mausoleum and gateways; and combined with hexagons, on the dadoes of the mausoleum, the drum of the dome, and the podium *(takht)* beneath Humayun's cenotaph. Only some of the *jālī*s (window-grilles) feature a more complex geometric scheme, where triangles and hexagons combine with squares (Fig. 8); by contrast, there is no trace of other geometric figures popular in Timurid ornamentation, such as the pentagon and heptagon. A geometrical analysis of the mausoleum's proportions strikingly confirms the importance of the six-pointed star, revealing its possible use as a guideline for the elevation's proportions (Fig. 7).

The paradisiacal references contained in the horizontal plan, that of the garden and mausoleum, combined with the concept of Divine Light, which may be envisaged as the main theme of the elevation and decorations, provide a first coherent picture of the tomb as the site for royal theophany. The deceased ruler is, so to say, "portrayed in majesty" in his mausoleum, in a setting recalling his heavenly home, radiating his Royal and Divine Light as a blessing over the world of the living.

The concept of the tomb as a "posthumous portrait," suggesting itself in other Mughal mausolea, is in accordance with the importance granted to individual merit and personal charisma in Mughal India, a feature of the dynasty's Central Asian heritage.[38] The development of imperial mausolea, of which Humayun's represents the first instance, is soon paralleled by the increasing popularity of portraits, and the growing awareness of the artists' individual styles and personalities, foreshadowed in the late Timurid period but especially cultivated by the Mughals.[39] In a context in which statuary was virtually unknown (although occasional examples of figures in the round are attested)[40] while, at the same time, so great an importance was given to individuals, and especially considering the deeply-rooted belief in *baraka* which characterizes Mughal India, it is not too far-fetched to imagine the mausoleum as a kind of functional equivalent for the funerary statuary of other traditions: an attempt to perpetuate the presence and qualities of the deceased in the physical world.

The Tomb as an Emblem of Power

In her essay on Humayun's tomb, D. Fairchild Ruggles investigates the symbolic implications of its plan, read as a cross-axial—or quadripartite—garden.[41] Strictly speaking, unlike other Mughal tomb-gardens, Humayun's is not quadripartite, but divided into nine plots (Fig. 4);[42] the scheme, nonetheless, may be read as such if stress is laid on the main visual axes.

Like the octagon, the cross-axial plan as a visualization of Paradise pre-dates Islam: consider only the Garden of Eden in *Genesis* II: 8-10.[43] According to Ruggles, in royal garden estates, with views opening in every direction from the central pavilion, the cross-axial plan may be read as an allegory of the king's power, whereas in a royal funerary complex such as Humayun's, the mausoleum itself becomes the object of vision, and the possibility of dominating the surrounding space is denied to all but—ideally—the deceased king. This inverted visual order underlines the tomb's sacredness.

On the physical plan, we may further observe that there is true distance between the visitor and Humayun's buried body, expressed by the double set of cenotaphs (in the crypt and hall), in a hierarchy of proximity which must have had its own significance;[44] on the plan of time, moreover, as Ruggles suggests, the tomb measures itself against eternity, thus transcending the individual identity of Humayun to encompass the whole dynasty.

When combined with our geometrical analysis, Ruggles' observations contribute one more level of interpretation to the hypothesis of a visual riddle: that of the tomb as an emblem of power. The garden, and more generally the horizontal plan, may be read as an allusion to the earthly realm—the

realm of the living—and its transformation into a Paradise brought about by the Golden Age ensured by the *baraka* emanating from the imperial relics, and also, implicitly, by the active presence of Humayun's descendants. The vertical plan, on the other hand, appears to proclaim the role of Humayun's relics as a guarantee for divine blessing: the star encompassing the mausoleum's prospect ideally links two worlds—the terrestrial, by reaching deep down into the earth, and the heavenly one, symbolized by the dome. Humayun's mausoleum thus strikingly appears to visualize his other posthumous title, *jahānbānī*, protector of the world.

In the eyes of posterity, the living Humayun is a model wise monarch, initiated into cosmic mysteries: some paintings from Shah Jahan's reign portray him with compasses in his hand, an allusion to his expertise in astronomy.[45] After death, in the posthumous portrait of his mausoleum, he becomes an intercessor before God, testified by the pilgrimages performed by his descendants.[46] At the same time, as a sapiential figure, a promoter of tolerance and fosterer of a renewed Golden Age, a theme cherished not only by him but all of his descendants, Humayun is perhaps, in Akbar's mind, an *alter ego* for himself, as the pursuer of his father's wisdom and just rule.

The Tomb as a Sapiential Diagram

Despite the amount of scholarly attention reserved to the six-pointed star, what seems to have escaped notice is that Akbar's adoption of it, both as a talisman and as an architectural motif, precedes the introduction of the *Dīn-i Ilāhī*, a religious synthesis centred on Sun-worship.[47] In view of its early adoption, the motif should not be confused with syncretic elements developed only at a later date; this reinforces the idea that it is essentially a borrowing from the previous period.[48] On the other hand, there are signs of Humayun's precursory role in this sense: he had commanded that drums be played daily before dawn, at sunrise and sunset, and on the first and fourteenth day of the month, "when the Sun and Moon face each other."[49]

As an auspicious symbol with astrological implications, the six-pointed star reflects Humayun's interests even better than Akbar's. Still other possible meanings, more directly related to Mughal ideology, have been discussed by Lowry.[50] The star possibly also symbolizes the ruler's knowing powers—an attribute related to Divine Light, of particular importance under Akbar. Representing the union of the material and heavenly worlds, the six-pointed star may not only be an effective symbol of the monarch, as the mediator between heaven and earth, but also of his knowledge of divine mysteries. A possible clue for this reading may be found in the Purana Qil^{c}a, a short distance from Humayun's tomb (fig. 3), the fortress identified by most scholars with Dīnpanāh, the "Asylum of Faith" he founded in 940/1534. The spandrels of the fortress's west gate, datable to Humayun's reign or to the Sur interregnum, display six-pointed stars in relief. Inside the gate, a Qur'anic quotation reads:[51]

وَٱللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْرِهِۦ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

God hath full power and control over His affairs, but most among mankind know it not

This is a possible reference to Humayun's return from exile, as it recurs in a contemporary Mughal source and appears again in the inscriptions of the fort's mosque, which Catherine Asher ascribes to Sur patronage, but whose architectural and decorative features point to the work of a Timurid architect.[52] The original context of the verse—Joseph's *Sūra*—and its theme—knowledge—suggest a reference to the king's superior knowing powers, a theme cherished by Akbar and, before him, by Humayun.

Asher has rightly noted Joseph's pertinence as an ideal model for Sher Shah Sur, who could easily identify himself with the man of humble origins attaining power by God's decree;[53] but Joseph-Yusuf must have been an equally important figure for the Mughals, particularly in the early period. His popularity under the later Timurids is well documented, most notably as protagonist of a work by ^{c}Abd al-Rahman Jami, the poet and saint influential at Sultan-Husayn's court[54] and revered by Babur, from whom Akbar and (reputedly) Humayun were descended through their mothers.[55]

Like Solomon—one of the cardinal figures in Mughal ideology, whose seal is also a six-pointed star—Joseph is a sapiential figure: a reader of dreams, by his own dreams he gains access to a superior form of knowledge. As such, he represents a particularly pertinent model for Akbar and Humayun.[56] The *Akbarnāma* contains several references to the premonitory dreams Akbar was reported to have had since childhood, a sign of his elect nature; and in the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*, the theme of knowledge is not limited to the ruler's figure but serves as a standard for the classification of men.[57] Like other aspects of Akbar's ceremonial and ideology of power—the *jharōka darśan* (appearance at the window), the salutation of the sun and moon, the colour of dress in accordance with the day's presiding planet, and so forth—the idea may have been borrowed from Humayun, who, according to Jawhar Aftabachi, could foretell the future and perform miracles.[58]

The theme of supernatural knowledge, read as an extension of the concept of Divine Light and a reference to Humayun's saintly nature, helps understand the process by which the tomb rapidly evolved into something close to a shrine—a typology whose form it actually echoes, as will be demonstrated shortly. Only the posthumous attribution to Humayun of supernatural forms of knowledge would explain why such dignity was associated with his tomb, both features being instrumental to Akbar's policy in the formative years of his reign.

The Tomb as a Shrine

Formally as well as functionally, Humayun's mausoleum belongs within the category of Timurid "dynastic tombs," popular in the Timurid period as an expression of the "strong interdependence of members of the extended family, and, particularly, the importance of the patriarch as peace-keeper and source of inspiration."[59]

Until the mid-15th century, Timurid dynastic tombs are usually chapels, that is, domed rooms with underlying crypts for individual or collective burial within larger complexes, as in the Dar al-Siyada in Shahrisabz (where Timur had planned to be buried, but where only the two sons who predeceased him were eventually interred), or the Gur-i Amir in Samarqand, which became the principal family burial of the Timurids after Timur himself and, later, his son Shahrukh were laid to rest there.[60] Like other Timurid tombs and cemeteries, they are usually located in proximity to the burial-place of a saint.[61] In the late Timurid period, a new form appears: the freestanding multi-roomed mausoleum, still connected with a saintly burial-place, but asserting a certain independence. In size and spatial organization, these later mausolea are highly reminiscent of shrines,[62] as if the royal tomb were beginning to appropriate some of the saintly *baraka* within itself. This transition, coinciding with the rise of the Mirānshāhī Timurid branch, from which the Mughal dynasty would later stem, is significant in view of the subsequent development of the royal tomb in the Subcontinent, beginning with Humayun's mausoleum.[63]

In conformity with Timurid custom, the latter lies in the proximity of the principal Muslim *mazār* (locally, *dargāh*) in Delhi, that of Nizamuddin Awliya', a saint greatly revered in the early Mughal period, but in the course of a few decades appropriates its sanctity, as sources testify.[64] Concurrently, the figure of Humayun—already being perceived as the founder and head of the dynasty, sometimes

in preference to Babur—gradually turns from that of protector of his lineage, in the Timurid tradition, into a mythical and mystical figure of reference for his descendants, not unlike Timur himself: both, tellingly, would become the objects of popular devotion.

Like late-Timurid dynastic tombs, Humayun's mausoleum is provided with a "crypt," which here, as is the norm for Mughal tombs, is at ground level within the plinth; a cenotaph hall; a series of ancillary rooms; and what Russian scholarship describes as a *mian sarai*—a tripartite entrance purportedly meant to host the burial rites. Interestingly, the *mian sarai* is a prominent feature of shrines built in the same period.[65] Peculiar to the Miranshahi tombs—Ishrat Khana; Aq Sarai; the tombs of Yunas Khan, ᶜAbd al-Razzaq and Humayun—the *mian sarai* is barely discernible in Akbar's mausoleum and disappears in subsequent Mughal structures, whose plans pursue a tendency already detectable in the Ghazni example, eventually achieving complete radial symmetry.

The attribution of *baraka* to the tombs of royal personages is no unknown phenomenon in Iran and Central Asia, and its occurrence appears to become more and more frequent from the Mongol period onwards. V. V. Bartol'd's observations on the Gur-i Amir[66] suggest that the Timurids probably made a conscious use of the association of their royal burial-places with the tombs of saints, in order to encourage the performance of pilgrimage *(ziyāra)*. Although none of the late-Timurid dynastic tombs features the ambulatory which was to become typical of Mughal imperial mausolea—a tangible sign of the practice of circumambulation *(ṭawāf)*[67]—Babur mentions this practice and uses an identical terminology in relation to the royal and saintly tombs.[68]

But there were other sources of inspiration that Akbar and his architect could exploit for the creation of a royal shrine. The ambulatory, for one, appears to have been introduced in the Subcontinent already in the 14th century,[69] in all likelihood from Iran and in emulation of an outstanding mausoleum which Humayun himself is known to have visited: the tomb of the Ilkhanid sultan Öljeitü in Sultaniya (*ca.* 705-710/1305-13).[70] This octagonal mausoleum and subsequent Indian examples perpetuate the form of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, plausibly derived from that of Christian martyria, and typical of shiᶜite *mashhad*s since at least the 9th-10th centuries.[71] The latter buildings were, like Humayun's tomb, the object of *ziyāra* and *ṭawāf;* some were extensively patronized by the Timurids.[72]

While the original raison d'être for the construction of the Dome of the Rock remains the object of debate, some scholars have convincingly argued for a connection with the *umbilicus mundi* associated with Jerusalem and the Temple, believed to be the site where God will sit in majesty on Judgement Day.[73] This interpretation would accommodate the Solomonic themes many scholars have read in its decorations, as well as the association with the site of Muhammad's journey to the heavenly regions, his *miᶜrāj*, current by the time of Humayun's burial.

This connection with the Last Judgement and the *miᶜrāj* would not seem to have been lost in octagonal Muslim mausolea and further defies the categorization of the latter as either secular tombs or shrines: Ölejitü's tomb is praised by the contemporary writer Kashani not only as a *janna* and *rawḍa*, indicating a garden or paradise, and as *hasht dar-i bihisht*, the "eight doors of Paradise," but, more specifically, as a "place of ascent to Paradise,"[74] stressing an ideological as well as a formal connection with the Jerusalem prototype, and the Sultan's role as a mediator between Heaven and earth. This adds a deeper dimension to the Paradise symbolism embodied in these two signal mausolea.

There is indeed reason to assume that the Ilkhanid building, seen by Humayun during his sojourn in Iran, was one of the sources of inspiration for the first Mughal mausoleum: its size is very similar, and several of its features anticipate those of Humayun's tomb.[75] Among these are the surviving inscriptions, Qur'anic quotations as well as *ḥadīth*s, containing references to knowledge and the admonitory role of God's Messengers.[76] A parallel with Akbar's tomb, whose epigraphic cycle contains references to both the Messenger and Solomon, in a context with manifest political implications,[77] corroborates a reading of Humayun's tomb in the same key. A more substantial parallel is provided by the themes of

pilgrimage and sanctity alluded to in the inscription in the dome of Öljeitü's tomb, describing Abraham and Ismaᶜil building the Kaᶜba (*Sūra* 2:127); Kashani's designation of *Kaᶜba* for the tomb makes the connection even more explicit.[78]

Perhaps the most significant parallel between the two royal mausolea is provided by the historical circumstances of their construction: Sheila Blair has interpreted Öljeitü's tomb as a monument to the conversion of the Mongol élite to Islam, and to the dynasty's ambition to be the custodian of the Holy Cities.[79] The form and inscriptions of the tomb, and the designation *kaᶜba,* all stress this concept. By a similar process, Humayun's tomb may be said to embody the recently consolidated Timurid power over the largely unconverted population of Hindustan.

Although Humayun's mausoleum resembles Timurid dynastic tombs and shrines more than it does the tomb of Öljeitü or the Dome of the Rock, it should be noted that the geometrical diagram underlying its plan, two interlocking squares generating an octagon (Fig. 6a), is identical to that underlying the plan of the Dome of the Rock: a remarkable coincidence indeed, if not, in both cases, a deliberate reference to God's Throne on the last day.[80]

A reference to the Last Judgement appears especially plausible when we consider that the same theme would later dominate the inscriptional cycle, if not the actual conception, of the Taj Mahal.[81] Thus, if some reference to the imagery underlying Öljeitü's tomb and, ultimately, the Dome of the Rock, were indeed present in Humayun's mausoleum, this should perhaps be understood not merely as an indication that the imperial mausoleum is both shrine and centre of pilgrimage, but also—on a subtler (or more esoteric) level—as an expression of its nature as an *axis mundi*, a privileged place of contact between heaven and earth. A reference to God's Throne, as well as to the *umbilicus mundi* and the Prophet's mystical journey, would greatly, and pertinently, reinforce the image of the ruler as a mediator between the heavenly realm and the phenomenal world, as *jannat ᶜashiyānī* and *jahānbānī*: an idea very popular with the Mughals, who may have assimilated it in India, but equally well received it as part of their Central Asian heritage.[82]

The positioning of the complex (Fig. 3), ideally located near both Dinpanah, seat of the temporal power, and the tomb of Nizamuddin Awliya', but with a greater proximity to the latter, is emblematic of the concept, and of the will to make it, like Öljeitü's, a centre of pilgrimage. So are the rites it hosted, commonly associated with saintly tombs: *ziyāra, ṭawāf,* distributions of food and alms.[83] Even before the mausoleum's completion, pilgrimage to this "site of the holiest of tombs" had become more important than that to sufi shrines.[84] Akbar's successor Jahangir calls the monument "illumined tomb of the holy *jannat ashiyani*" *(rawḍa-i munawwara ḥaḍrat jannat ᶜashiyānī),*[85] and the panegyrist Muhammad Salih Kanbo, writing under his son Shah Jahan, describes it as "the most noble and august among the sacred places of that land"[86]—a sign that it had by then fully appropriated the *baraka* initially sought in its proximity to an established shrine.

There is another, intriguing formal aspect of the tomb which points to its connotations of sanctity: the western gateway, opening onto the Nizamuddin necropolis, is a concave structure (Figs. 2-4), reminiscent of a *miḥrāb* or an ᶜ*īdgāh*. This form, albeit uncommon, has a most pertinent contemporary parallel in the Char Bakr shrine, built in Bukhara only a few years earlier (Pl. XXXII, Fig. 9). I have elsewhere noted the striking similarity between the west gate of Humayun's tomb and the entrance to the Char Bakr complex;[87] but analogies between the two monuments are not purely formal, if we accept the interpretation of the Bukhara shrine proposed by Florian Schwarz,[88] according to whom the Char Bakr, built by the Shaybanids at the ancient shrine complex of Sumitan west of the city, was intentionally aligned with the *qibla* of the older congregational mosque in the heart of Bukhara, thus becoming a kind of "*miḥrāb* for the city" when viewed in its urban context.

The symbolic role of the Char Bakr shrine in relation to Bukhara accounts for the concave shape of its main building and of the gateway to the complex (Pl. XXII, Fig. 9)—both in axis with Bukhara's

ancient *qibla*; and it sheds light on the unusual form chosen for the western gateway of Humayun's tomb. The latter, however, does not point to the *qibla*; instead, it opens onto the existing religious centre of Delhi and indicates the royal tomb itself as "qibla." This idea, heterodox though it may seem, has some precedents in the Islamic tradition and also solid ground in the Mughal context: the concept of the ruler as "*qibla* (or *kaʿba*) of the empire" is explicitly stated in reference to Akbar by a contemporary source only a few decades later,[89] and the Public Audience Hall, the *Daulat Khāna-i Khāṣṣ u ʿĀmm*, of Fatehpur Sikri, the city Akbar founded in 958/1571, has been interpreted as the seat of rituals complementing, and in some way challenging, those of the congregational mosque, to which it constitutes a visual (and, perhaps, symbolic) counterpart within the urban structure.[90]

In an essay on 16th-century Delhi, Lowry remarks that:

> Humayun's tomb [...] did not simply become part of this important historical setting, it redefined it. By virtue of its size [and, we may now add, of its architectural vocabulary] the building established a visual reference that shifted the focus of this area away from the pre-existing monuments and centered it on the mausoleum.[91]

It may also be observed that the position and role of Humayun's tomb in relation to the city of Delhi in some way parallel that of shrines in the Timurid homeland, such as Gazurgah in relation to Herat, or the Char Bakr for Bukhara.[92] Finally, the suggestions drawn from Timurid architecture, and possibly Ilkhanid Iran, may be interpreted as expressing the continuity between Mongol Sultaniya, Timurid Samarqand, and Mughal Delhi.[93]

Humayun as the Second Timur

There are, in fact, quite substantial clues to suggest that to Humayun was posthumously attributed the dignity of being considered founder and head of the Mughal dynasty, becoming, so to say, the *alter ego* of Timur: his tomb—not Babur's—becomes the principal family cemetery, and to it his descendants invariably pay a visit, on the occasion of military campaigns or dynastic challenges.[94] Moreover, as I hope to have shown, from the point of view of ideology and ceremonial, and as the builder of the first Timurid capital in India, it is Humayun, and not Babur, who must have been perceived as the true "founder" of the dynasty and the Mughal state.

There are reasons at once psychological and political for Akbar's choice of enforcing the conception of his father's tomb as a shrine and, ultimately, of Delhi as the second Samarqand. Born during Humayun's exile, until the reconquest of Kabul and Hindustan he had been virtually continuously parted from his father, learning about him almost exclusively from women's tales; barely six months after the victorious enterprise in Hindustan, Akbar lost him again, suddenly and forever,[95] ascending the throne while still in his early adolescence. Once his most immediate opponents were defeated,[96] there still remained much for the young ruler to do in order to consolidate his power: his dynasty had no roots in the country, and no prestige other than the pride of descending from Timur—a fact of little or no relevance to his Indian subjects. By magnifying the figure of Humayun—the just and wise king, the scholar, the astronomer, the saint—Akbar was able to bridge the gap between the (Iranian-) Islamic and the Indian bases of his mandate, paving the way for his later political-religious synthesis.[97]

By contrast, Babur would not have made an ideal founder-figure for an Indian imperial dynasty: a Central Asian-born Timurid prince from a collateral line (his father had only been the ruler of the provincial kingdom of Ferghana), he had conquered Hindustan only as a consequence of the Uzbek invasion of his native country. On his accession, he had underlined continuity with the prior sultans

of Delhi by adopting the title *ghāzī* and committing acts of desecration and force, such as the defacing of Jain sculptures and the building of mosques on Hindu holy sites.[98] The policies and diplomacy in his four years of rule had likewise reflected those of the period preceding the conquest, his power depending strictly on the loyalty of the powerful men of his entourage, whom Akbar endeavoured to tame; Babur's lifestyle, though strictly Timurid, still was that of a refined nomad.

Humayun's actions reflect a different conception of power: on the pattern of the great Timurid rulers—Timur, Ulugh Beg, and Sultan-Husayn—he promoted the arts and sciences, founded a city, and established a ceremonial full of Iranian suggestions: the habit of wearing clothes of a colour suitable to the day's presiding planet, borrowed from the legendary Sasanian king Bahram Gur; the salutation of the Sun and Moon; and even the institution of a Drum of Justice (*ṭabl-i ʿadl*) near his Audience Hall, a forerunner of Jahangir's Chain of Justice, which was also inspired by a Sasanian model, and not without precedent in India.[99]

In the eyes of contemporary Timurid intellectuals, too, Humayun embodies the nostalgia for a golden age: in a work by Amir Mahmud, Khwandamir's son, who had stayed behind in Herat,

> Le personnage de Homāyun devient la projection de la nostalgie timouride, sentiment encore vivant à Herat vers le milieu du XVIe siècle. Remarquons pourtant le contraste entre cette image traditionnelle et la réalité du rôle historique joué par Homāyun, contraste que ses contemporains ne percevaient visiblement pas de même manière.[100]

Humayun is not known to have declared himself—as his descendants later would—*ṣāḥibqirān-i thānī*: "Second Lord of the (Auspicious) Conjunction," that is, the second Timur; but he is called *ṣāḥibqirān* in the transcription of a *farmān* of Shah Tahmasp, the Safavid ruler of Iran who gave him hospitality during his exile, as given in the *Akbarnāma*.[101] Whether or not a Mughal interpolation, the title appears to have been attributed to Humayun by his immediate successor, if not by his contemporaries.

The role posthumously ascribed to Humayun, taking into account the reconquest of Hindustan more than its former loss—a fact modern historians should perhaps also reconsider, especially in the troubled historical circumstances of early 16th-century Muslim Asia—is embedded in a pervasive Timurid nostalgia and backed by significant ideological implications. There is eloquent testimony for this in the *Akbarnāma*, where Humayun's figure is exalted far beyond Babur's,[102] far more than would be justified by the need to fill the gap in historical sources caused by the dynasty's exile from Hindustan. The same vision is expressed by the inscription on the south façade of the gateway to Akbar's tomb, greeting the deceased ruler as both second Timur and second Humayun, doubtlessly with a pun on the word *humāyūn*, "noble, saintly, auspicious," but nonetheless with an overt reference to his father; and as a king superior to Khusrau and Caesar, representing the Persian and Byzantine emperors, the two great models of Islamic monarchy. By contrast, no direct reference is made to Babur.[103]

Conclusion

Numerous references appear to point to the posthumous role of Humayun as a mythical, and mystical, figure, paralleling Timur as the progenitor and protector of his lineage. This connection seems to be embodied at several levels in his tomb: the square plan with a central building recalls the royal estates of Samarqand, rather than the typical late-Timurid garden,[104] and is possibly meant to underline Delhi's role as the new Timurid capital; while the cartouche-and-star frames running around the plinth of the mausoleum recall those at the base of Timur's cenotaph.[105] Even the all-important six-pointed star may contain a reference to the Mughals' dynastic ancestor, being identical

with the diagram visualizing the sixty-year cycle relating the planets Jupiter and Saturn,[106] whose "auspicious conjunction" had greeted his accession to power, and whose importance the astronomer Humayun could not have failed to note.

The diagram might even be read as an alternative version for Timur's emblem, composed of three tangent circles forming a triangle: an emblem which has been interpreted both as the visual rendering of his title *ṣāḥibqirān* and, like the star, as a symbol of knowledge.[107] The same dual meaning is traditionally associated with the ninefold division of the square, the scheme here adopted for the garden, identical to the *wafq*, the diagram representing the archetype of Saturn,[108] a diagram of auspiciousness and knowledge and, possibly, one more reference to Timur. In the light of our hypothesized visual riddle, it would not be daring to assume that other meanings were also alluded to, among which, most probably, is the auspiciousness traditionally associated with the number nine in Central Asia.[109]

In its perfect harmonization of form and content, the tomb of Humayun embodies the quintessence of the Timurid building tradition. Of equal relevance is its role as prototype for subsequent Mughal funerary architecture, which never again reached—no matter how successful—such a peak of intellectual refinement. Last but not least, as I hope to have shown, its analysis provides material for a reassessment of Humayun's much-neglected figure.

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Notes

1. Badaʿoni, *Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh* II, p. 135.
2. Misra (2006). The only previous monograph on Humayun's tomb, of a more scholarly nature, is Naqvi (1947).
3. Parodi (2006).
4. Wescoat (1997), p.187. See especially Petruccioli (1990, 1994, 1997); Wescoat & Wolschke-Bulmahn (1996); and Conan (2007).
5. Wescoat (1997), p. 191.
6. Cf. in particular Banerji (1938), on which much subsequent scholarship appears to rely.
7. Lowry, "Humayun's Tomb" (1987).
8. Babur had his mother buried in a garden: *Bāburnāma* (Chagatai-English), II, Chagatai, p. 325 (fol. 157); English, p. 324; for its possible remains, see Moynihan (1979), pp. 81-82; he was himself buried in a terraced garden in Kabul; for a discussion, see Zajadacz-Hastenrath (1997), with bibliography; see also note 94, below.
9. For the meaning of *chahārbāgh* in the Timurid context, see Subtelny (1997).
10. Cf. Hoag (1968), as yet the most complete work on 'Abd al-Razzaq's tomb, who however fails to note this. The idea may have reached the Subcontinent even before the actual arrival of the Timurids, as the tombs of two Baridi rulers in Bidar (Karnataka), one of which is earlier than Humayun's tomb, were possibly also set in a formal garden: see Yazdani (1947), Pls. LXXXIX, CXII.
11. Lowry, "Humayun's Tomb" (1987); see especially pp. 142-7.
12. For instance, in Akbar's tomb, the Throne and the Messenger, Parodi (2001); and in the Taj Mahal, Paradise, and Judgment Day: Parodi (2000); see also Begley (1979).
13. Subtelny (1986), p. 76. The essay effectively outlines the role of such poetry in Timurid society. See also Lentz & Lowry (1989), pp. 284-85.
14. Lowry, "Humayun's Tomb" (1987), p. 147.
15. I have proposed a similar reading for the Taj Mahal, Parodi (2000), in a sense reconciling the contrasting interpretations of it as the visual expression of Shah Jahan's ambition to be seen as *al-insān al-kāmil*, Begley (1979), and the replica on a grand scale of a form common in waterfront gardens, Koch (2006).
16. For the latter's biography, see Subtelny (1993, 1995, 1997); for a discussion of the work and legacy of these two Timurid architects in the Subcontinent, Parodi (2002).
17. Cf. Schimmel (1976), p. 21, and Reinhardt (1991), p. 17, respectively. The subject of paradisiacal associations has received considerable attention in the past: see especially Schimmel (1976) and Moynihan (1979).
18. For a more detailed geometrical reconstruction, see Parodi (1997-98), pp. 54-57, with illustrations.
19. See Alemi (1997), pp. 58-59, for a few instances and a discussion, and Koch (2006), pp. 26-27, for *hasht bihisht* in Mughal architecture.
20. *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī* (Persian), fol. 54a, p. 273; *Qānūn-i-Humāyūnī* (English), p. 38.
21. Nath, "Decorative Art" (1976), pp. 31-33, provides the most comprehensive list of occurrences.
22. Nath, "Tantric Symbol" (1976), pp. 68-77.
23. On which see Nath (1985), pp. 9-87; also Streusand (1989), pp. 123-53.
24. Nath, "Decorative Art" (1976), pp. 36-7.
25. Emma Flatt, "Heavenly Gardens: Astrology and Magic in the Garden Culture of the Medieval Deccan," presented to the conference entitled Fragrance, Symmetry and Light: The History of Gardens and Garden Culture in the Deccan, University of Hyderabad, India, 22-25 January 2007. A pertinent instance of the use of the six-pointed star in architecture are the (now lost) doors of the

tomb of Mahmud of Ghazna, illustrated in Nath (1985), p. 44.

26. Cf. Lowry, "Humayun's Tomb" (1987), pp. 142-44.

27. *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī* (Persian), fol. 9a, p. 253; *Qānūn-i-Humāyūnī* (English), p. 7.

28. For the situation in the former Timurid capital, Herat, cf. Szuppe (1992).

29. See Lambton (1971). On these concepts in Mughal ideology, see Koch (1993), p. 13.

30. Lowry, "Humayun's Tomb" (1987), pp. 144-45.

31. Versions of this legend, first recorded in the *Secret History of the Mongols*, are given in the inscription on Timur's cenotaph and in *Akbarnāma* (English) I, pp. 37-39; *Akbarnāma* (Persian), fol. 12, pp. 25-26; (cf. Lentz & Lowry 1989, pp. 27-28).

32. *Jahāngīrnāma*: manuscript, cited in Koch (1993), p. 9.

33. Kashani, cited in Koch (1993), p. 12; Persian text in her note 69.

34. Koch (1993), p. 13.

35. Cf. Asher (1981), p. 213.

36. Discussed in Nath, "Tantric Symbol" (1976), p. 69.

37. See Buehler (1996).

38. Wescoat (1994) has found that a precise hierarchy exists in the size of Mughal tombs; my research on imperial mausolea (Parodi 1997-98) has brought to light more specific references to the deceased, which have led me to propose their reading in terms of "posthumous portraits," as explained further in this essay with reference to Humayun's tomb.

39. Cf. Lentz & Lowry (1989) and Welch *et al.* (1987) respectively.

40. See Brand & Lowry (1985), pp. 118-9, and *Jahāngīrnāma* (English), f. 129a, p. 197, for statues of defeated *rājas*; and Koch (2007), pp. 167-169, for life-size sculptures of elephants.

41. Ruggles (1997). This is a form once identified with the *chahārbāgh* (literally, "four-garden") type and considered "classical." For a more correct assessment of this garden typology, see Alemi (1986, 1994, 1997), McChesney (1997) and Subtelny (1997).

42. A plan which may, in its turn, contain symbolic references to auspiciousness and power. Imperial Mughal funerary gardens are illustrated and discussed in Parodi (1997-98); see also Crowe & Haywood (1972).

43. For a comprehensive discussion of this issue, see Moynihan (1979).

44. Cf. the case of the Taj Mahal, briefly discussed in Habib (1996), p. 132.

45. Illustrated in Alfieri (1996), Figs. 7,8. Cf. also Parodi (1997-98), pp. 4-6.

46. See Koch, "Shah Jahan" (1991) and Koch (1993).

47. On which see Nath (1985), pp. 9-87; Richards (1987); Streusand (1989), pp. 148-51.

48. It is not known when the six-pointed star was first adopted by the Mughals—perhaps as early as Babur's reign (1528): cf. Nath (1976), p. 31, for the one on the *miḥrāb* of the controversially dated Jamali Masjid, Delhi. The first dated examples are in Sher Shah's tomb (Sasaram, Bihar), built however after his conquest of Delhi, where he first came into contact with Mughal architecture: cf. Asher (1977), pp. 295-97. The prominence and popularity of the six-pointed star in Akbar's architecture would seem to indicate that the Mughals adopted it first.

49. *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī* (Persian), fol. 114a, p. 305; *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī* (English), p. 82.

50. Lowry, "Humayun's Tomb" (1987).

51. *Sūra* 12:21. The inscription is quoted in Nath (1982), p. 147. For a discussion of the dating and attribution of the Purana Qilᶜa, see Parodi (1997-98), pp. 117-31.

52. The Sura is quoted in *Tadhkirat al-Wāqiᶜāt*, English, p. 69. To be more precise, while the *miḥrāb*s do seem to be in a style associated with the Surs, some of the soffits and the geometrical inlays of the façade are accurate translations into stone of Timurid forms; this may indicate two phases of construction, but would still associate the

inscription with Mughal patronage. For a fuller discussion, see Parodi (2002).

53. Asher (1981), pp. 214-15. *Genesis* XLI:40-43; XLV:8.

54. See Lentz & Lowry (1989), pp. 292-95. Babur visited his tomb in 1505-6; *Bāburnāma* (Chagatai-English), fol. 178b, II, p. 371.

55. *Akbarnāma* (English), I, p. 285; *Akbarnāma* (Persian), fol. 121, I, p. 190

56. For a discussion of Solomon as a sapiential figure in the inscriptional and decorative cycle of Akbar's tomb, see Parodi (2001).

57. *Āᶜīn-i Akbarī* I, p. 606.

58. *Tadhkirat al-Wāqiᶜāt*, f. 57a, English, p. 46. Akbar's official history, the *Akbarnāma*, amplifies the idea, linking it to the general concept of Divine Light, to Humayun's learning, and most importantly to his saintly nature, reputedly inherited from Jami—thus acknowledging his role in the creation of Mughal ideology: cf. fols. 120-122 (English, I, pp. 283-87; Persian, I, pp. 189-192; 165 (English, I, pp. 352-53; Persian, I, p. 250), 203 (English, I, p. 413; Persian, I, p. 302). Humayun's mind-powers are magnified already by his official chronicler, Khwandamir, in the *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī*. A historian at Sultan-Husayn's court who later joined Babur's in India, see Szuppe (1992), p. 55-57, and a generation older than Humayun, Khwandamir may have conveyed several ideas from the Timurid homeland: for instance, he speaks of Humayun's attitude towards architecture, anticipating Akbar's, in terms similar to those used by Timurid sources: cf. *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī* (Persian), fol. 78a-b, p. 287; *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī* (English), pp. 55-56, with the passage of the *Irshād al-Zirāᶜa* quoted in Subtelny (1995), p. 26. A brief discussion of Humayun's precursory role in the creation of Mughal ceremonial is found in Parodi (2006).

59. Golombek & Wilber (1988), p. 50. On Timurid "dynastic tombs," see Pugachenkova (1963); Golombek & Wilber (1988) p. 50; Haase (1997). On Humayun's tomb within this typology, see Lowry (1987).

60. For the Dar al-Siyada, see Golombek & Wilber (1988), Cat. No. 40, and Masson & Pugachenkova (1978, 1980); for the Gur-i Amir, Golombek & Wilber (1988), Cat. No. 29C. Other examples are the mausoleum in the *madrasa* of Gawhar Shad (Herat, 1432) and the Dar al-Tilava in Shahrisabz (1437-8): Golombek & Wilber (1988), Cat. Nos. 70 and 43 respectively.

61. Cf. the Shah-i Zinda cemetery at Samarqand, Golombek & Wilber (1988), Cat. Nos. 11-24, and the Herat cemeteries (*ibid.*, Cat. No. 71). A more detailed analysis of the latter is found in Allen (1983). I shall not concern myself here with the complex questions revolving around the burial of Sayyid Baraka in the Gur-i Amir (on which see Bartol'd-Rogers (1974), pp. 83-85; but it is worth mentioning that the only late-Timurid tomb on which information on such a connection appears to be lacking is that of ᶜAbd al-Razzaq (Hoag and other authors make no mention of saints' burials nearby)—perhaps only because its original context has been altered.

62. For example, that of Ahmad Yasavi in Turkestan, Golombek & Wilber (1988), Cat. No. 53.

63. The Ishrat Khana (Samarqand), Golombek & Wilber (1988), Cat. No. 35 was built *ca.* 1460-64 by Abu Saᶜid's chief wife, Habiba Sultan Begim; the Aq Sarai (Samarqand) (*ibid.*, Cat. No. 36) dates from the reign of his son Sultan Ahmad (r. 1469-94); the tomb of ᶜAbd al-Razzaq (Ghazni) was built by another son, Ulugh Beg (r. 1469-1501). To the same typology belongs the tomb of Yunas Khan (*ibid.*, Cat. No. 49), Abu Saᶜid's Chagatai ally whose daughter married another of his sons, Umar Shaikh; from their union Babur would be born.

64. Koch (1993). Babur circumambulated Nizamuddin's tomb soon after entering Delhi, in 932/1526; *Bāburnāma* (Chagatai-English), fol. 267b, III, p. 573; English, p. 572. For his successors' visits to the shrine, see Koch, "Shah Jahan" (1991), and Koch (1993).

65. For a definition of the *mian sarai* and some examples, see Pugachenkova (1963), pp. 183-84; Hoag (1968), pp. 237-38. In the case of Humayun's tomb, it should be remembered that the ruler only received a secondary burial there, and the connection with burial rites then only applies to subsidiary burials at the complex. For the scant information on Timurid burial rituals, see Bart'old-Rogers (1974); for the Mughals, Koch, "Shah Jahan" (1991), and

Koch (1993). On the Mughal side, one should not underestimate the importance of festivals connected with the anniversary of a death (*ᶜurs*), on which a little more information is available. Among Timurid shrines provided with a *mian sarai*, the following may be mentioned: that of "Zangiyan" in Yazd (*ca.* 1465), Golombek & Wilber (1988), Cat. No. 229, that of ᶜAbdullah b. Muᶜawiyah in Herat, dated 1460-88 (*ibid.*, Cat. No. 75), and—possibly—the "Chashma Ayyub" in Bukhara, which may have been partly rebuilt in the 16th century (*ibid.*, Cat. No. 3).

66. Bartol'd-Rogers (1973), p. 85.

67. The practice of *ṭawāf* in royal tombs would seem to date back at least to the Ilkhanid period, cf. Blair (1986, 1987). In Humayun's mausoleum, *ṭawāf* could take place at several levels: on the terrace, in the imperfect ambulatory (opening onto the *īwān*s) surrounding the cenotaph hall, in the more congruent continuous corridor on the upper floor, illustrated in Lowry, "Humayun's Tomb" (1987), Figs. 6 and 8 respectively, and around the cenotaphs in the hall and crypt.

68. Cf. *Bāburnāma* (Chagatai-English), fol. 32, I, p. 63: *"Axsīğa yetip atamnıng mazārını tavāf qıldım,"* which Thackston renders "Upon reaching Akhsi I paid my respects at my father's tomb," but which—besides containing an explicit reference to *ṭawāf*—is virtually identical to the description of the pilgrimage later made by Babur to the tombs of saints like Nizamuddin Awliya' and Khwaja Qutbuddin in Delhi (*Bāburnāma* (Chagatai-English), fol. 267b): *"Šayx Niẓām Awliyāning mazārını tavāf qılıp"* (more literally translated by Thackston as "I circumambulated ..."). The possibility that Umar Shaykh's tomb was more than a simple gravestone would seem to be suggested by Babur's brief mention of it (Chagatai, p. 227 [fol. 111b], English, p. 226): *"Maqbaranıng janūb ayvānıda olturup ..."* ("We were seated in the portico to the south of the tomb ..." in Thackston's translation). It would be tempting to interpret the passage as a reference to a domed mausoleum, in which case, were its alignment the same as in Humayun's tomb and the Ishrat Khana, the south *īwān* would correspond to the entrance. However, given the particular meaning of *īwān* in Timurid sources, customarily used with reference to the structures called *tālār* in Iran, see the Glossary appended to Koch, *Mughal Architecture* (1991), I am inclined to think that Babur's father was, in fact, interred in a walled graveyard, and that the prince and his companions were seated in the shade of a nearby portico, most likely wooden, possibly being part of the enclosure.

69. With the tomb of Khan Jahan Tilangani, see Alfieri (2000), pp. 45-46. Other examples include a few pre-Mughal tombs and, more importantly, the mausolea of Sher Shah and Islam Shah of the Sur dynasty, which wrested Hindustan from the Mughals during the lifetime of Humayun (see note 75).

70. On Öljeitü's tomb, see Blair (1986, 1987). Humayun's visit to it is recorded in the *Tadhkirat al-Wāqiᶜāt*, f. 71b, English, p. 65.

71. For instance, those at Najaf, Karbala, Samarra, Qum and Mashhad, cf. Blair (1983), p. 86. Other examples of octagonal structures belonging to this typology are the Qubbat al-Sulaibiya at Samarra (Iraq), cf. Hillenbrand (1994), p. 254, the pavilion at Natanz (Iran), cf. Blair (1983), the Shahzada Sarbaz at Bust in southern Afghanistan, cf. Hillenbrand (1994), p. 283, the buildings at Sirjan and Ghubayra, cf. Blair (1983), p. 83, the "Divan Khana" of the Shirvan Shahs in Baku, Golombek & Wilber (1988), Cat. No. 143, to name but a few. Except for the Dome of the Rock, and perhaps the Qubbat al-Sulaybiya, whenever the original function has been ascertained, it is that of a mausoleum, cf. Blair (1983).

72. Humayun visited the one in Mashhad during his sojourn in Iran (*Tadhkirat al-Wāqiᶜāt*, f. 83a, English, p. 76).

73. See especially the essays published in Raby & Johns (1992) and Johns (1999), and the discussion in Rosen-Ayalon (1989). Other recent studies include Grabar (1990, 1996); Nuseibeh & Grabar (1996); Rabbat (1989, 1993); Khoury (1993); see also Grabar (1959) and Soucek (1976). Grabar (1990) has more recently pointed out the differences between the Dome of the Rock and Christian martyria, without disclaiming the relation proposed in his previous essays.

74. *Tārīkh-i Öljeitü*, cited in Blair (1986), p.

145. Gardens actually existed in Öljeitü's funerary complex, although not necessarily formal ones. Blair (1986), p. 145, observes: "The Safavids and Mughals further refined the Eight Paradise plan in buildings such as the tomb of Humāyūn and the Taj Mahal, but the imperial mausoleum with an eight-fold plan in a garden setting goes back to Ilkhanid Iran." *Rawḍa* is also, of course, the word for a tomb, and the one commonly used to designate imperial Mughal mausolea.

75. There existed examples of this typology closer in time and space to the Mughals, and almost identical in size: the tombs of their Sur rivals (one of them unfinished). These were the latest representatives of a tradition that closely follows the Iranian examples, and dates back at least to the 14th century; for a comprehensive survey, see Nath (1978), pp. 84-95. Lowry, "Humayun's Tomb" (1987), pp. 137-8, interprets the "impressive dimensions of Humayun's tomb" (over 47 metres wide and 42 metres high as against 37 by 41 of Öljeitü's mausoleum and 41 by 45.5 of Sher Shah's) as "a direct response to the vision of kingship expressed by these monuments and as an affirmation of the Mughals' power and permanent presence in India." Although there is no direct evidence that the Indian tombs belonging to this typology were the object of pilgrimage or had saintly connotations, their form suggests that this may have been the case; moreover, a Sur tomb of a different type is known to have been charged with a saintly aura, cf. Asher (1988), p. 91.

76. Cf. Blair (1987), Cat. No. 2: "he who seeks knowledge in the defense (?) of Islam ...;" Cat. No. 51a: "The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him salvation, said: Seeking knowledge is the duty of every Muslim, male and female." See also Blair (1987): Cat. Nos. 51a, 46, 48, 49c, 49d. Despite the fragmentary state of the mausoleum's decorations, Blair (1987) was able to reconstruct a coherent and organically structured epigraphic program, containing references to contemporary historical circumstances.

77. Parodi (2001); see also Parodi (2000), for the same themes recurring in the Taj Mahal.

78. Kashani, cited in Blair (1987), p. 65.

79. Blair (1987), p. 71.

80. Cf. the illustration in Creswell (1932), Fig. 22. For a possible link with God's throne, see Parodi (1994). A comparative analysis of the plans of other octagonal structures belonging to the same typology would not seem to have been attempted.

81. See Begley (1979) and its discussion in Parodi (2000), and also Begley & Desai (1989).

82. On the king's nature and role in the Altaic tradition, see Scharlipp (1992), pp. 62-67.

83. Koch, *Shah Jahan* (1991).

84. Koch, *Shah Jahan* (1991), p. 24. The quotation is from Nizamuddin Ahmad, cited in Koch (1993), p. 13.

85. *Jahāngīrnāma* (English), reproduced with Persian integrations in Koch (1993), p. 9.

86. Cited in Koch, *Shah Jahan* (1991), p. 24.

87. Parodi (2002), p. 185, with illustrations.

88. Schwarz (2000), pp. 198-99.

89. *Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh* II, pp. 266. Dr Schwarz—whom I take the opportunity to thank for reading the draft of this article and providing me with his valuable observations—pointed out to me that the first Manghit khans of Bukhara would also, later, feature *qibla gāh* among their titles. I think the origin of this idea may ultimately be traced back to the Ilkhans after their conversion to Islam: compare the instances of Ilkhanid royal tombs situated behind the *qibla* wall of a mosque, allegedly "to obtain maximum exposure to the blessings of those praying there," Blair (1986), p. 142. What Bartol'd-Rogers (1973), p. 85, remarks about the 19th-century emirs of Bukhara and khans of Khiva is also interesting: apparently, they used to take wives "sometimes even forcibly, from among the descendants of the Prophet, in order that their heirs might be able to include 'Sayyid' among their titles." This is not unlike the "sanctity" attributed to Humayun and Akbar in consequence of their mothers' descent from Jami.

90. Lowry, "Urban Structures" (1987), p. 33.

91. Lowry (1983), p. 16.

92. I have elsewhere proposed and discussed this idea (Parodi 1997-98), which I hope to develop in a future article.

93. On the importance of Sultaniya as a formal and ideological prototype for Timur's Samarqand, see Blair (1986), p. 151.

94. For this latter aspect, see Koch (1993). Only those family members most closely connected with Babur, like his son Hindal (who died in Kabul in 958/1551) and the latter's daughter Ruqayya Begam (d. 1035/1626), are buried alongside him, see Parodi (1997-98, p. 11, with bibliography). True, Babur's tomb lies somewhat out of reach, in Kabul. Although this is likely the result of his relics' removal from their original burial place (in Agra) during the Mughals' exile from Hindustan of 947-962/1540-55, the possibility that the choice to leave Babur's remains in Kabul was instrumental to a deliberate policy of diffusion of imperial charisma is suggested by the Mughal practice of building imperial tombs near the main cities, moving the court away from them each time, Parodi (1997-98). I presented some new ideas on Babur's tombs in Agra and Kabul at the 6th International Conference of Iranian Studies (Vienna, 19 September, 2007), and hope to publish them soon. Humayun's relics, in their turn, were removed from their temporary burial in Delhi during the first, troubled years of his son's reign (*Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh* III, p. 269): Akbar's visit to the burial of Humayun, then in Sirhind (Panjab), is recorded in *Akbarnāma* (English), fol. 66, II, 102.

95. Humayun fell from the stairs of his library and died a few days later. The accident is related in *Akbarnāma* (Persian), fol. 363, I, 533; *Akbarnāma* (English), I, pp. 656-57.

96. Cf. Richards (1993), pp. 13-19.

97. It is perhaps no coincidence that the keyword of Akbar's political manifesto, *Dīn*, had appeared before in the name of his father's capital, Dīnpanāh, a name whose implications have not as yet been fully investigated.

98. Cf. *Bāburnāma* (Chagatai-English), III, fol. 342b, p. 729, and Asher (1992), pp. 25-30, respectively.

99. Christensen (1936), p. 372, remarks that the latter is but a legendary feature: although widely popular in the Islamic world, it has no ground in contemporary sources. According to Ibn Battuta, Iltutmish, the Mu'izzi sultan of Delhi (r. 606-632/1210-1235), had had two lion statues installed at his gate, with bells hanging from their necks, for the same purpose (*Riḥla*, p. 33). For Humayun's institutions, see the *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī* (Persian), fol. 72 ff., pp. 283 ff., *Qānūn-i Humāyūnī* (English), pp. 50 ff. (clothes) and 113 (salutation of the Sun and Moon, and Drum of Justice).

100. Szuppe (1992), p. 148.

101. *Akbarnāma* (Persian), fol. 206, I, p. 306; *Akbarnāma* (English), I, p. 419.

102. See note 58.

103. "The [...] renewer of the marks of perfection, renewer of the phases of prosperity, a *ṣāḥibqirān*, a Humāyūn in pomp, displacer of the glories of Kisrā and Caesar [...], the heaven-exalted king of Kisrā's dignity" (for the full inscriptional cycle of Akbar's tomb, with Persian text and translation, see Smith (1909), pp. 31-35). Humayun's sword, along with Akbar's own turban, moreover, constitutes the royal insignia given by Akbar to his successor Prince Salim on his deathbed, Richards (1993), p. 35.

104. Cf. Bernardini (1994) and Subtelny (1997) respectively.

105. Compare Fig. 1 with the illustration in Lentz & Lowry (1989), fig. 3.

106. Critchlow (1976), pp. 154-5.

107. See Bernardini (1995) and Critchlow (1976), p. 16, respectively.

108. Petruccioli (1988), p. 165.

109. Babur himself testifies that the Timurids believed in the auspiciousness of this number (cf. *Bāburnāma* [Chagatai-English], fol. 81b, I, English, p. 164; Chagatai, I, p. 165. and *passim*).

Fig. 1 The Tomb of Humayun: south facade of the mausoleum (photograph: L. E. Parodi 1995)

Fig. 2 The Tomb of Humayun: west gateway with the dome of the mausoleum in the distance (photograph: L. E. Parodi 1995)

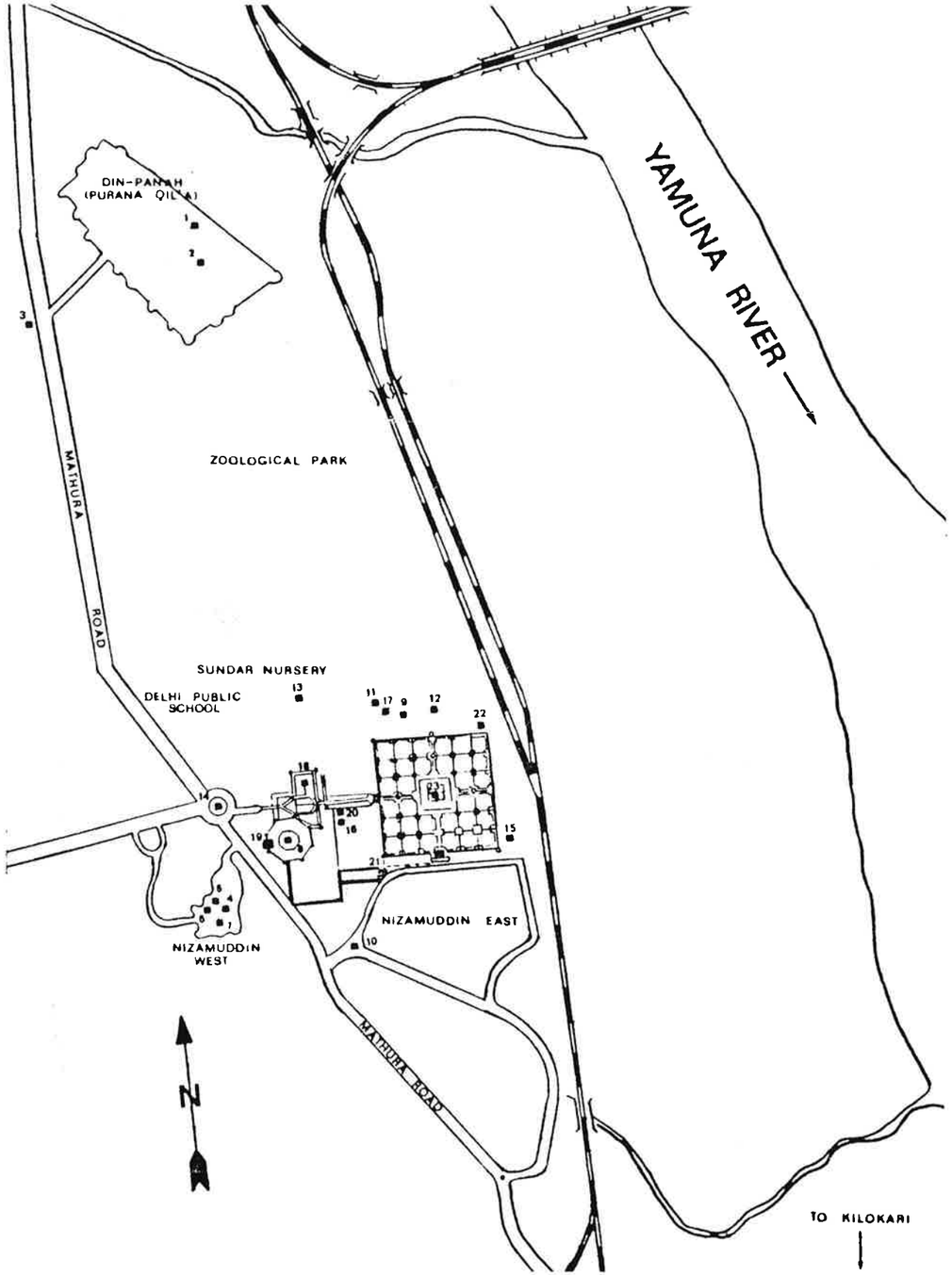

Fig. 3 The Nizamuddin area
(from Lowry, "Humayun's Tomb," 1987, fig. 1)

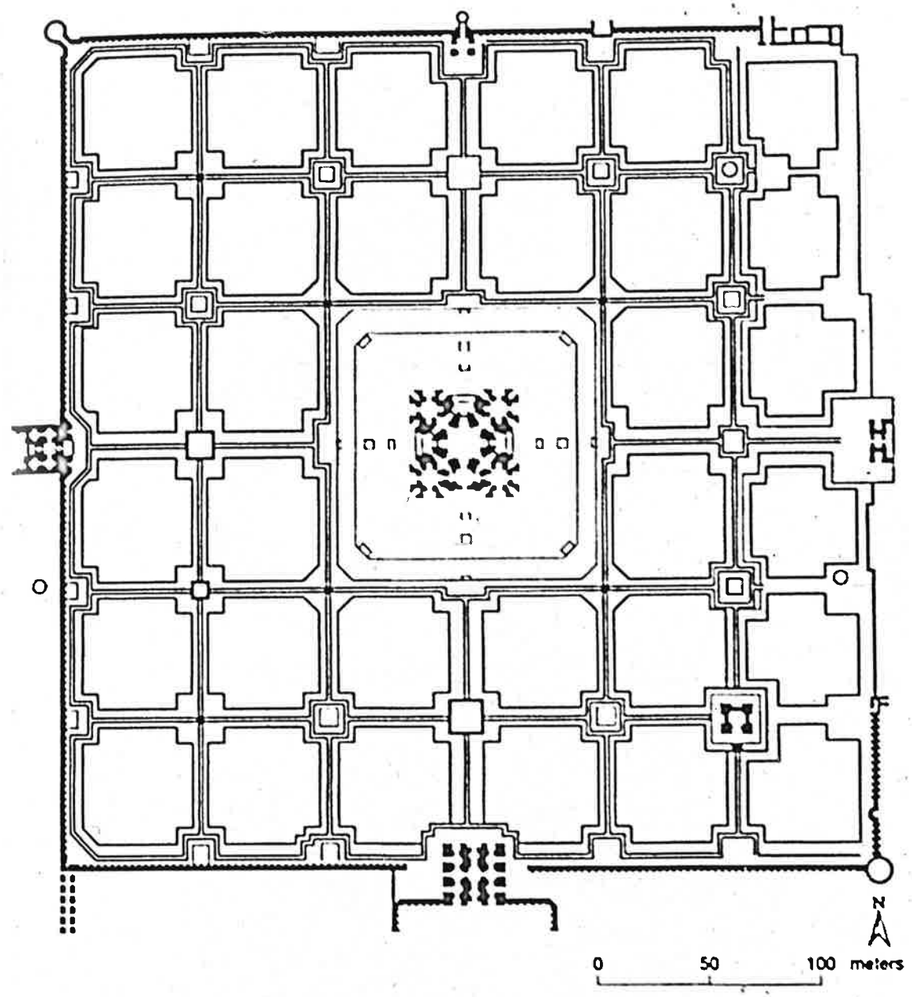

Fig. 4 The Tomb of Humayun: plan of the complex
(from Parodi 1997/98, adapted from a plan by the Archaeological Survey of India)

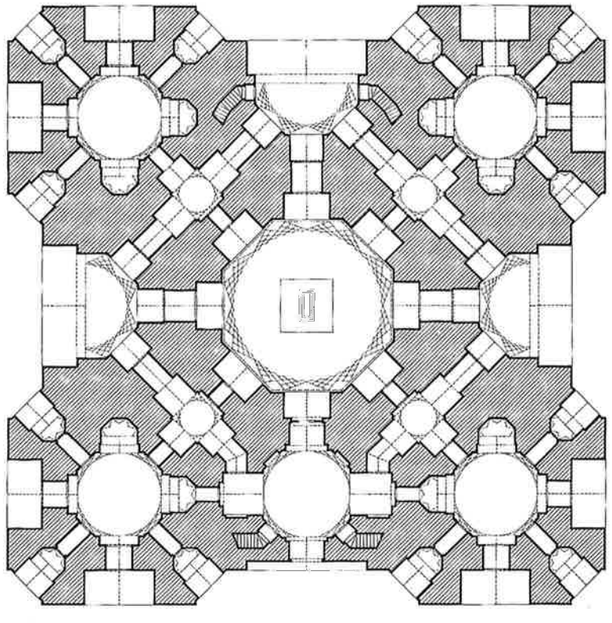

Fig. 5 The Tomb of Humayun: plan of the mausoleum
(from Koch, *Mughal Architecture*, 1991)

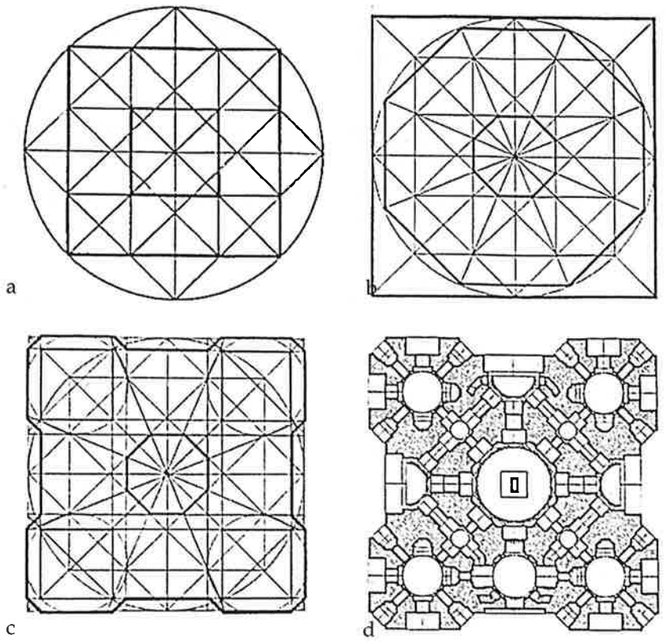

Fig. 6 Geometrical analysis of the mausoleum's plan
(from Parodi 1997/98; plan on the lower right from Koch, *Mughal Architecture*, 1991)

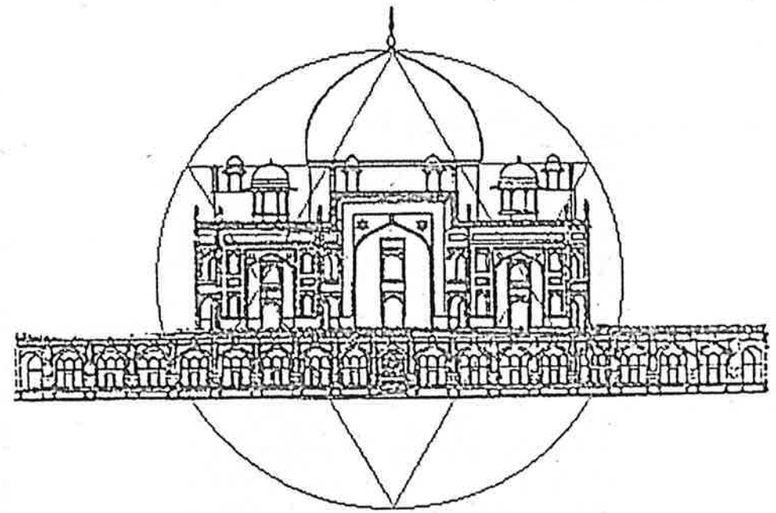

Fig. 7 Geometrical analysis of the mausoleum's elevation
(from Parodi 1997/98; elevation from Nath 1992)

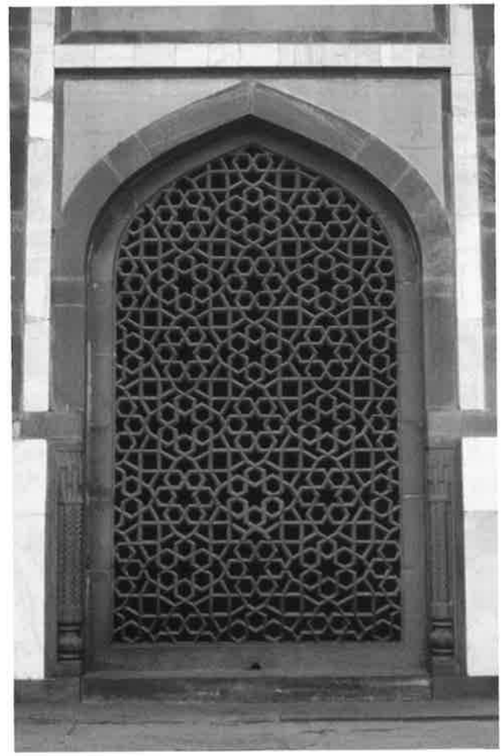

Fig. 8 A *jālī* (window-grille) in the mausoleum
(photograph: L.E. Parodi 1995)

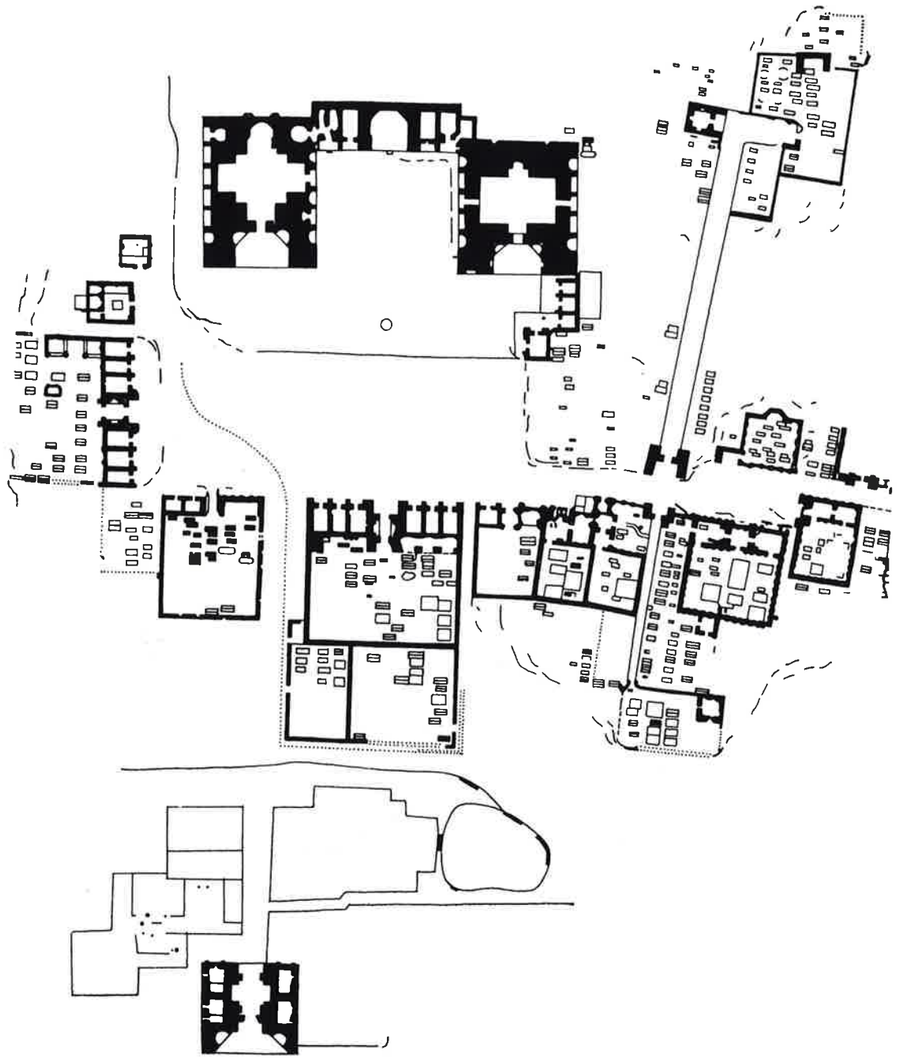

Fig. 9 Plan of the Char-Bakr Shrine, Bukhara
(from Blair & Bloom 1994)

THE TURKISH ROOM AT SLEDMERE HOUSE: MARK SYKES AND THE EARLY 20TH-CENTURY TILE-MAKERS OF KÜTAHYA

Lavinia Davies*

For Ralph Pinder-Wilson
1919-2008

The Turkish Room at Sledmere House in Yorkshire is an important example of an "Islamic" interior in the British Orientalist tradition of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was created by Sir Mark Sykes in the years immediately preceding the First World War. The room was originally designed to be the cooling room of an elaborate Turkish bath, the rest of which was only partially completed owing to the outbreak of the war and Sykes's death in 1919.

Situated as it is among a suite of reception rooms on the ground floor, the room seems a startling addition to what would otherwise appear to be a traditional English country house of the late 18th century. Sledmere House in the East Riding of Yorkshire (Pl. XXXIIIA, Figs. 1-2) was built by Richard Sykes in 1751 and extensively remodelled by his grandson Sir Christopher Sykes, the second baronet, between 1781-90, with important Neoclassical interiors by the English stuccoist, Joseph Rose. However, in 1911 the house went up in flames; when the fire had subsided only its shell remained. The house was insured and the family decided to recreate—as far as possible—the old 18th-century house, retaining the surviving walls. The Yorkshire architect Walter Brierley, whose practice descended from that of the 18th-century architect John Carr of York, was assigned the task of rebuilding and modernising the original plan. Because of the great age of his father, Sir Tatton Sykes, Mark Sykes took over most of the responsibility for the rebuilding, and throughout the six years of its construction, contributed many suggestions for improving and embellishing the house, among which was the idea of a Turkish bath: an idea with which he had already experimented at another house on the estate at Sledmere.

The fashion for "Islamic" interiors in Victorian Britain reached its peak during the second half of the 19th century. These were the years of Britain's expansion in the East and the advent of the great international exhibitions offering new perspectives on foreign lands and their cultures. With new opportunities for long-distance travel, views of Middle Eastern architecture and interiors became known through travelogues and the works of contemporary Orientalist painters and designers, such as John Frederick Lewis and Owen Jones. Orientalist imagery had long associated the Islamic interior with notions of relaxation and entertainment such as smoking and bathing, and the "Islamic" style became a popular decorative theme for some of the special rooms of recreation proliferating in the large houses of the day, particularly in the male domain of smoking and billiards.

Tiled rooms were one feature of the Orientalist repertory. Usually designed by contemporary fashionable architects, they varied, from rooms incorporating genuine antique Islamic pieces, as in the Arab Hall at Leighton House in London, to those designed and made by English manufacturers inspired by Persian, "Moorish," Ottoman or Indian originals. The tiled room of 1871 at Hertford House in London by Minton, Hollins and Co. is an early example; now the Wallace Collection, only a small portion of this room is still intact.