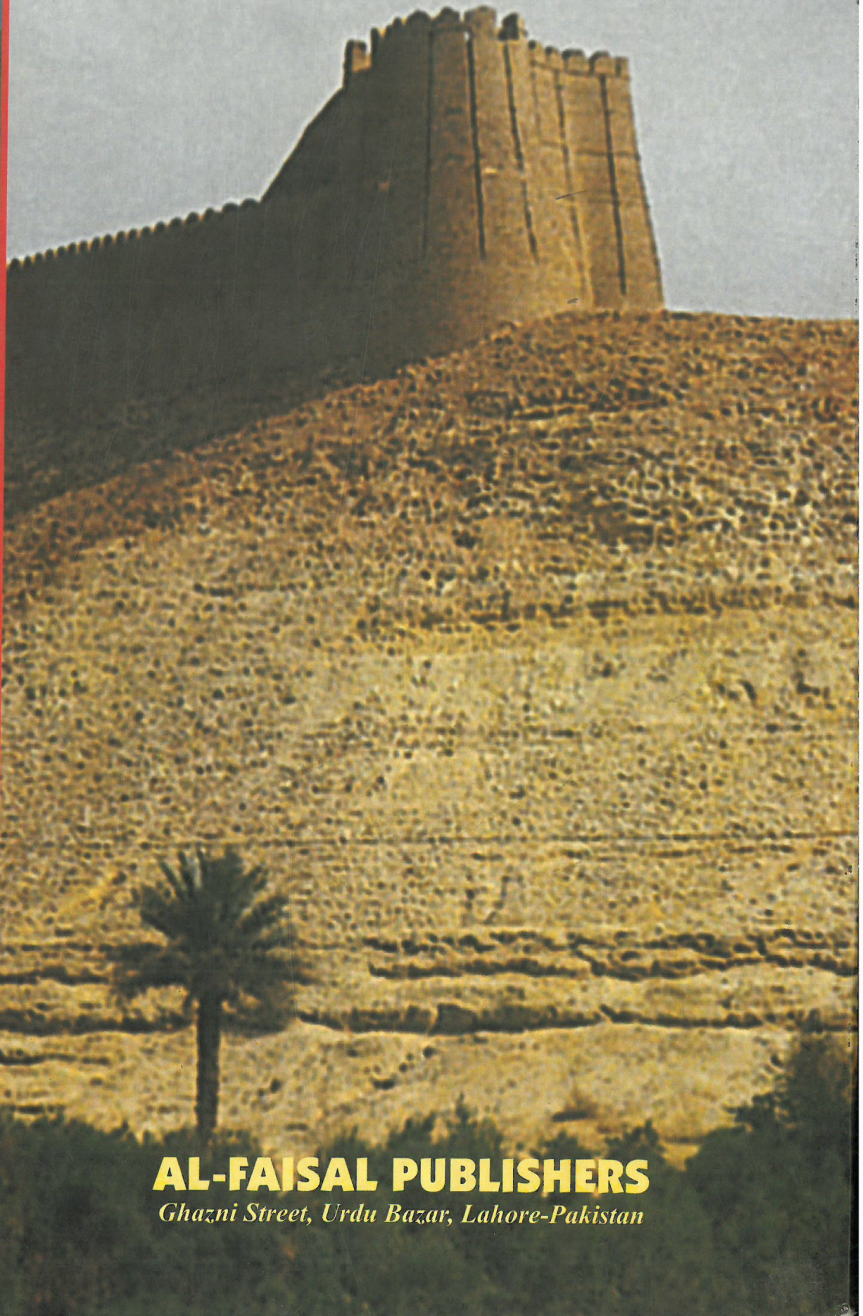
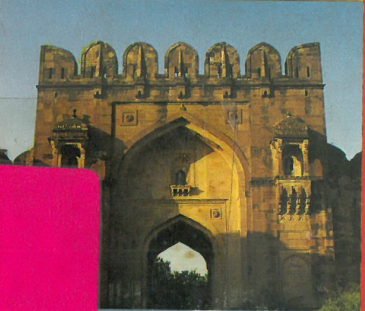
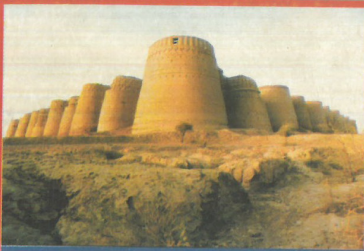


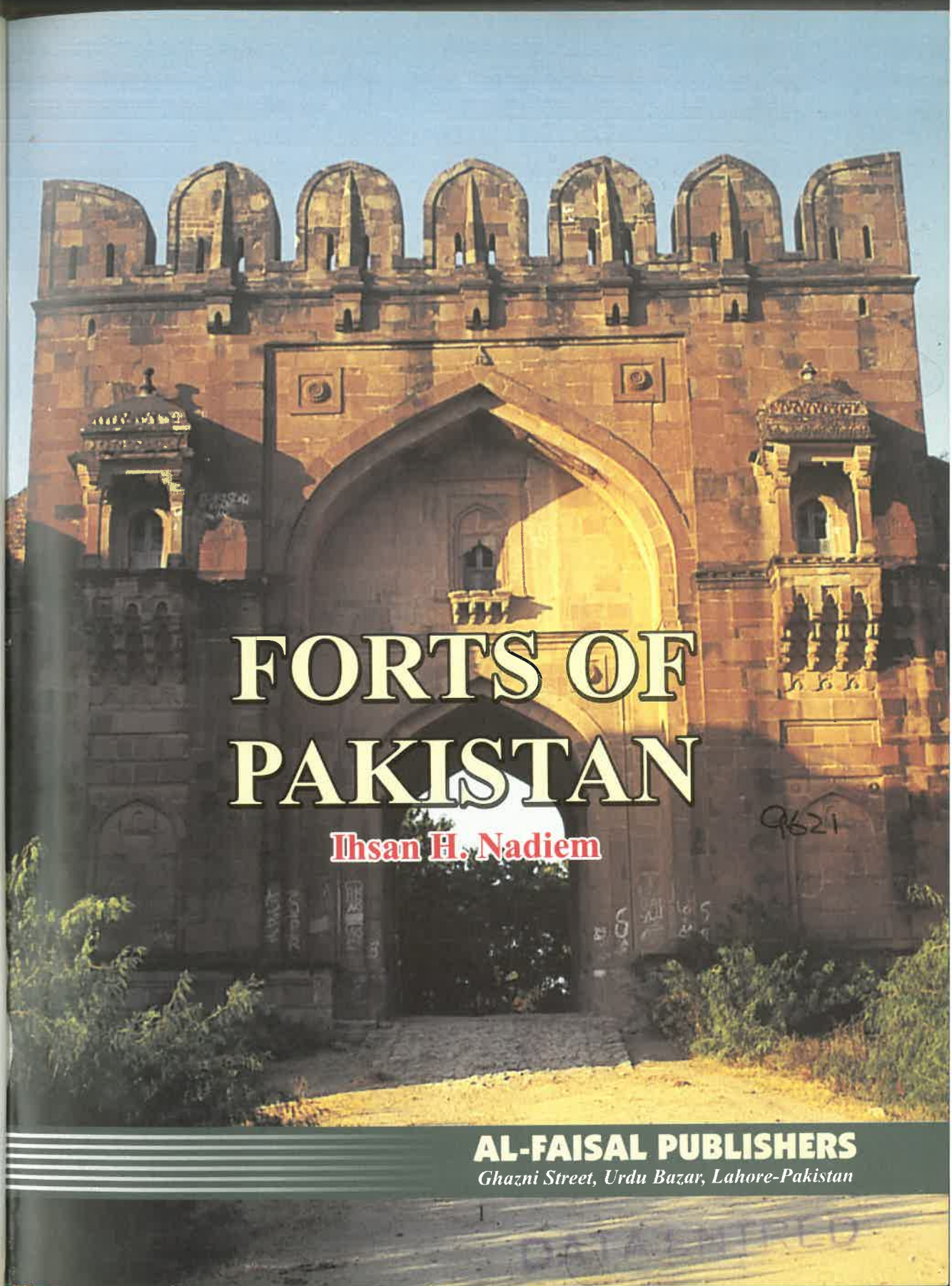
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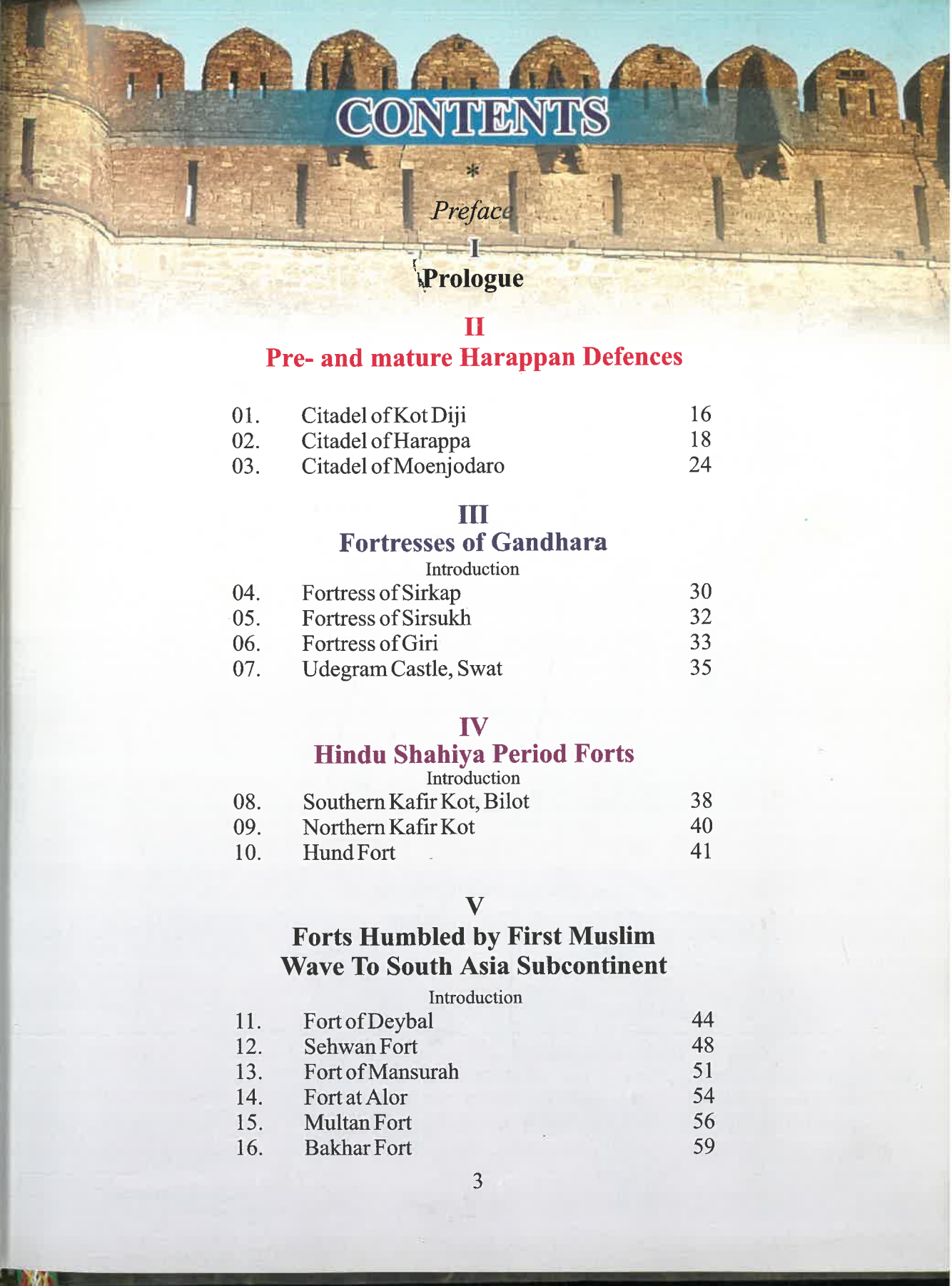


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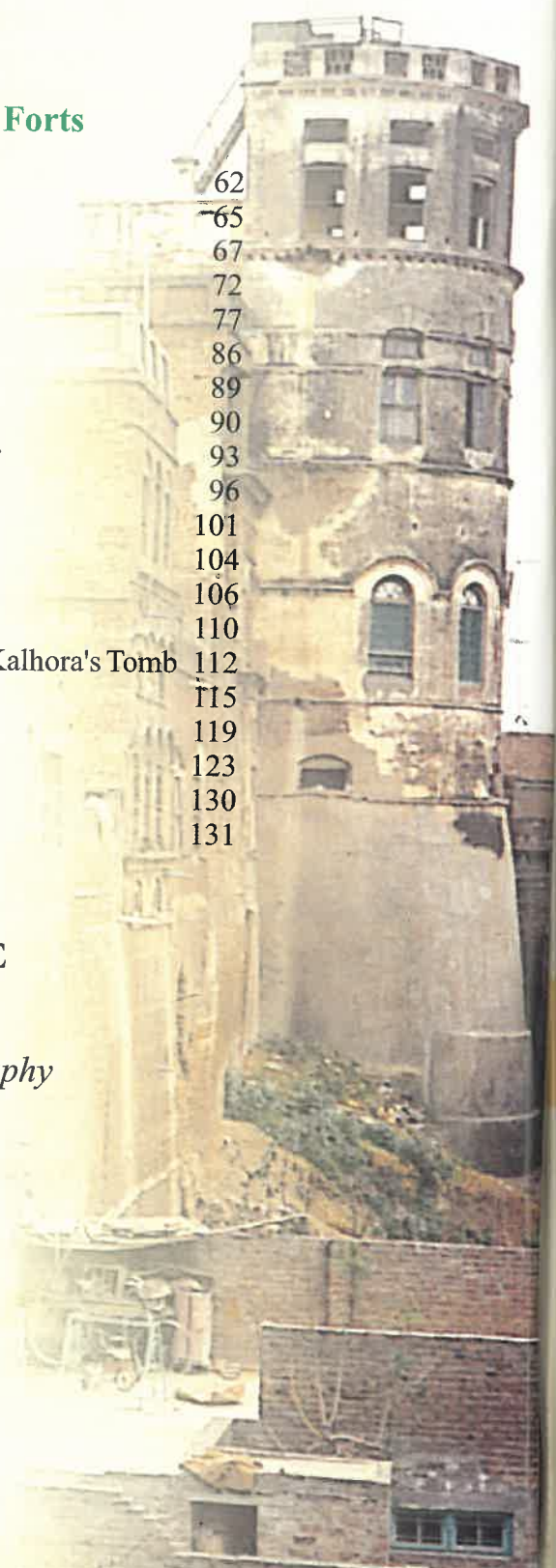
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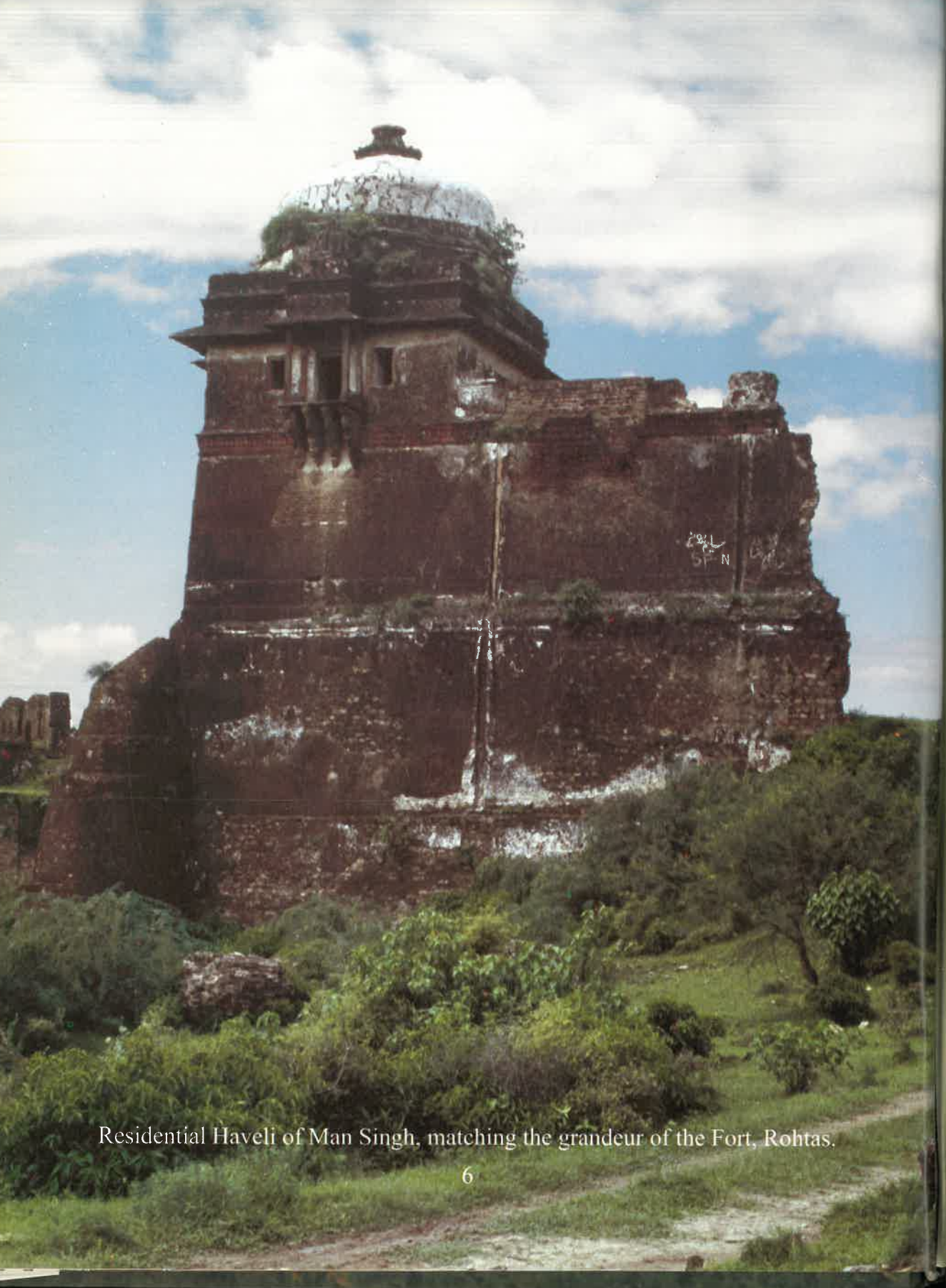
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To My Children:
**Asem, Iram, Asef
&
Masuma, Shama**





Residential Haveli of Man Singh, matching the grandeur of the Fort, Rohtas.

PREFACE

I was especially attracted to the forts of Pakistan when many years ago I was working on my research paper on Rohtas Fort. It was then that I faced numerous difficulties because of the dearth of literature on the subject. This situation gave me the necessary impetus to jot down notes and prepare other illustrative material on the more important or representative buildings of this genre whenever I had the opportunity to visit one. This collection went on building up though in frequent shifting of my residences under the compulsion of service postings, I lost or could not keep in trim condition some of the photographs/transparencies. For this deficiency I had to go through a repetitive effort or got the desired results with the help of some good friends.

Although it is almost impossible to pinpoint the exact location of the earliest of the forts in the world, as seen in the modern sense of the word, yet there is a general notion that this type of structure remained more favourite with the rulers in the Asian region. This could probably account for the presence of the largest number of forts and fortifications in the Continent of Asia. It is also true that some of the earliest strongholds of the world have also been discovered as result of archaeological digs in this region.

The book, under prologue, gives a very concise history of the category of fort, although it is a subject worth tackling in a much wider context and over full volumes. The individual articles then examine the major historical and regional traditions of fort architecture, spanning over some five thousand years and encompassing almost all parts of Pakistan.



The forts, or fortresses, having their place in the following treatise are found today in their physical form, either excavated from under tons of earth or simply lying above ground. But by no means they are the only ones that exist in the country. In fact the whole of Pakistan is literally strewn with remains or buildings representing forts. However, the accounts of only those have been included here as were found more representatives in the context of geographical, historical or architectural perspective.

Here it would also be relevant to note that the forts in this treatise follow a loose chronology and are mentioned in ascending order that is starting from the earliest to the latest periods. Some of these forts in their present shape do not necessarily belong to the period as they were first founded. In such cases effort has been made to reckon their date of origin to set their order, though the description matches best their present condition.



The exercise made me to sit hours on my computer to write, as far as possible, a comprehensive treatise on these Forts covering whole of Pakistan. The other consideration here was to keep each essay in concise shape and simple form by avoiding unnecessary verbosity and high technical jargon.

In the writing and publishing of this book many a friend lent a helping hand and provided support to give a boost to my morale to start working on, and completing, this not-so-easy a task. I thus feel it my duty to record here my gratitude to all of them, foremost among them being Mohammad Faisal, who took extra interest in publishing it on an attractive format. I am also thankful to Agha Nisar for the pains he took in designing the book.

As said earlier, most of the photographs appearing in the book are my own love's labour while some other friends have helped me fill in the missing gaps or augment the readily available material. Abdul Rehman of the University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, loaned me transparencies showing Gujrat Fort, Giri Fort, Dipalpur Fort and a general view of the Southern Kafir Kot out of his collection. Similarly, Shoukat Hussain Shoro, Director of the Institute of Sindhology, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, was kind enough to provide some photographs out of which I could make use of only one, each under Sehwan Fort and Katcha Qal'a, Hyderabad. One of the photographs illustrating Sehwan came to me through the courtesy of Qasim Ali Qasim, Director of Archaeology, Southern Circle, Hyderabad. A part of the photographic coverage of Attock Fort was made possible by M. A. Halim, retired Director of Archaeology, Pakistan. Aasim Dogar took the trouble of providing me a couple of fresh photographs of the gate of the Citadel of Harappa. Jonathan Mark Kenoyer allowed me to use a couple of images from their Harappa Project. Meeran Jan Kakar, DCO, Kharan, helped me in a special way by providing fresh photographs of Kharan Fort. Like always, Taj Ali, Professor of Archaeology in the Peshawar University, also gave a positive response to my request. I feel much indebted to all these friends.

I am also thankful to M. Rafique Dogar, who very willingly gave time to discuss many a point arising out of my study of forts. He also made available some of the photographs of the Forts of Cholistan other than the ones of Derawar, which were taken by me on one of the visits.

I shall fail in my duty if I do not mention the name of my friend, Fidaullah Sehrai, whose time I have been encroaching upon to discuss the subject especially with reference to the Gandharan region. I am obliged to him too.

No less I am thankful to my family members, Suraiya, Asem, Iram and Asef who bore with patience my sojourns to these places. On most of these trips they accompanied me and helped me in many ways. The families of my sons, Masuma and Shama along with Ujala, Zoya and Ayesha also deserve my heartfelt thanks for giving me strength with their words and actions.

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Dated the 10th January, 2003.

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Hedge around habitations, probably the primitive concept of fortification.

PROLOGUE

The encyclopaedia defines a fort or a fortress as a place that is strengthened against attack. The primary aim in fortifying a fixed position is to erect a physical barrier that cannot be suddenly overrun and that is strong enough to enable the defending power to hold the position for a period of time.

The idea of fort was perhaps born with the first man on earth. It was the instinct of his remaining safe and secure, first from the wild animals of the wilderness where he spent his days and nights and then from fellow men as he progressed and had diversified nature of interests. The first fort must have been built in the shape of a hedge put before the cave of that early Stone Age. He then learnt to improve upon it as he developed his skills towards the civil society that he was obliged to live in at a much later date.



As he started 'building' his thatched houses, he would put a hedge of tree- or bush-branches around it, certainly to fortify his fixed position. Then he must have also learnt to have this hedge of greener stuff to avoid its burning by the attacking forces. With the invention of mud-houses, this hedge was changed into a mud-wall that served well as defence.

With further material progress in society the mud-defences were thought to be inadequate as they were prone to fast deterioration or easy to be breached. As such the use of mud-bricks and then burnt bricks became vogue. In many cases the use of burnt-brick faces with mud or mud-brick core was thought to be more effective, or at least caused a cut on the expenses without compromising on its efficacy. To enhance the impregnability of such defences stones were also brought into use where possible. To make the defence system doubly secure, moats (*khandaq*) were also dug around the fortification walls, usually filled with water to make access of the attacking army more difficult.

Defence works are reckoned to be of two types; they may be permanent or temporary in nature. Those of the permanent character would include city walls, the forts and castles of the proto-historic to the Middle Ages, and the frontier fortresses and harbour defences of relatively modern times. The construction of permanent defensive works resulted from the need of protecting the political, economic, or military interests associated with a particular locality. The necessity for development of temporary or field fortification arose during wars to meet the tactical requirements in the field. Here the trenches dug to considerable depth, or additionally filled with water also came to serve the same purpose of defence construction.

The attack on and defence of masonry structures whether city walls, isolated forts and castles or extensive barriers, to serve as defences involved three basic concepts that remained unaltered until the age of gunpowder. In order to reach the defenders, the attackers had to scale the wall, break a passage through it, or tunnel underneath it. The techniques of siege warfare were directed toward the accomplishment of these aims, singly or simultaneously, and the techniques of fortification were aimed at preventing such accomplishment.

'These opposing techniques interacted, with fortifiers seeking to build the impregnable fortress while besiegers strove to develop the irresistible siege; the effectiveness with which these aims were pursued varied widely through history'. While selecting a site for the city the first consideration thus was its natural defensive strength, which could have been met by a high ground, water-barrier or formidability because of the hilly or arduous terrain. One of the most crucial requirements at the site of a fort was a regular supply of water to ensure self-sufficiency during a siege, which could last for months. The planner in the past gave great weight to the availability of this life-sustaining element. As such wells or efficient reservoir system, to store water for a longer period of time was a must to be planned along with the building of the defences. The sources of water were the secrets well guarded from the enemy lest they deceitfully poisoned it.

The forts and fortresses could have been constructed to serve one or all of the basic three aims of a fortified fixed place. It could serve as Military Stronghold, for the use of the armed forces to defend the country either on its borders or through the projected route of enemy. The best example of this type of forts is the Rohtas Fort in Jhelum district. The Residential or Palace forts were constructed at places where the monarch or the chiefs resided permanently or camped periodically while on the move within their territory, for example the Lahore Fort. The caravanserais, especially

fortified, were constructed on the caravan routes where security of the campers and traders would have been at stake because of the surrounding country. The best example of the last type can be seen in the forts or fortresses of the Cholistan desert. This type of the forts was also well suited to serve as military outposts and halting places for the functionaries on their tours to administer the affairs of the state.

Throughout the historic period the forts and fortified settlements have been regarded as the mighty symbol of authority and reflected on the strength of a ruler to overawe enemies within and without. Such type of architecture was the direct result of the anxiety of the kings, chiefs or important individuals about political and personal security. If it was not the threat of war, siege or invasion from the outside enemies, it was the constant fear of intrigue that might lead to assassination and military coup. The kings and chiefs thus laid much emphasis on constructing huge, impregnable or formidable forts. The history, however, tells that they gave a sense of security perhaps more than the security itself.

There are numerous references to forts and fortifications in ancient and mediaeval literature in the South Asia Subcontinent. The *Vedic* period *Rgveda Samhita* speaks of some tribes who were living within the fortifications which it calls as *Pur*. This word has been assigned the meaning of 'earthworks strengthened by stone walls'. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* also contain accounts of forts, and the *puranas* state that the rampart and ditch are vital elements in the fortifications of a castle'.

The Holy Quran says in *Surah* (Chapter) 77, *Ayah* (Verse) 32, [translation] "Indeed it throws about sparks (huge) as forts". It is a clear reference to the awesome nature of any such construction. The *Aiteraya Brahmana* also refers to the three *agnis*, or fires, as three forts, which prevent the *asuras* from disturbing the sacrifice. Still at another place the Holy Quran mentions of forts as amongst things of boon and bounty. [Translation] "And remember how He made you inheritors after the 'Ad people and gave you habitations in the land: ye build for yourselves palaces and forts in (open) plains and carve out homes in the mountains; so bring to remembrance the benefits (ye have received) from Allah and refrain from evil and mischief on the earth." (Surah 7, Ayah 74)

The Hindu term of *durg* also stands for fort or a place difficult to trespass, which signifies the importance of the fortification wall with or without a moat but built as an impregnable site. The *durgs* are divided in to six types mainly on the basis of their location or material with which these were built. These may be enumerated as 'the *dhanva durg* or desert fort; the *mahi durg* or mud fort; the *jala durg* or water fort; the *giri durg* or hill fort; the *vriksha* or *vana durg*, or forest fort; and the *nara durg* or the fort protected by men'.

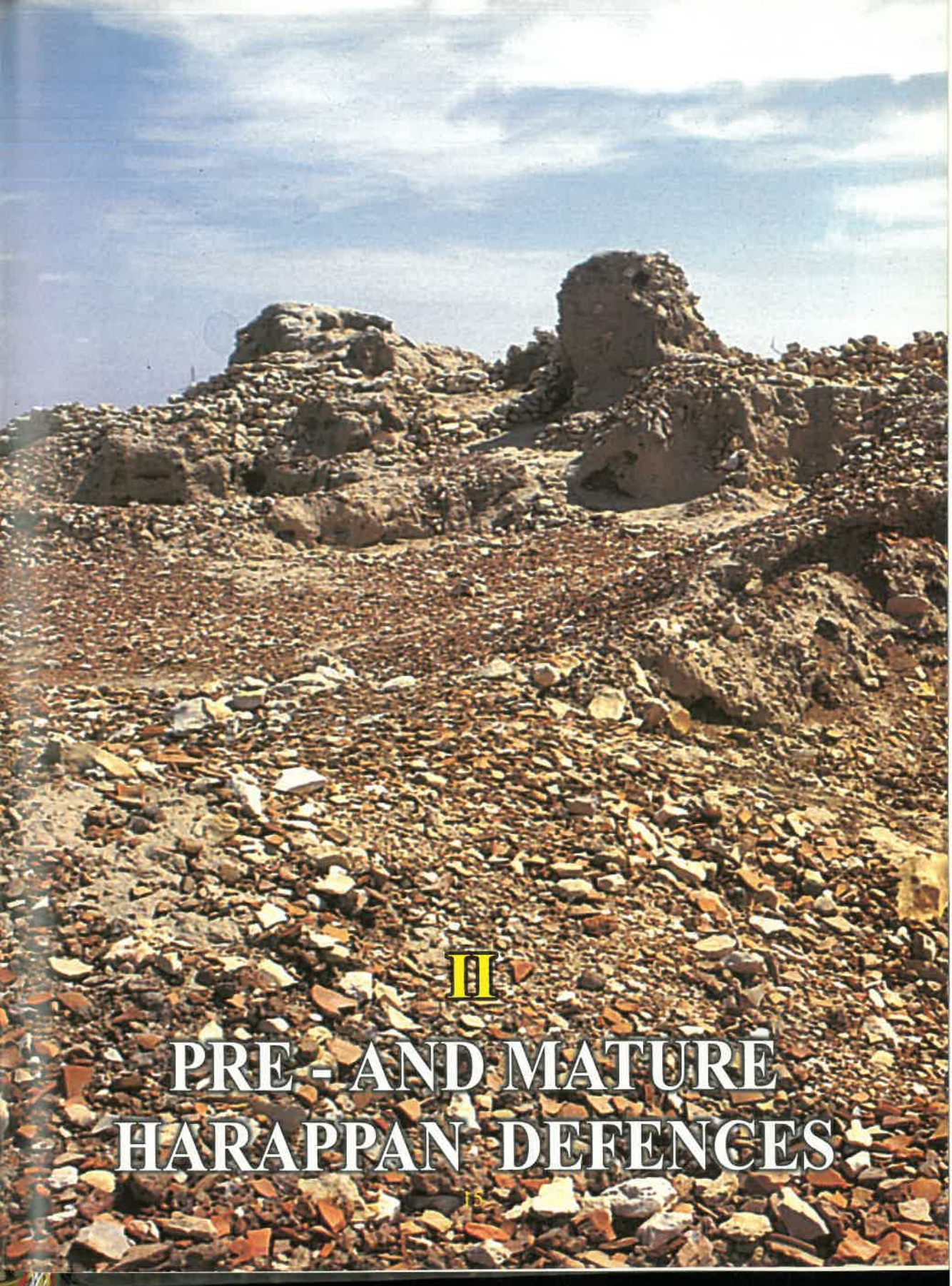
With the discovery of gunpowder the fort as a great invention of mediaeval times had to undergo some changes in its construction planning. The use of cannons to breach impregnability of a fortification only went to further strengthen its defence and the art of offence and defence changed accordingly.

The art of modern warfare with its enhanced capability of artillery and very effective air and missile power has greatly undermined the effectiveness of the forts and fortifications as seen in the historic context. It is, therefore, now rare that any of such a type of construction would have come up in the whole of Pakistan in the recent past.

Forts of Pakistan



Note: The numerals refer to S. Nos. of the forts in the text.



II

PRE - AND MATURE HARAPPAN DEFENCES

Citadel of Kot Diji

Although architectural activity in Pakistan has been proved to have started in the eighth millennium BC at the site of Mehrgarh in Balochistan yet the presence of any defence wall in the modern sense of the word could not be found in that remote period. However, at the beginning of Period II (c.5500 BC) at the same site, some major tectonic event seems to have taken place. This resulted in almost completely burying the original area of the Period I. The architectural operations in the Period II continued on the pattern of the earlier phase. During this period the presence of the remains of several massive walls and platforms suggests something approaching monumental architecture. These, though, could not be termed as the defences in the absence of any other evidence towards that end.

At somewhat the same period, agricultural settlements began to spread more widely in the Indus Valley itself. The next distinguished culture was recognised for the first time on excavating the site of Kot Diji in Khairpur district of Sindh. The site lies about 25 kilometres south of the town of Khairpur Mirs', on the right side of the National Highway while going towards Karachi, across the road from a Talpur Fort of the eighteenth-century AC. This ancient site has an important place in the annals of the archaeological excavations in Pakistan as it yielded clue to the period immediately preceding the mature phase of the Indus Valley Civilisation and the remains of the earliest of the citadels in the whole region of South Asia.



ANCIENT SITE Kot Diji



Remains of Ramparts

The site, though not expansive in dimensions, stands on a prominent ground east of the Indus River, almost opposite to the metropolis of Moenjodaro. It measures about 183 metres by 122 metres, rising to a height of a little over 12 metres from the level plain around it. The spot consists of the remains of a high citadel mound and a lower city. The archaeological excavations were carried out at the site during two seasons in 1955 and 1956 under the directions of F.A. Khan. The earliest settlement unearthed here has been assigned a date of 2900 BC, if not earlier. The date has since been confirmed through C-14 tests in the laboratory. The dig at the site brought out some of the characteristic features of the mature phases of the Indus Valley Civilisation (2500 - 1750 BC), especially the fortification wall and the distinctive cultural materials.

The deep excavations on the Citadel area, across the defence wall, brought to light twenty-nine layers associated with different building periods. The upper levels here represented a typical mature phase of the Harappan period while the lower levels consisting of the underlying accumulation, over 5 metres in thickness, separated by a thick layer of charred material, showed a completely different culture. This phase that came to be known as Kot Diji or early/pre-Harappan Culture because of its preceding the Great Civilisation was distinguished by a different type of ceramic industry.

From its upper layers extensive building remains with stone foundations and mud-brick superstructures, showing a well-regulated town planning, came to light. However, no signs of drains and entrances to the rooms were encountered. The building activity in the lower eleven occupation-layers, representing Kot Dijian levels, bore massive walls of mud and sun-dried mud bricks, again, on stone foundations. Some of the foundations were found to be as thick as to measure over 1.5 metres.

The ancient site of Kot Diji comprised a citadel where the ruling class lived, and an outer part of the city, which served the common populace. The foundation of the defence wall rested on the bedrock while its lower part was constructed with undressed limestone blocks in mud mortar, and the superstructure with sun-dried bricks. The outer face of the stone base of the defence wall was strengthened with a mud-brick revetment built with the foundation and surviving to the height of about 4.3 metres. The defence wall has been traced over a length of about 33 metres on the northern side. Here it rises to an average of 1.7 metres. The habitation quarters seem to have been built inside the citadel, also against the fortification, and on its top when it fell into disuse. The fortification wall does not seem to have been made use of during the mature period of the Indus Valley Civilisation.



Kot Diji: Section through fortification showing stone foundation and mudbricks superstructure

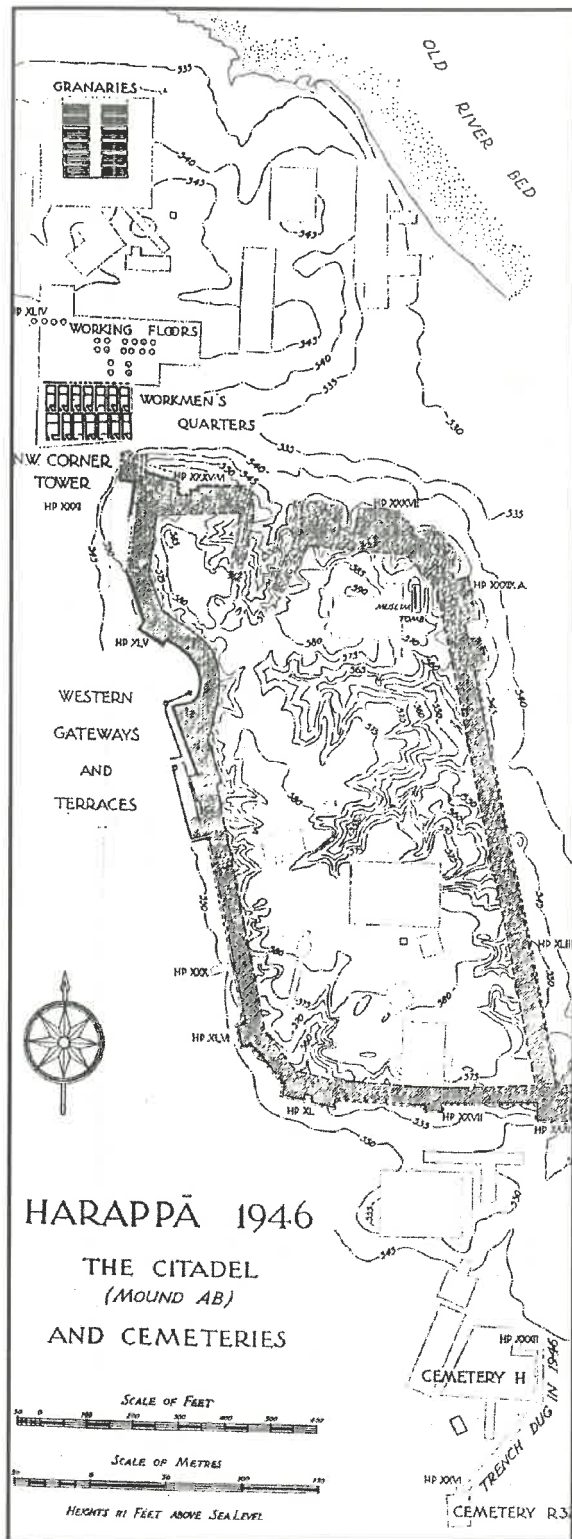
Citadel of Harappa

Harappa, a small town in the district of Sahiwal in Punjab, known earlier as Montgomery till 1966, does not merit very high except for its antiquity. It first attracted the attention of the scholarly world in 1831 AC when, during the British period, a European visitor, Charles Masson, thought of the huge mound lying here as the site of Sangala, the Capital of King Porus, whom Alexander the Great defeated in 326 BC..Some five years later the site was inspected by, again, a European archaeologist Sir Alexander Burns, who was the first to recognise its archaeological importance. Sir Alexander Cunningham of the Archaeological Survey of (British) India conducted here some archaeological excavations at a limited scale during 1872-73 AC. The site by then had been robbed of its burnt bricks to use as crush on the newly laid Lahore-Multan railway line. However, the remains of the city and the artefacts retrieved from here were enough to get it reckoned as the type-site of one of the greatest civilisations of the world known as the Harappan or Indus Valley Civilisation.



A view of the Gateway steps

The scientific diggings were commenced here only in 1921. These excavations took to the full-scale operations between 1923 and 1925 and again 1926 to 1934. Further excavations in 1937 and later in 1946 revealed additional features of the site. The Pakistan Department of Archaeology undertook a limited dig in 1966 concentrating only on the Harappan culture cemetery. Our knowledge of the site is far from complete although an American Archaeological team is excavating here from the beginning of the 1990s.



The earlier excavators were able to prove its contacts with dated phases of Mesopotamian Civilisation indicating that Harappa was a flourishing city even before 2350 BC. The discovery

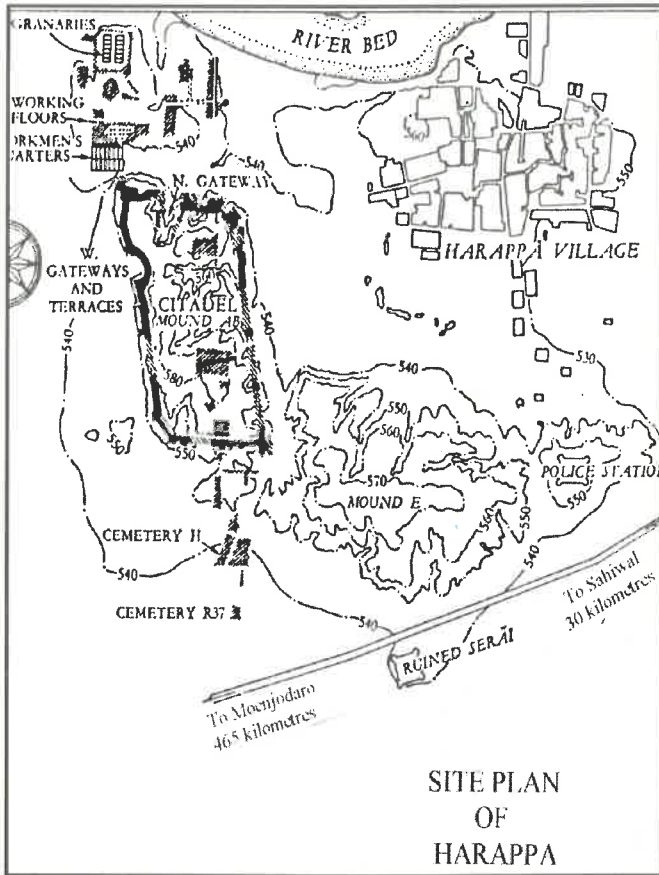
Startled the world as it rivalled with Mesopotamia and Egypt as the home of one of the oldest civilisations of the world.

The archaeologists discovered nine building periods in Harappa before it was finally abandoned around 1800 BC. A number of hypothetical reasons have been put forward by scientists as to the possible reasons of extinction of the Harappan people. The shifting course of the river Ravi and a consequent decline in material prosperity could be counted as most important among these causes. The striking dearth of assault weapons suggests their being peaceful people who might have not been able to withstand any outside invasion. In the absence of solid evidence it still poses an enigma as to the causes of the end of the Harappans, just as the problem of their early development has not yet been solved.

The remains of the city, about five kilometres in circuit, have been divided into two parts: lofty citadel Mound AB, towards west; and the lower part, though much extensive, known as Mound E, to the east, and mound F on the north.

One of the most outstanding features of the architecture of Harappa is its fortification wall which encloses a considerable area, technically known as the citadel mound, on the west of the site. The discovery of the presence of such an innovation in a site of remote antiquity pushed back the history of fortifications in South Asia Subcontinent considerably. It also added to the credibility of the Indus Valley Civilisation as wellknit, socially cultured and a defence-conscious society. This also negated the earlier notion about them as being passive and not well versed in the art of war.

The Citadel area roughly makes a parallelogram on the plan, measuring about 421 metres in length from north to south and nearly 197 metres in width from east to west. The area is presently lower in height in the



south, gradually rising towards north, the highest point being between 14 metres and 15 metres above the adjacent level ground. Unfortunately, the presence of a Muslim graveyard at this point did not let the archaeologists probe down under it thus hindering the knowledge to the true significance of the area.

The buildings inside the fortified area have been constructed over a platform made of mud and sun-dried clay bricks. It is raised to the height of 6-7.6 metres from the original ground level. The platform itself rests over the alluvial deposits caused by the floods in the river Ravi and some habitation layers cutting through these deposits. This only goes to denote the presence of earlier settlers who occupied the site before it was taken up by the Harappans of the mature period of the Indus Civilisation. The alluvial deposits and the occupational layers were also disturbed by the rain or floodwater. These furrows and cavities were filled up by the Indus people with mud-bricks before

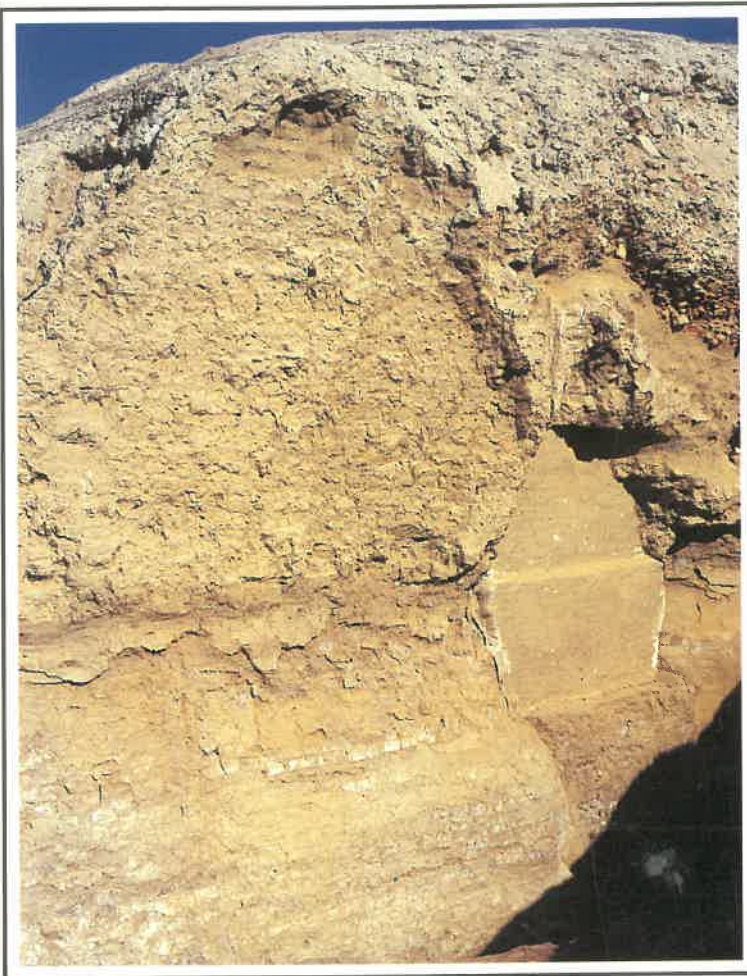
Embarking on the new construction. The fillings of these cuts with mud and mud-bricks were also carried out 'to form an anti-flood 'bolster' or *bund* (embankment) spreading protectively beyond the outer foot' of the great defence wall.

The fortification wall has a massive construction, nearly 13.7 metres in width at the base and decreasing gradually as it rises. The wall was found mainly constructed with mud bricks. The excavators observed from the remains that the back of the mud-brick wall at first was vertical, 'but insecurity quickly developed and a slope or batter was introduced during the work'. The wall of mud-bricks was provided with burnt-brick revetment externally. At the time of excavations this revetment measured a little over one metre at places where it was found preserved while at other places its remains were as thick as around or over 2 metres. The revetment also narrowed in thickness as it rose. As no bonds were found between the internal mud and mud-brick platform, this is obviously taken to be structurally secondary though contemporaneous with the fortification wall. The presence of at least six distinct phases of burnt-brick buildings, affecting plans, only goes to suggest its stretching over a considerable length of time.

The defence wall was provided with bastions at regular intervals. There are indications that some of them might have been higher than the fortification itself. The place of main entry to the fortress has not been encountered by the excavators who only conjecture it to be on the northern side where the place is marked with break in the mound. On the western side there also seems to be gates in the defence, which seems to have curved and stepped approach through the ramps. There is a bastion here, which overlooks the entry that might have been regularly guarded. The approach to the citadel from the adjoining plains through steps or stairs cannot be overruled as according to the excavators 'the Harappans were very familiar with the principle of the staircase'. Their opinion is further

corroborated by the fact that Sir Alexander Cunningham actually found steps on the eastern as well as western side of the Citadel Mound when he carried out a limited dig at the place during the nineteenth century.

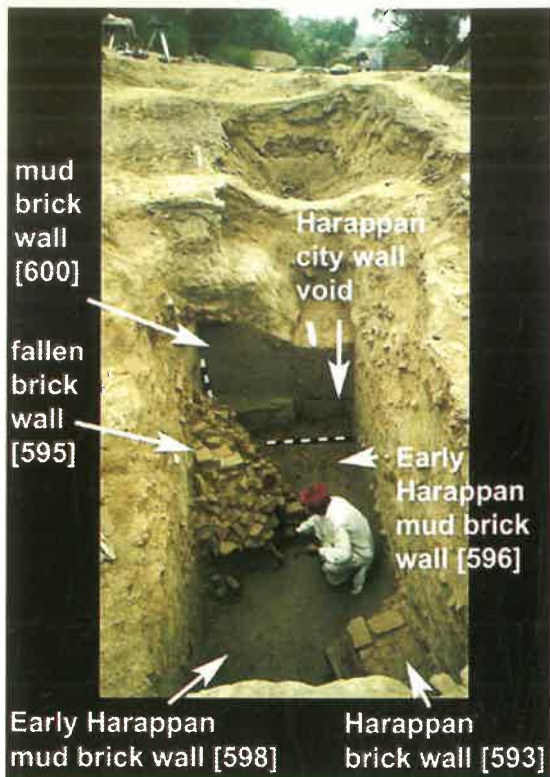
According to the excavator of 1946-operations, Sir Mortimer Wheeler, "the history of these defences was not a simple one. In addition to the 'village culture' found below them in the main section, at two points fragments of underlying baked-brick structures were also identified. Whilst, there is no indication of any lengthy settlement, there was certainly an appreciable antecedent phase. On the other hand, it seems probable that, as originally built, the defences of the citadel long remained untouched save by the weather, which wore and rounded the exposed surface of the baked-brick revetment to a very notable extent. This revetment has been built in the first instance of brickbats rather than whole bricks, and its construction was in marked contrast to that which at last replaced it. The old revetment, if it had not already fallen, was now pulled down to within half a dozen courses of its base, by this time doubtless below the ground-level, and was replaced by a new one, carefully built of whole bricks in the finest Harappan style".... "This excellent construction is particularly evident at the gateway in the curved re-entrant".... "and in the adjacent tower towards the north which was like-wise refaced. A third structural phase eventually followed: the defences of the north-west corner were enlarged, and the gateway just referred to was blocked. The obvious inference is that the Harappans were now on the defensive".



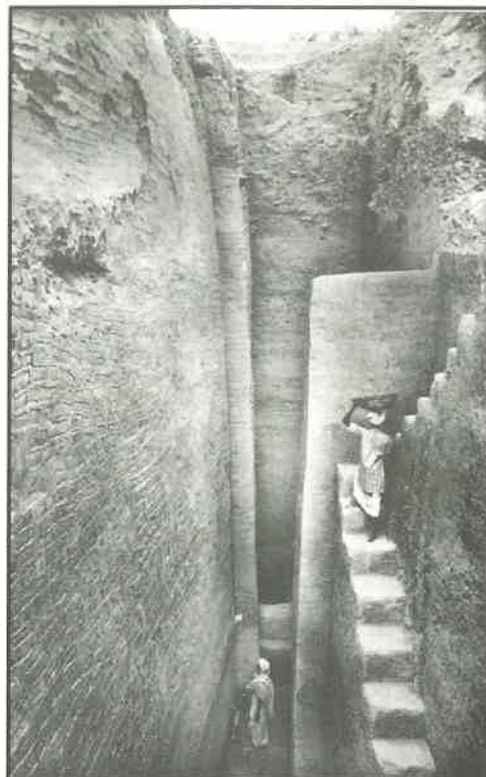
Wheeler further says, "of the buildings, which in varying form stood upon the enclosed platform and gradually raised it with accumulating brickwork, flooring and debris, no intelligible fragment is recorded. The excavated areas show that the area was thickly built over, but the plundered remains baffled the excavators. A long covered baked-brick drain proceeded eastwards near the centre of the eastern side; towards the southern end was a double-ringed well, and a long line of forty urns, buried in a row alongside a building but of unknown purpose".

A town so systematically built with a proper fortification is the earliest of this kind in the whole of South Asia Subcontinent. It preceded considerably the forts mentioned in the Hindu Rigveda, earlier taken to be the oldest in this region.

Harappa: Deep trench



Harappa: City Wall.



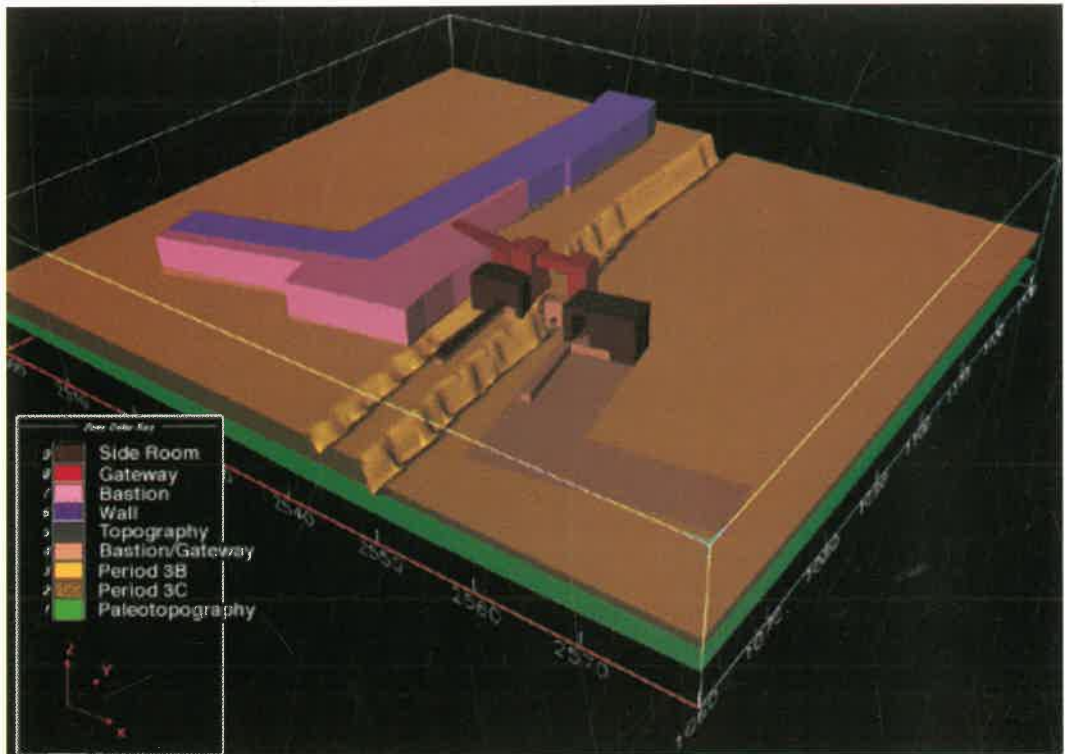
Harappa: Section through mud-brick defensive wall on western side of citadel.



Harappa: City remains, wells and drain



Harappa: Panorainic View Of Rewaies Of Ramparts.



Harappa: 3-D reconstruction of ramparts and gate.

Citadel of Moenjodaro



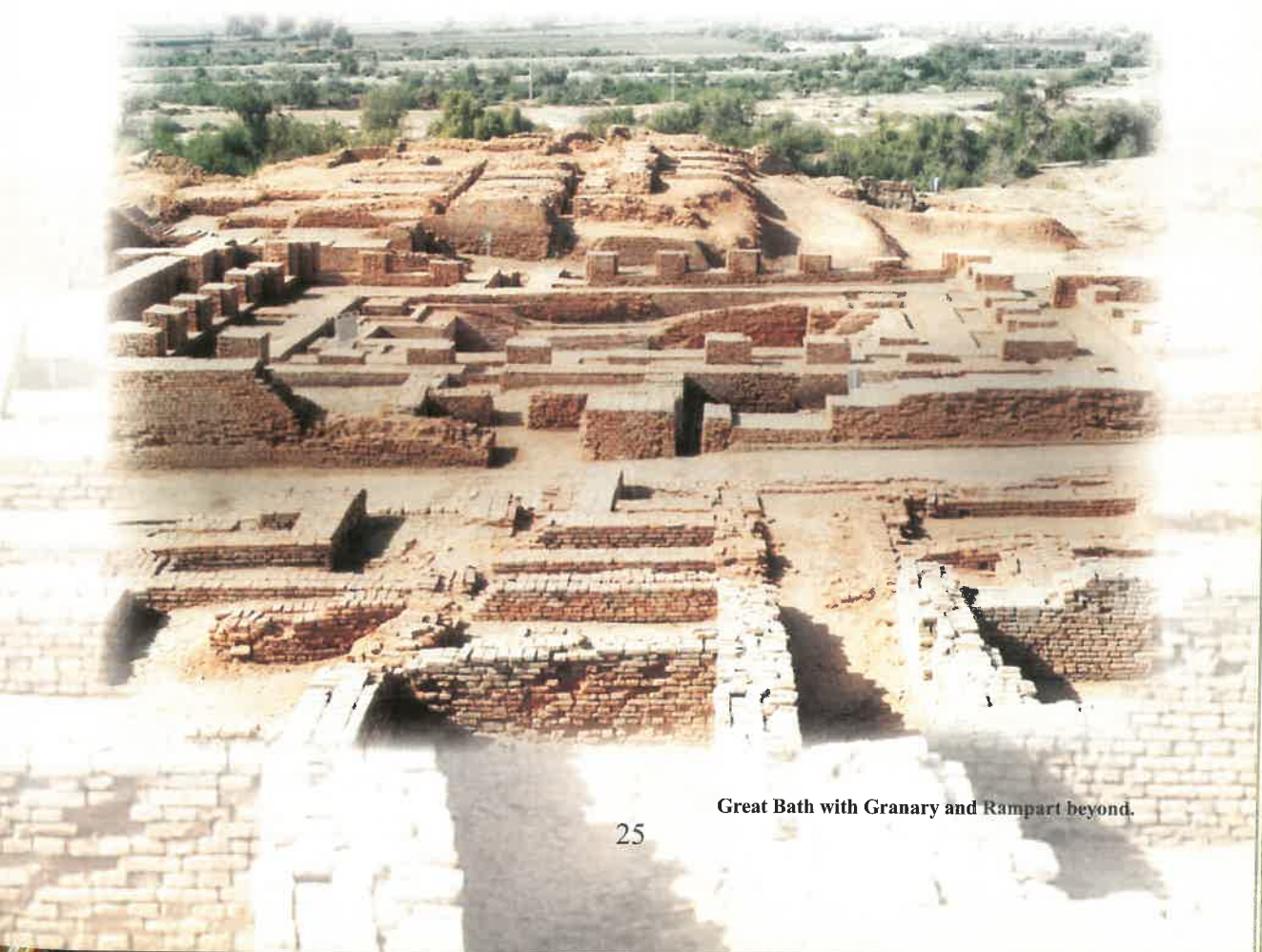
The mighty river Indus, or the Sindh and Mehran of the Arabs, has played a decisive role in sustaining many a culture on its banks and the valley watered by it or its tributaries. The most outstanding among them was the great civilisation now known to us as Harappan (after the name of its type-site) or Indus Valley Civilisation. It flourished over an expansive area where the so far discovered city-sites are the remarkable examples of well-planned towns, often having fortified areas, with straight streets, cutting each other at the right angles and dividing the habitation into blocks.

The most outstanding of these sites rescued from under thousands of tons of earth by the archaeologists is Moenjodaro, some 450 kilometres northeast of Karachi and about 30 kilometres south of Larkana in Sindh. The remains of this large metropolis when first brought to light from oblivion were in such a perfect state of preservation that they astounded the whole world with its magnificent representation of a highly developed society. It was then that it was termed as 'perhaps the most fortuitous discoveries of our time'. Moenjodaro, along with the twin capital Harappa, is an outstanding metropolis of the famous Indus Valley Civilisation which flourished roughly between 2800 - 1500 BC and covered an area more extensive than Mesopotamia and Egypt put together.

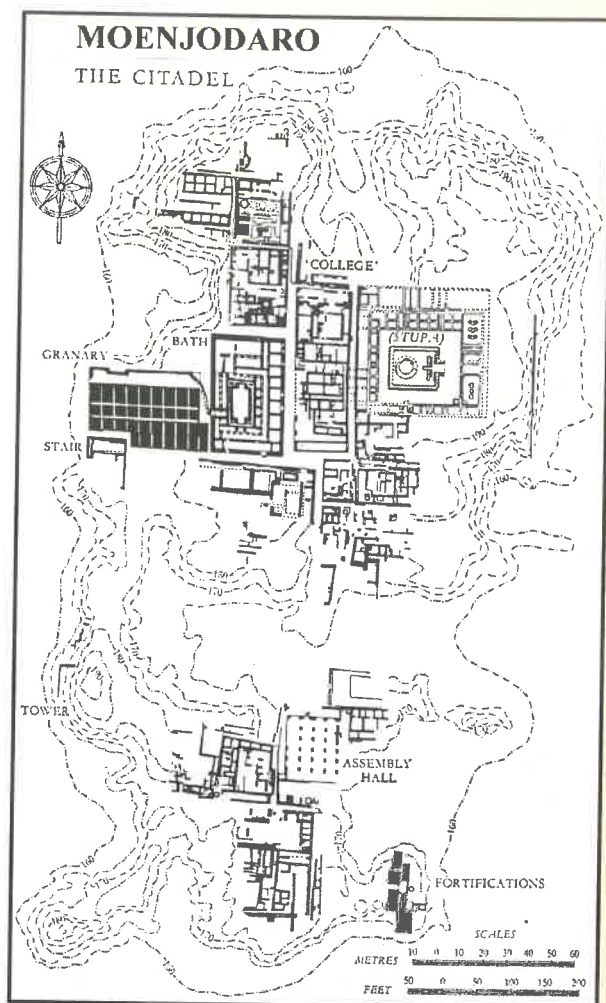
The site of Moenjodaro occupies a vast area on the right-bank of the river Indus. The city, which was almost entirely built with burnt bricks, covers an extensive tract of over six kilometres, with the possibility of finding further extension as the area of scientific probe is enlarged.

The presently exposed part of the city can roughly be divided into two parts: The citadel and a fairly large lower city sprawling on the eastern side. At the beginning of the excavations these were the two major mounds, one of them considerably higher than the other. The Citadel Mound, which rose to a height of 22 metres above the adjoining plain, measured 80,000 square metres. This higher mound has also sometimes been termed as the Stupa Mound obviously because of the presence of the remains of a Buddhist Stupa and a monastery of the 2nd Century AC presenting a very commanding view. Its true nomenclature as Citadel Mound is based on the discovery of a fortification wall girdling the whole area.

This huge Citadel Mound is now bitten into two, a clear result of the perennial floods in the Indus which is now hardly a kilometre away. Here the Citadel of Moenjodaro, like that of its contemporary at Harappa, rises over an artificial hill, consisting of a platform built of sun-dried bricks and mud. As a result of the archaeological excavations this area has yielded the remains of the buildings mostly having administrative or religious significance. These buildings include the Great Bath, Collegiate building, row of bath-rooms most probably used by the priests for ablution before going for the rituals at the Great Bath, Assembly Hall, State Granary etc. The excavations in 1950 brought out the true significance of these buildings, which are now confirmed to have been built during the 'mature phase' of the Harappan period, simultaneously with the raising of the platform. However, the original excavators believe that still more construction periods lie underneath, which could not be probed for obvious reasons.



Great Bath with Granary and Rampart beyond.



Plan of the citadel, Moenjodaro

platform over the whole of this stupa area, as well as over a big expanse of ground to the north'. The extension of the same platform is found to the south and the west. Here it is evidenced in the shape of weathered in the south or sufficiently preserved mass under the huge Granary brought to light on the western edge of the mound during the excavations carried out in 1950 by Sir Mortimer Wheeler.

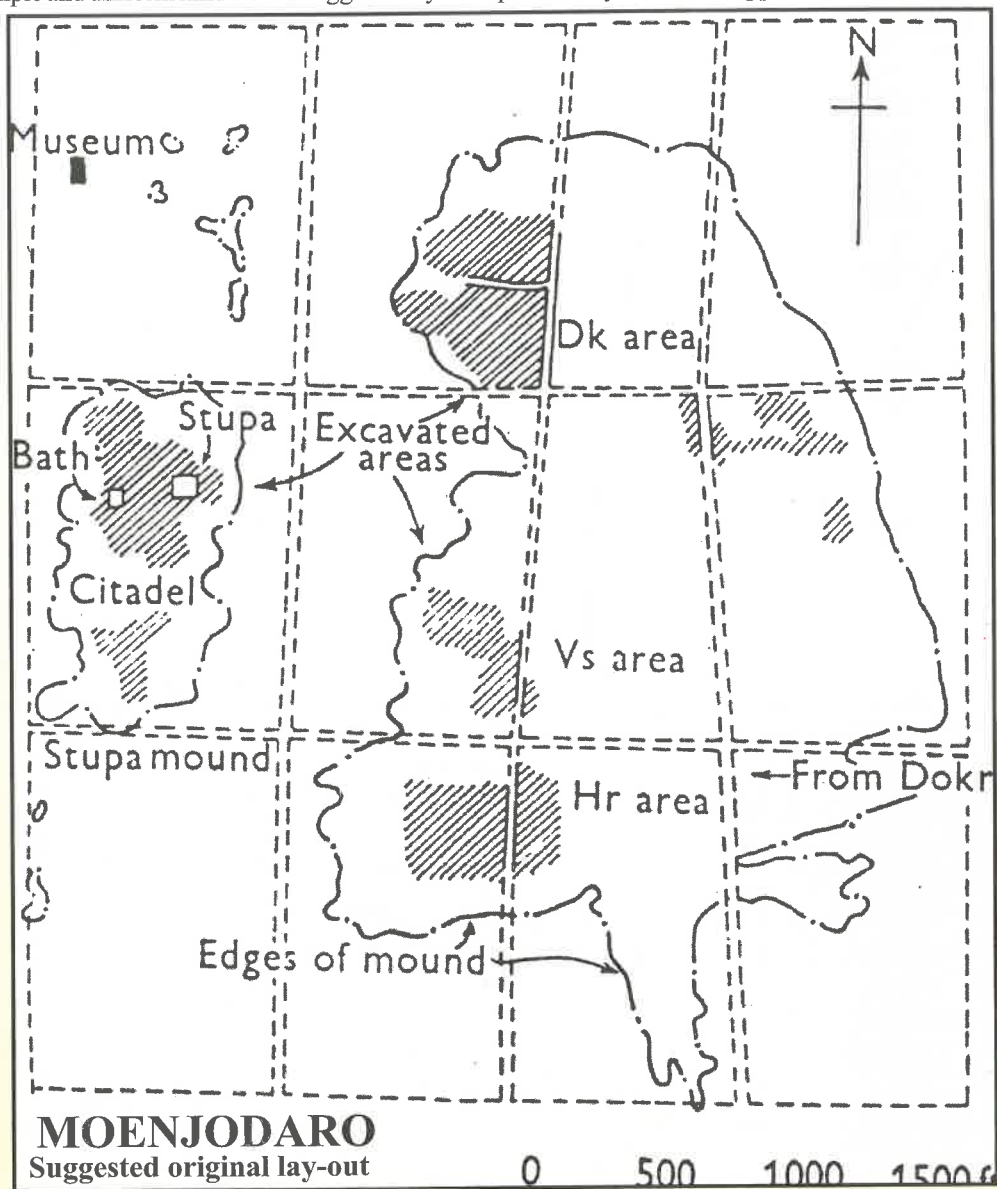
The evidence of solid burnt-brick towers making the integral part of some accumulated complex not yet fully exposed have been found in its southeastern corner of the plan of the Citadel. The archaeologists date the earliest of these, measuring over 9-metre by about 7.6-metre, to a time frame corresponding with that of the platform. The foundations of this tower were made of solid and massive burnt-brick work. In the face of the building slots measuring about 2.7-metre x 1.5-metre were found. The excavators suggest that these voids had been left by decaying timber used to reinforce the structure horizontally. At some places these slots had been found partly patched with bricks probably against the collapsing of the structure because of the resultant voids. It is interesting to note that the later builders of the adjacent towers fully grasped the lesson and did not follow the method of reinforcing huge structures with timber. However, the use of such a method is also evidenced in the building of the Granary, which incidentally is contemporaneous with the construction of the Citadel mound.

From the evidence brought to light during the dig it is clear that the people of Moenjodaro were very conscious of protecting their structures against the onslaught of the floodwater. The mud and mud-brick platform mentioned earlier was found provided with mud-brick embankment, about 13.7 metres wide. This provision seems to have been effected at a relatively earlier date. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that the archaeologists found a burnt brick drain built at the foot of the platform while the same seems to have been re-built some 4.5 metres higher up during a later period, when the embankment for itself was reinforced externally.

Although the mound could not be fully excavated down to the virgin soil, for the rise in the subterranean water table posed the biggest problem, yet the available record sufficiently make clear some of the features of the Citadel. Interestingly these features generally agree with many of the characteristics of the Citadel at Harappa. Here too the basis of fort is a mound deliberately constructed for the purpose. During the archaeological probe Banerji and Marshall observed the presence of the artificial platform in the Harappan phases under the level of the Buddhist Stupa and the Monastery. They had noted a 6-metre thick deposit made of 'crude brick or alluvial mud heaped up artificially so as to form an immense

On the southeastern corner of the mound there is a gradual increase of rectangular bastions. The scientists are though unable to explain the unusual phenomenon. According to Wheeler, "Two of them seem originally to have flanked a postern gate, which was later blocked and replaced by a platform with a parapet..... In the debris on this platform the excavators found about a hundred baked-clay missiles of two grades, one approximately six ounces (170.1 grams) in weight, the other twelve ounces (340.2 grams). Further foundations lie beneath the surface to the east of these towers and may be found to represent, with them, a small fort or strongpoint.

"On the west side of the citadel, to the south of the Granary, a baked-brick tower or salient, still standing 10 feet (a little over 3 metres) high, has been partially uncovered, and to the north of this tower a small postern has been identified. The implication is that the platform of the citadel was, in one way or another, of a defensible character throughout its circuit, but that the defences were of a less simple and uniform kind than is suggested by the equivalent system at Harappa."

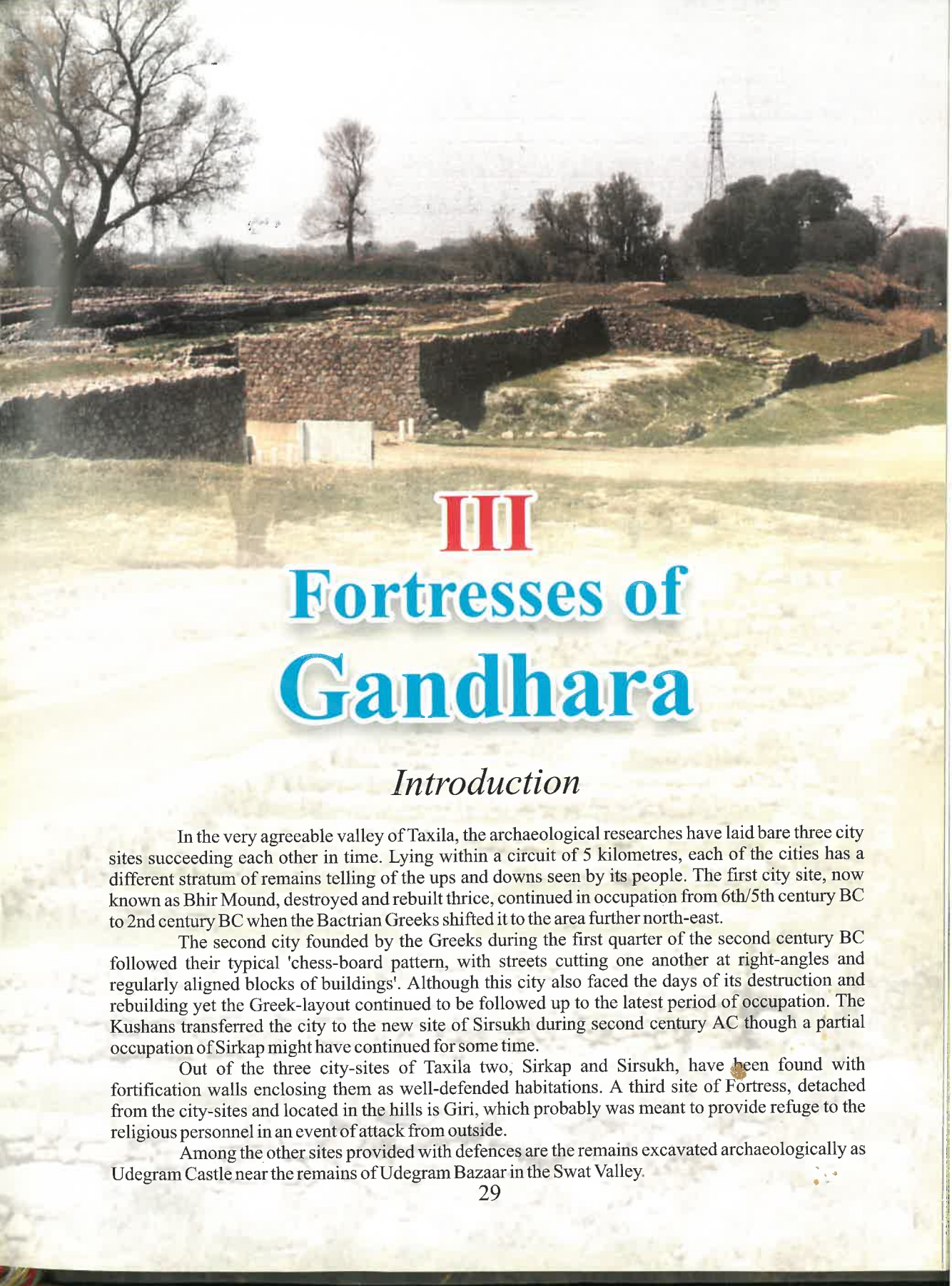




Moenjodaro: Parapet Walk between two of the towers at the southeastern corner of the citadel



Moenjodaro: Group of towers at southeast corner of citadel



III Fortresses of Gandhara

Introduction

In the very agreeable valley of Taxila, the archaeological researches have laid bare three city sites succeeding each other in time. Lying within a circuit of 5 kilometres, each of the cities has a different stratum of remains telling of the ups and downs seen by its people. The first city site, now known as Bhir Mound, destroyed and rebuilt thrice, continued in occupation from 6th/5th century BC to 2nd century BC when the Bactrian Greeks shifted it to the area further north-east.

The second city founded by the Greeks during the first quarter of the second century BC followed their typical 'chess-board pattern, with streets cutting one another at right-angles and regularly aligned blocks of buildings'. Although this city also faced the days of its destruction and rebuilding yet the Greek-layout continued to be followed up to the latest period of occupation. The Kushans transferred the city to the new site of Sirsukh during second century AC though a partial occupation of Sirkap might have continued for some time.

Out of the three city-sites of Taxila two, Sirkap and Sirsukh, have been found with fortification walls enclosing them as well-defended habitations. A third site of Fortress, detached from the city-sites and located in the hills is Giri, which probably was meant to provide refuge to the religious personnel in an event of attack from outside.

Among the other sites provided with defences are the remains excavated archaeologically as Udegram Castle near the remains of Udegram Bazaar in the Swat Valley.

Fortress of Sirkap

As the city at Sirkap did not grow haphazardly but was to come up as a result of solid planning, the Greeks were on the look out to choose a site that would fulfil their basic requirements. The area covering 'western end of the Hathial spur together with a small sharply defined plateau on its northern side' formed the best choice of the Greek town-planners. The *Tamra Nullah* on its western side and the *Gua Nullah* on the northeastern fringes provide the necessary flowing water for household use while also served an additional purpose of the city's defences.

The extensive excavations carried out at the site have revealed many an interesting feature of the city. The vertical dig exposed seven successive strata of remains covering a time span of three to four hundred years, down to the depth of about 5 to 7 metres. The remains now visible at the surface on the site belong to the second stratum. The plan of the city is clearly distinguishable. The main street runs north-south throughout the length of the city. Most of the buildings were plastered and whitewashed or colour-washed. On both the sides of the street were shops, though not running continuously. The main street is joined by narrow lanes at regular intervals from both sides. Their religious buildings, temples and shrines, are situated conspicuously by the street. A prominently large house, undoubtedly a royal palace, stands towards south overlooking the main street, which is on its western side.



Sirkap: Northern Fortification wall and Main Gate

A defence wall runs all around the city. It is built in stone with coarse rubble facing in mud, and varies in thickness from 4.5 to 6.5 metres. The stone used in the construction of this fortification wall is the hard limestone, which is found locally in the surrounding hills. However, a softer type of stone, *kanjore*, is found interspersed here and there.

The defence wall is irregular in plan on the western side towards the edge of the plateau while runs straight on northern and eastern sides. On the southern side it follows the contour of the hill. There are rectangular bastions built at regular intervals along its face. The principal excavator, Sir John Marshall, thinks that these bastions were higher with two or three storeys - "hollow and loop-holed above the solid basement. The curtain wall between the bastions would also be loop-holed above and furnished with a berm on the inside for the use of defenders". A 7.6-metre berm was also provided on the outer side of the northern wall to reinforce its solidity.

There are reasons to believe that the city had four gates, one on each side was provided through the fortification wall enclosing the town. The excavators, however, encountered the remains of only one such approach located in the northern wall. This gateway is positioned at the end of the north-south-running main street, a little towards east of it, probably to check any sudden onslaught of invaders. It is also possible that it might be, or might not be, simultaneously meant to serve as barrier to reduce the force of rainwater gushing from the main street before it would enter the wide culvert beneath the gate.

The gatehouse in the northern wall has been found to comprise of necessary arrangements for security. There was a large hall, measuring around 10.6 metres from east to west and projected to about 6 metres in front of the wall and thus, according to the scholars, formed 'a barbican to the gateway'. There were two more guardrooms to the west of the gateway. These were duly provided with sleeping-cells against the inner face of the wall to facilitate the staff on security duty.

In addition to the royal palace mentioned above, a complex of buildings was exposed on the high ground on southern-most side of the extensive lower city. This group of buildings named as "*Mahal*" (palace) by the excavators truly signifies the royal residence with spacious open courts and large rooms.



Sirkap: General view of city within fortification.

Fortress of Sirsukh

The third city of Taxila was established by the Kushan invaders after abandoning the second, fortified city of Sirkap. The place selected for the purpose is now known as Sirsukh and lies about 1.6 kilometres on the further side of Lundi *nullah*. This city was also provided with well-defended fortification wall, a good part of which was laid bare during the archaeological excavations on its eastern and southern sides. The walls on its northern and western sides have already disappeared leaving the excavators with the only choice of drawing it on the board through conjecture.

The available evidence of the wall tells that it was built with 'rough rubble faced with neatly fitting limestone masonry of the heavier diaper type'. At this place it measures about 5.6 metres in thickness and is 'provided at base, on its outer face, with a heavy roll plinth, which was added after the wall itself had been complete'. The plinth is thought to be serving twofold purpose of strengthening its foundations and preventing its undermining. The wall is further strengthened by semi-circular bastions provided at a regular interval of about 27 metres. The interior of these bastions is accessed through a narrow passage provided in the thickness of the wall. The bastions as well as the fortifications are provided with loopholes placed immediately above the plinth. The original excavator while explaining the evidence says that 'in the bastions, these loopholes are splayed slightly towards the outside and are closed on the outer face of the wall with triangular tops, which give them a singularly Western appearance. Beneath them, inside the bastions, is a horizontal chase in the wall, now filled with earth, which marks where timbers were once let into the masonry. Still lower down on a level with the old floor and opposite the entrance of the bastion there is, in some of them, small aperture, about 1 ft. 8 in. (51 centimetres) high and 7 in. (17.8 centimetres) wide, which no doubt served the purpose of a drain.

'The floors of the bastions were composed of lime concrete containing a large admixture of river sand. The foundations both of the wall proper and of the bastions descend about 2 ft. 6 in. (0.76 metre) below floor-level and are provided on the inside with single footing about 6 in. (15.24 centimetres) wide'.



Fortress of Giri

A little over 5 kilometres east-southeast of the Fortified City of Sirkap lies another fortress in the Taxila area. The approach to the site from the main valley is very odd. It now goes through the villages named Khurram Piracha and Khurram Gujjar beyond which one has to take the bed of a rough torrent to reach a small valley housing the Fortress of Giri. It is situated 'nestling into the hillside at the foot of the Margala spur'. Here also lies sweet-water spring, the probable source of water for the people of the castle and the nearby monastic establishment. The Buddhists could not have chosen a better place for its serene and secluded location, and a calm atmosphere for the monastery and a naturally ideal spot for the fortress.

The director of the archaeological excavations here gives interesting account of its location. "On the south side of the valley and between it and the glen of Giri is a rocky hill over 500 yards (457.2 metres) in length from east to west by half as much from north to south, which is detached from the main spur by a steeply scarped nala on the west, a more open depression the south and a shallow saddle on the east, while on the north are steep bluffs alternating with more gently sloping bays". This naturally-defended place was provided further strength to serve as a stronghold by a fortification wall adding bastions at regular intervals. It is a pity that the whole of the wall could not be found in good state of preservation but a considerable length of it, over 503 metres, could be traced in ruined condition. This piece of the fortification lies towards its eastern end while some more patches were



Giri Fort

traced running over the western half of the hilltop. When excavated this wall along the southern side was 'between 10 and 11 ft. (about 3 to 3.35 metres) in thickness and faced with a late type of semi-

ashlar masonry. North far from the south-east corner is a narrow gateway. The bastions, which are semi-circular in plan, are placed at regular intervals along the curtain of the wall, as well as at the salient and re-entrant angles. In front of the curtain is a plinth, intended probably to protect the base of the wall against undermining. Of the fortification on the opposite hill to the south only a short section is now traceable. They are clearly defined at the point where they cross the ravine and for a space of about 180 ft. (about 55 metres) beyond, where they turn eastward around the shoulder of the hill, but from there onwards their alignment is uncertain. It is clear, however, that they must have embraced within their circuit the all-important spring of water higher up the ravine towards the west, and it is nor unlikely that they also took in the monastery area..... Inside these fortifications the hill-top is rugged and uneven and for the most part quite denuded of earth'.



There is clear evidence pointing towards the fort's having been inhabited for considerable length of time. This conjecture is based on the fact that the excavators found here the remains of dwellings and other structures lying scattered over almost the whole area of the fort. However, a comparatively scant quantity of the pottery sherds was found from the fortress. On the basis of this fact the archaeologists infer that this well-defended place was meant only to be used in an event of emergency by the Buddhist establishments of the scores of monasteries lying scattered along the foot of Margala and the Vale of Taxila. 'In the fifth century A.D., from which this stronghold appears to date, the whole body of monks in the environs of Taxila must have run into many thousands, and even assuming that they could have taken refuge inside the city, they may have had strong reasons for preferring to defend themselves in a fastness such as that of Giri, which might well escape the full force of an invasion and from which, if necessary, they could beat a retreat into the higher hills of the Murree range. Towards the close of the fifth century the Buddhists especially were hard put to it to escape the fury of the White Huns, who were then overrunning the north-west, and this stronghold of Giri affords interesting evidence of the imminent dangers to which the monks were then exposed'.

Udegram Castle, Swat

About ten kilometres short of Mingora, while going to the district headquarters of Swat, there is a small village by the road. It is known as Udegram. The archaeological excavations carried out in its vicinity brought out the remains of a town, known as Udegram Bazaar, and on the spur of the hill the remnants of a huge building, large staircase and massive wall were named as Udegram Castle. The impressive remains of the Castle are located on a rocky spur commanding a large area of the valley below. 'The semi-circular buttresses of the supporting wall give the structure a turreted appearance, which explains the origin of the name Castle', says the original excavator. 'At the same time the imposing size of the building and, even, more, the superimposition of structural phases that clearly belong to different periods support the impression that we have here a public building, if not the seat of the lord of the area, at least of one of his lieutenants. The layout of the building derives advantage from the rocky spur which juts out from the sloping hillside, by enlarging the available building space with a series of supports'. The difference in their building-styles speaks for the places for having been inhabited for a long time.

The monumental staircase unearthed in this complex also consists of various periods. This huge staircase leads into the central nucleus of the building where there are a large number of rooms separated by corridors, designed to overcome the difficulties arising from the natural changes in level. The overall digging operations could bring to light only about the one-third of the whole building which, according to the excavators, extends over an area of approximately a hectare.

At a fairly earlier level, where the entrance is associated with the staircase, the area is relatively free from buildings. Here it forms a kind of a large vestibule, later occupied by service rooms and directly linked to one of the quarters of the upper town, close to the gates in the wall circuit. This area, recognised as the central nucleus, is represented by a number of fairly substantial rooms looking towards the valley. These rooms in turn are built on imposing buttresses. Where the natural profile of the hillside allowed, a second level has also been found added here.

In this case the different structural periods have been identified. Their large number is the result of a highly complicated stratigraphy. To appreciate this, one has only to realize that twenty different periods have so far been identified. It is inferred so because apart from a period of vertically superimposed levels, which saw the constant re-use of earlier foundations there also exist features that follow what one might call a concentric plan. This is the result of continuous attempts to increase the amount of space available by enlarging the perimeter of the outside wall. In this way, the early buildings occur not only inside the whole complex but also below it, and up to the present time it has not been possible to uncover them.

Among the small finds unearthed from the archaeological excavations were coins study of which has made it possible to establish a fairly accurate chronology of the site. These studies conclude that the lowest levels belong to the Sasanian and Kushan periods, going as far back as the second century AC. It thus seems highly possible that the deepest levels in the interior might belong the Indo-Greek period following the conquest of Alexander the Great as he is certain to have penetrated into Swat as far as Udegram (327 BC) and possibly even further.

From the available record of the archaeological dig it appears that this place was occupied after the abandonment of the lower area as a habitation site towards the end of the fifth century AC. However, the majority of these buildings must be dated between seventh and tenth centuries AC. The unique and most impressive feature brought to light from the excavations, the grand stairway of the Castle, must belong to the latest phase of this period.

The citadel was finally conquered by Mahmud of Ghazna (11th century AC) as is proved by the coins as well as by the fragments of the glazed pottery characteristic of the period. The upper occupation levels belong to this period of the Muslim domination, when settlement in the area continued at a modest rate. After the temporary return of a Buddhist community whose presence is attested by a fragment of a Buddhist image this brings us to the 13th and 14th centuries'.



IV Hindu Shahiya Period Fortresses

Introduction

Dera Ismail Khan, the southern-most district of the North West Frontier Province, not only spreads over a vast area but also presents varied forms of landscape and a diverse type of cultural scenes. Besides the remote antiquity like the sites at Gumla and Rahman Dheri, it has in it the unique Muslim period tombs at Lal Mahra Sharif belonging to the Tughlaq period, taking their origin in the 14th century, and the modern building feat in the shape of Chashma Barrage. It is then little wonder that students of architectural history find here some of the unique examples of building art.

Two such interesting examples are faced at the Kafir Kots, Northern and Southern, the latter lying near the village of Bilot Sharif. A local tradition tells that there were three brothers named as Til, Bil and Akil each of whom built a *kot* or fort and named it after himself. Til Raja's *kot* is now generally reckoned as Kafir Kot, specifically the Northern Kafir Kot, while the other two *kots* are even to date known after the names of their founders. Bil Raja's *kot* was known after him as Bil-kot, now corrupted to Bilot (the southern Kafir Kot) while Akil's fort was called Akil Kot, becoming Akilot, now thought to be the site of Akra near Bannu.

Both the Kafir Kots, northern as well as southern, have their origin shrouded in the haze of time. However, on the basis of the architectural evidence, as also the historical events, they certainly are assigned a date prior to the conquest of Punjab by Mahmud of Ghazna (1001-1026 AC). They strongly bear the marks of Kashmir style on the basis of which they could be reckoned to go back to 7th-8th centuries AC when this whole area was under Kashmir. The assumption is further corroborated by the fact that in the first half of the 8th century AC the inroads of the Arab Muslims had already gone up the Indus and there is complete absence of any Muslim architectural specimen in both of the Kafir Kots.

Southern Kafir Kot, Bilot

The Kafir Kot Bilot site, or the Southern Kafir Kot, although remotely located, is now easily accessible from Dera Ismail Khan taking either the Canal Road along the Paharpur Canal or the D.I.Khan-Chashma Road. It lies on the top of the hill just above the Paharpur Canal Regulatory and about a couple of kilometres from the village of Bilot Sharif. The extensive remains of a fortified town belong to the Hindu Shahiya period, antedating Muslim era in the region. The fortification and the temples inside now lie scattered on the heights and would have once commanded the valley below towards Punjab.

The fort occupies a defensive position on top of a well-defined plateau formed by an offshoot of the Khisor Range on its southern-most point where it touches the Indus Plan. The range is part of one of the three high ranges, namely Bhattani, Marwat and Khisor. These hills display the general north-south alignment as the Waziristan hills and the Sulaiman Mountains but are devoid of not only all the tertiary formations but practically also of the cretaceous constitution. Geologists conclude from this fact that these hills might be the remnants of an older landmass which once extended over a far greater area. The topography of the surrounding area clearly suggests that it was once touching the river Indus that, at present, is more than fifteen kilometres away.

The spur is outlined by a massive defensive wall of dressed stone-blocks without mortar, using larger blocks towards the base. There are about twenty round-fronted towers with clear indications of at least one gateway towards the south. Proper investigation may reveal such other features as well. The whole of the defensive wall is considerably covered with debris, as also is the gateway. The interior of the fortified area, about 100 metres above the plain, is covered with remains of buildings, including the typical Hindu-Shahiya temples surviving to this day.

Square in plan, all these temples rise in the form of the convex sided tower or an ornate *sikhara* typical of medieval period of northern regions of the South Asia Subcontinent and contain a square cellar with corbelled dome. The foundations of the edifices are in stone available locally, while in the super-structure we invariably find *kanjur* stone following the general pattern of Buddhist Stupa architecture in the Gandhara region, dating from 1st to 5th centuries. The masonry is set in white lime mortar and faced with white stucco, which has turned very hard with the passage of time. It is perhaps this plaster which has made these shrines stand to this day in spite of the prolonged neglect and virtually no repairs or conservation done to them.



General view of Kafir Kot, Bilot

The chief types of decorations found here are the typical embellishments of the Hindu temples of the Salt Range. They consist of niches, false and true, cinquefoil arches, Corinthian pilasters, floral bosses, *amalakas*, dentils, stucco ornamentation etc. Exquisite tracery work in stucco in the interior of some of the buildings has its special significance in view of its rareness in the area. In one of the shrines Hindu deities, after Gandhara-style, also survive in trefoil arched niches.

These rare specimens of temple architecture present a very pleasing and harmonious blending of three distinct styles of religious architecture. The rich plastic embellishment and some of the architectural details like Corinthian pilasters, dentil cornice, saw-tooth and beehive ornamentation and sloping doorjambs etc. clearly point towards Gandhara/Buddhist influence. On the other hand, cinquefoil arches surmounting the recesses or niches unmistakably suggest their drawing inspiration from the Kashmir style of temple architecture. The pyramidal form of *sikhara* has been inferred to be a copy of timber prototype designed to resist the heavy snowfall of Kashmir. The general outline and the overall shape of the temples, also incorporating pilasters having vase capitals with pendent foliage are in a fashion first elaborated by fifth and sixth centuries Gupta architects of the northern plains. Such characteristics clearly show their close affinity with the Gupta style of temple architecture of the plains. In the words of Wheeler it is "a north-westerly extension of the architecture of Jumna-Ganges plains doubtless as an aftermath of the westward extension of the Gupta Empire from those same plains into a north-western style which had matured largely under local Buddhist patronage". However, Percy Brown prefers to call the temples of the Salt Range on the whole as a provincial offshoot of the Kashmir style. The group of temples along the river Jehlum in Punjab at Amb, Katas, Malot and Nandna are nearly more related to the Kashmir style, especially the one at Malot is the most typical example. The southern group mainly consisting of the Kafir Kots, northern and southern, both by the river Indus, are more ample in proportions and replace pure pyramidal roof with *sikhara*. Their plastic embellishment, rich decoration of tiered carved pilasters, dentil cornice, foliated medallions and 'horse-shoe' and '*malaka*' motif suggest their closer resemblance with structural work of Gupta architects.



Southern Kafir Kot Bilot

Northern Kafir Kot

The ruins of the Northern Kafir Kot are situated on a projecting spur also of the Khisar range of hills, overhanging the Indus about 13 kilometres below the point where Kurram River joins the Indus. This spot is located about 40 kilometres north of the Kafir Kot Bilot on the same Right Bank of the River Indus. This fort commanded the gateway of the famous Kurram defile as it approaches the Indus valley and the plains of Punjab



Sir Mortimer Wheeler while speaking of the importance of the Northern Kafir Kot says, "the Kurram valley is a natural highway from the Kabul plateau to the central Indus valley. It is significant that, in Hiuen Tsang's time (about A.D. 630), the kings of Kapisa, at the foot of the Hindu Kush north of Kabul, ruled also in Bannu, in the lower reaches of the Kurram; and in A.D. 404 another Chinese pilgrim, Fa Hien, had travelled down into India from the neighbourhood of Jalalabad by that route. For the control of trade or invasion, whether from the lowland or from the highland, the precipitous spur chosen by the builders of Kafir Kot overlooking the Indus near its confluence with the Kurram was a key position".

The fort is oblong in shape and measures 385 metres from east to west and about 185 metres from north to south. A stone defensive wall, built in dry masonry, outlines the irregular terrain of the spur here. The wall is strengthened with round and rectangular towers at close intervals, with a 'dog-legged' entrance in the midst of the landward side'. The lone surviving tower rose to a height of over 12 metres. Within the western limits, against the defences, an oblong-shaped citadel measuring about 128 metres in length upheld by massive retaining walls 'above the general level and commanding the most exposed approach'. The walls as well as the towers are built in a battered fashion, sloping inward as they rise. The towers at some places are found to have been further strengthened with revetment.

In addition to the remains of the fortification there are also found the ruins of four temples and a two-storey structure locally known as *Marri* which may go to mean as 'palace', facing one of the temples. Both of the storeys of this structure contain windows with sloping jambs.

The temples inside the fortification wall at Northern Kafir Kot have been marked as A, B, C and D for the purpose of record. The foremost among them is somewhat in better state of preservation with all the four walls surviving the vagaries of time. The building is of humble dimensions with lower portion ornamented with pilasters. In the middle of each face there is a small niche with sloping side.

The other three temples are almost similar to the one mentioned above, though in more ruinous conditions. The last of them, D, is plain without bearing any pilasters.



Hund Fort

Many a city of the great cultures and civilisations of the yore are found located by the banks of the rivers for obvious reasons of sustenance and security. No wonder then that the remains of the mighty strongholds, cities and towns are still traceable by the great river Indus. One such fort is Hund, which lies about 80 kilometres east of Peshawar, and around 20 kilometres upstream of the gorge at Attock. By virtue of its location at one of the most treaded routes of the invaders and the conquerors from the west to the mainland South Asia Subcontinent, it has witnessed the history of the area being made over the course of thousands of years.



Hund Fort Along Indus on the East

The historians give interesting explanations on its turning to the present nomenclature over its long existence. It is said that it was known by the Sanskrit name of Udabhandapur in the ancient times. The word literally means 'the city of water-pot', which goes to suggest that the Indus was crossed over here by swimming with the help of pots under the chest in the ancient times. However, the most common means of swimming across has also been the inflated cow- or buffalo-hide, which medium is thought to have been followed in the historic times by most of the armies.

Hiuen Tsang, who visited the region of Gandhara between 629 AC and 645 AC recalls it as Ou-to-kia-han-t'cha, which has also been thought to be a version of the same name, Udabhandapura, the variation observed due to the different linguistic rendering. The place with such a name has also been mentioned as the winter capital of the Shahi kings of Kabul by the Kashmiri chronicler, Kalhana, who wrote his Sanskrit book *Rajatarangini* in 1150 AC. But before that, it had also been called as Waihand by Alberuni during his sojourn around 1030 AC. He gives its Latitude as East 34 30'. It has

been recorded as Wehand or Waihand during 1310 AC and as Ohind as late as 1790 AC by Mirza Mughal Beg. One thing is common among all these authors, who mentioned it with slight variation of phonetics, that they tell it of being the capital of Gandhara. *Tabaqat-e-Akbari* makes a mention of the Fort of Hind where Sultan Mahmud besieged Jaipal in 1002 AC. The famous archaeologist and a great linguist, Sir Alexander Cunningham, aptly summed up as to its name. He says, "from all these Examples I infer that the original name of Utakhanda, or Utkhand, was first softened to Utand.... And then shortened to Uhand or Ohind". The modern scholars think that it further 'modified' to become Hund of our times.

It may be interesting to note here that a recent Kharoshthi inscription discovered by Ihsan H. Nadiem at Takht-e-Bahi, about 50 kilometres northwest in the Mardan district, reads a similar word, Udakabhadra, meaning 'auspicious water'. It could be assumed that it was because of its association with the Buddhist religious establishment that water has been sanctified. The discovery thus also emphasises on the importance of water and its affinity with the cities or other establishments.

Hund being at the confluence of the routes from the east (via the Khyber Pass) and from north (Swat, Dir etc via the Karakar Pass) has played 'host' to many an adventurer. The written records mention of its having been visited by Alexander the Great, the Scythians and the Kushans, the Chinese Pilgrims, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, Sultan Shihabuddin Ghauri as also Timur on his return march. From the house of Timur, Babur also paid it a visit on his entry to the plains of Punjab. Before him it had been visited by the great Mongol conqueror, Chingiz Khan, who was in pursuit of Khwarizm Shah, Jalaluddin Mankarni. After the defeat of the Turki Shahis in Kabul, the Hindu Shahi rulers made Hund their capital in the 9th century AC. The 10th century Muslim traveller, Muqaddasi, eulogises Hund for its riches and congenial environs.

The ruins of the ancient city lie on the Right Bank of the River Indus and stretch in length for quite a few kilometres. Although the outline of the fortification wall around the modern village is very clear yet it is on the southern side on the river front that it appears in somewhat better form in the thickets and trees of the jungle. It clearly shows its construction in stones set in rubble type of masonry. The wall at that time used to have been further strengthened with squarish bastions. There are at least two of such bastions surviving to recognisable height on the riverside. The bastions are, however, built in stone diaper. The Hindu period fortification wall and the village seem to have considerably been washed away by the centuries of high floods in the river, or periodical change in its course. This must have necessitated its building and rebuilding over several times. The last phase of such an activity seems to belong to the Hindu Shahi period when big gravels and stones appear to have been used to raise the wall. There are certain indications of the presence of a Hindu Shahi period gate towards the river.

During the reign of Emperor Akbar the Great, several forts were built in the plain of the Yusafzais mainly to keep in check their oft-rebellious attitude towards the Mughal authority. Among these forts was the one at Hund, which was built in 1586 AC, using the small bricks. This Mughal Fort, which is square in plan, has four entrance gates on each side of the square. These gates, which are also made with small-sized bricks, are adequately strengthened by bastions. The fortification wall runs over a length of 1280 metres and is built of the larger stones of diaper masonry wall of the earlier period, put together in usual Muslim period rubble construction. A total of 36 bastions have been provided to further strengthen the whole length of the fortification wall. This wall engirdles the modern village access to which is through the western gate, which in turn is connected with a straight passage with the eastern gate on the side of the River. There are two rooms near the western gate, possibly for the use of the guards on security duty. From the traces of the building activities it is clear that the Mughals placed their stronghold within the perimeter of the earlier Hindu period fort.

It is probable that Hund Fort lost much of its utility, hence prosperity, when Emperor Akbar the Great installed a ferry at Attock, some 18 kilometres downstream, and built a huge fort on the cliff, on the left bank of the River, to guard the crossing and the region.

The remains of the Hund Fort have yielded quite a few inscriptions, some of them clearly dated, helping to piece together the information on such an important place of the yore.





Forts Humbled by First Muslim Wave to South Asia Subcontinent

Introduction

The Arabs had lost their sea-trade routes between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea before the coming of Islam. The political changes in the Arabian Peninsula and areas around it in the first half of the seventh century AC, however, were greatly favouring them. With the final blow to the Persians at Qadisiyya in 636 AC, and Byzantians casting away the yoke of Egypt in 642 AC, the Muslim Arabs became almost the sole power of the whole maritime route. They were now bent on converting 'the Indian Ocean into an Arab Mediterranean' and dominate sea-trade between Europe and South Asia, and beyond.

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It was during this part of the seventh century that Muslims had overpowered limited areas along the western coast of the South Asia Subcontinent, mainly with a view to secure safe passage to their sailing ships. These Arabs were basically sea faring people and had their trade links with areas as far as Sarandeeep (now Sri Lanka), South East Asia and Far East. It was during the reign of the Ummayyad dynasty (661-750) that Hajjaj bin Yousaf made a somewhat greater effort to consolidate earlier conquests. It was especially aimed at subduing the arrogant rulers of Sindh and humbling the highly treacherous pirates operating mainly along this coast.

The story of the Arab assault on Sindh targeting first the waterfront stronghold of Deybal is quite well known. The immediate reason of Arab expeditions in this area was provided by pirates who had attacked an Arab merchant ship coming from Sarandeeep. The pirates had often harassed Arab ships in the vicinity of Deybal, but this time they went too far as they not only robbed the ship but also imprisoned men and women. When Hajjaj bin Yusuf, the then Governor of Basra, came to know about this he sent an emissary to Raja Daher, the ruler of Sindh, to return the booty and liberate the captives. Raja Daher's reply was that he had no control over the robbers. Hajjaj then decided to take action because the pirates of Deybal now posed a grave threat to the safe movement of Arab merchant ships to South Asia and Far East. First, he sent two smaller punitive expeditions, which failed to achieve results. Then, Hajjaj decided to send a strong Arab army under the command of his son-in law, Muhammad bin Qasim. The Arab forces took the land route, marching to the Subcontinent via Shiraz and Makran. After easily overpowering resistance *en route*, bin Qasim arrived at the gates of Deybal. By this time his naval force had also arrived. Here, after tough resistance, he conquered the Fort and marched forward inland and humbled other Forts like Nerunkot, Sehwan (or Siwistan), Brahmanabad (or Bahmanabad, later turned to Mansurah), Alor, Multan etc. Within three years Muhammad bin Qasim had established his domination and the Muslim rule over the areas from Multan at the frontiers of lower Kashmir i.e. Punjab to Kutch and on the other side reached up to Malwa.

Fort of Deybal

The city of Deybal, as almost the whole of the rest of Sindh, was being ruled by Raja Daher in the early eighth century AC. It now has a unique place in the Muslim history of the South Asia Subcontinent. This city was the first major capital town to fall to the young Arab General, Muhammad bin Qasim, in 711 AC. Its significance could be gauged from the fact that it was to serve as a gateway not only to a new religion but also to a different culture, which greatly influenced the life pattern, arts and crafts of the South Asia Subcontinent.

The port-city of Deybal, which was also well fortified, has now been identified with Banbhore lying about 65 kilometres from Karachi, some 4 kilometres off the National Highway, south of Dhabeji. The site is situated on the Right Bank of Gharo Creek, now a mere shadow of its earlier eminence due mainly to its choking up with sand and silt, marking the northern edge of the alluvium fan of the Indus Delta.



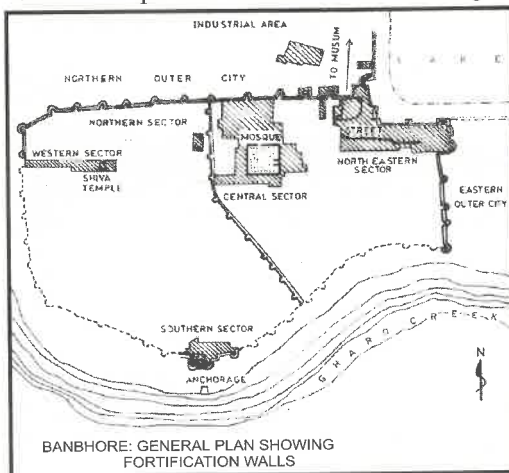
Deybal (Banbhore): A general view of the Fort from north

As the city of Deybal in the normal historical process had lost its name, scholars have been making efforts to re-discover the actual place. In this regard its probable sites have been mentioned by researchers with varied degrees of arguments. Among the places falling more closely to the description of Deybal are Thatta, Lari Bander, Kakar Bukera on the Baghar, Pir Patho, Banbhore etc. The research works carried out lately on the Kufic inscriptions from the excavations at Banbhore, however, narrowed down the field of arguments as the earliest dated inscription greatly agreed with the statement of Baladhuri, a contemporary historian, whose works tell about the construction activities of the Muslims at Deybal. The theory was also backed up by the most significant of all the



A Model of the catapult called Al-Urus by the Arabs
unfortunate Sassui, your town of Banbhore has been robbed) reverberates with the masses of not only Sindh but also Punjab and Balochistan.

It was here at Deybal that the Arab forces had faced tough resistance from the local governor of Raja Daher. He faced the invading army while well entrenched in this well-defended coastal fortress. A spiritual emblem of the Hindu gods, believed to be protecting the fortress of Deybal,



BANBHORE: GENERAL PLAN SHOWING
FORTIFICATION WALLS

discoveries at Banbhore. It consists of the remains of a grand Mosque built in the Central Sector of the Citadel. The epigraphic evidence in the form of dated Kufic inscriptions recovered during the excavations safely places the Mosque as the earliest known Muslim religious building in the whole of South Asia Subcontinent. The exposed structural remnants show only the ground plan of the mosque, but the features are so clear that even a conjectural reconstruction of the building can help fully understand it. It had a large courtyard open to the sky, covered cloisters and corridors on three sides and the roofed main prayer chamber on the western side. As the *mihrab* or niche had perhaps not yet been introduced we do not find it in its Western Wall. This feature makes the Banbhore Mosque comparable with the *Jami'* Mosques of Kufa and Wasit built respectively in 670 and 702 AC.

Another material evidence to identify Banbhore with Deybal was the unearthing of a Shiva Temple, which was found to have been built in mud-bricks. In addition to the temple-features and antiquities of Hindu origin this building has also yielded a perfect object of Hindu worship. It is a stone *Uni* with Shiva *lingam* duly placed in its centre.

Many a scholar has argued on the possibility of Deybal and the locale of the famous legendary romance of Sassui and Punnuhu, Banbhore, being the same place. More so, when even today one finds a *Sassui jo Bagh* or the Sassui's Garden in the vicinity of Banbhore. The famous lines of the romantic lore, *tera lutiya shehr Banbhore ni Sassuiay beqadrey*, (O, Fluttered proudly from a very tall flagpole. It was the firm conviction of the Hindu priests that the fortress was invincible as long as it was guarded by the flag of the gods. Muhammad bin Qasim realised that to break the morale of the defenders he had to destroy the flagpole. He thus called his Engineer Jaubat Salmi and enquired if he could accomplish the task. He was to be given ten thousand *dirams* on successfully doing the task otherwise, the Engineer had agreed, his hands would be cut. After nine days the sanction to the conditions was received via Kirman from the Governor. It also contained the fresh instructions that "when you advance in a body for battle, see that you have the sun behind your backs, as (then) its glare will not prevent you from having a full view of the enemy. Engage in fight on

the very first day, and supplicate the help of the great God. If anyone of the people of Sind ask for mercy and protection, do give it to him, but not to the residents of Debal, whom you must not spare on any account". Jaubat commissioned the highly effective and most powerful Arab war weapon, *manjanique* or catapult. The catapult used here was named as *al-Urus*, or the bride, which hurled heavy stones at the gates and the ramparts of the fortress, while also specially targeting the symbolic flagpole. The flagpole was finally hit and torn down and so too was the dome of the temple. This, as expected, completely demoralised the defenders, *pandits* and military men alike, who surrendered to the Arab army.

The identification of the remains at Banbhore with the fortified city of Deybal was no chance discovery but took scores of years of hard work in researching on the site and, later, excavating structures and unearthing finds from the mound. At the turn of the nineteenth century AC, General Cunningham is commonly taken as the first scholar to have evinced an interest in the mound purely from archaeological point of view. Then Henry Cousens and N.G. Mujumdar made some initial probes in early 1920s and 1930s respectively. They abandoned the site thinking it as an insignificant target. However, after the emergence of Pakistan as an independent Muslim State, its true significance as an important Port City in the history of the region was recognised though not before the closing years of the 1950s. Leslie Alcock of the Pakistan Department of Archaeology worked here on a limited dig in 1951. He, too, abandoned his quest for its thorough examination. All these scholars encountered only Muslim period remains in which they obviously were not very much interested during that era. They were not lucky enough to have struck the pre-Muslim layers to attract them to any degree to continue the probe. It was only in 1958 that regular excavations on scientific lines were started to lay bare its true character. These excavations continued for over eight seasons under the directions of F.A. Khan, then heading the Pakistan Department of Archaeology. It was during these full-scale diggings that considerable knowledge, in addition to a wealth of antiquities and architectural features, has been brought to light.

The site consists of a fortified ancient town of sizeable dimensions. The citadel is 610 metres in length from east to west and 365 metres broad from north to south. Some sort of population explosion seems to have caused the settlement to spread north and eastward outside the citadel. The Industrial quarters have also been located lying outside the fortification and on its north.



Deybal: general view of fortification and the lake

The fortification wall at the site is the most outstanding feat of the early Muslim period uncovered in the Subcontinent so far. It has been exposed almost fully and has been found girdling the city except with a few breaks to provide gateways of which only three have been excavated so far. One of the gateways, opening on the waterfront towards the south, is flanked by semi-circular bastions and approached through broad steps. These features, along with the presence of the remains of an 'anchorage' a little distance from the gate, clearly point to its being the main gate of the port. On the landward side the Gate, also situated between the bastions, lies on the northern side towards the fort's eastern limits. The third Gate, on the eastern side, a small approach to the residential quarters, is of the type of Mori (hole) gates found in so many of the Muslim period forts in the Subcontinent.

The defence wall was built with large and heavy undressed boulders or semi-dressed blocks of lime stone using mud mortar. Massively built semi-circular bastions at regular intervals and revetment at the base provide the required support to the wall.

The deep trenches laid inside the citadel show distinctly three different periods from the 1st century BC to the 13th century AC. These periods are broadly assigned the eras of Scytho-Parthian, Hindu-Buddhist and Muslim. The earliest period has yielded finely polished and burnished pottery types, an undoubted imitation of Greek pottery. The movable antiquities recovered from the pre-Muslim levels include terracotta figurines, both human and animal, fragmentary stone sculptures and fine ceramic specimens, sometimes inscribed in proto-Nagri style.

The upper levels, as also the defence wall, invariably belong to the Muslim period assigning them a timerange from 8th to 13th Centuries AC. The Muslim period, in turn, can be divided into four phases viz. the Ummayyad period (711-750 AC), ii) the Early Abbaside period (750-892 AC), iii) the late Abbaside period (10th to 12th centuries AC) and iv) Topmost scanty remains belonging to the 13th century AC.



Deybal: fortification with bastions

The city of Deybal, or Banbhore as it might have been reckoned in its latest period of occupation, seems to have come to an end in the 13th century AC. Although there are no written records to pin down exactly the real causes of its extinction yet the material evidence from the excavations make us safely put the blame on the shifting of the watery channel and partly on the violent and large scale disturbances. The large number of human skeletons found lying scattered inside the houses and on the streets, presence of thick ashy and charcoal layers and intensely burnt bricks along with large number of stones fallen from their original positions strongly support the theory of a civil war or an intense invasion. The invasion of Sindh by Jalaluddin Khwarezm Shah in the 13th century and his conquering a number of coastal towns coinciding with the final blow to this city should have some connection with the inferred happenings in this city as well.

Sehwan Fort

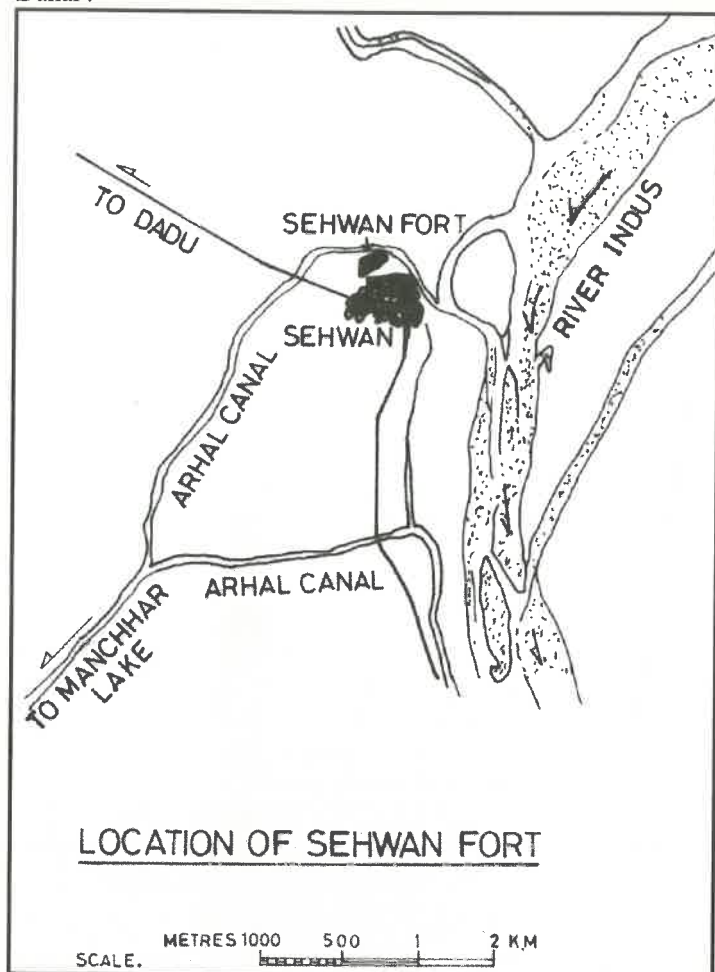
The ancient town of Sehwan lies about 130 kilometres north-northwest of Hyderabad in the Sindh Province. A very good road, as also the rail-link, connects it with that city and Karachi beyond it through the Super Highway. The town itself is of great antiquity and religious reverence as it houses not only the remains of a sizeable fort going back to remote antiquity and a relatively later habitation around the mausoleum of the Lal Shahbaz Qalander. It is situated in 26° 26' North Latitude and 67° 54' East Longitude on the eminence on the right bank of the Aral, which flows from the Manchhar Lake into the Indus and, interestingly, reverses the direction of its flow when the mighty Indus is in spate. On its southern side the Laki hills terminate abruptly on the river Indus which once flowed right under the town but is now a little distance away from it.



Sehwan Fort: General view

According to Cousens, 'Sehwan and district have been referred to in most old accounts as Siwistan, though it has also gone by the names of Sharusan, Sadusan, Sadustan and Sindustan'. It is believed that the Greek writers' Sindomana was no other place than the present Sehwan. Historians mention that its ruler, Sambus, had sent envoys to seek the support of Alexander against Musicanus who was then controlling the Siro or northern areas of Sindh from, probably, Alor. The latter, however, was obliged to surrender before the speedy invasion of Alexander. Here the conqueror ordered the city to be fortified and garrisoned. It was a lesson enough to tell about the might of the great invader who, contrary to the schemes of Sehwan ruler, had shown his kindness and confirmed Musicanus in his seat. This fact disheartened the lord of Sehwan or Sindomana who fled, leaving his capital at the mercy of Alexander the Great.

Muhammad bin Qasim was the first Muslim to have captured it in 711 AC. After humbling the fort at Nerun, according to Chachnama, 'he resolved to go to Siwistan. That fortified town is to the west of the Mehran on the top of the hill. Muhammad Kasim entertained hopes that the whole of that country would be conquered by the Musalmans. After that end was attained in regard to the country of Siwistan, he thought of returning thence and arranging to cross the river, in order to proceed against Dahar'.



During the twelfth century AC, when the Sufi Saints belonging to the Suharwardiya order had mounted a successful change to the Ismaili missionaries in Sindh, the famous saint Syed Usman known as Lal Shahbaz Qalander, had migrated from Maran (or Marwand) in Azerbaijan. He died in 1274 AC and was buried in Sehwan. Next the fort of Sehwan comes up prominently in the annals through the courtesy of Ibn Battuta, the famous traveller from North Africa. He mentions that when an upstart, though very learned a Hindu by the name of Malik Rattan, gained favours with the Sultan of Delhi he was bestowed the charge of Sehwan and awarded the title of Raja-e-Sindh the ruler of Sindh. Jam Unar, the founder of the Samma dynasty in Lower Sindh, plotted against this representative of the Delhi Crown. He, with the help of Amir Qaiser Rumi, treacherously killed him after inviting him outside the fort. Unar thus became the ruler of

The Northern Sindh as well and assumed the title of Malik Firuz in 1333 AC. The imperial army under the command of the Governor of Multan, however, marched on Sehwan when Unar was obliged to desert the city and escape to the desert country. When Sultan Muhammad Shah Tughlaq, on an expedition against rebels, died near Thatta in March 1351 AC, his body was taken to Sehwan and buried here to the west of the Tomb of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar.

Humayun being on the run after his defeat at Qanauij at the hands of Sher Shah Suri, made an unfruitful attempt to capture Sehwan on his way to Umerkot. It was, however, subsequently taken by Akbar the Great after a siege of seven months, and was dismantled. The town was later on taken over by Mahmud of Ghazna in the beginning of the eleventh century AC.

The remains of the sizeable fort lie to the north of the modern town in the shape of a high mound. Its site is still known as the Kafir Qal'a, meaning the fort of the *ubelievers*, pointing clearly towards its origin in a period prior to the arrival of the Muslims. The fort, which is now under heaps of tons of earth, is ascribed to Alexander the Great. The Greek coins found from here do strengthen this



General view of the site

Theory. Though Henry Cousens even argue the point thinking that the occasional find of coin might have brought the object here 'not, necessarily, Greek here'. A French Archaeological Mission was excavating here some time back but their report on the same is awaited.

The huge mound still covers an area of considerable dimensions. It rises to a height of over 18 metres from the plain ground around it. In length it measures about 366 metres while its breadth is over 183 metres. Throughout the recorded history of the mound it has been yielding potsherds, brickbats, broken china, bones, charcoal ash etc. from its surface. Some coins or potsherds would especially become visible after rains. From the furrows and chasms caused on its sides by innumerable years of gushing rainwater, showing building remains, only go to prove that the fortifications of this town must have been built in bricks. The wall seems to have been washed away at most of the places during the scores of centuries that it stood in the shape of a heap of earth. The sections thus made by the rains on its sides at quite a few places showed the remains of these walls. The presence of these remnants at different levels would certainly suggest different building periods over the centuries of its existence.



Shwan Fort: General View of decayed fortification and bastion

Fort of Mansurah



Mansurah: General view of watch-tower

About thirteen kilometres southeast of the small town of Shahdadpur in the Sanghar district, and nearly 70 kilometres northeast of Hyderabad in Sindh, were encountered low and high mounds by archaeologists. These heaps of earth were found scattered over an area of 2.5 kilometres in length and nearly 1.5 kilometres in breadth. The highest mound rose to around 11 metres from the level plain. The other smaller site, to the south of the main one, is connected to it by means of an earthen embankment, which is about 46 metres wide. In-between the two lies a considerable depression marking the old bed of the river Indus.

The site had been attracting the scientists, common antiquarians and inquisitive men alike with its booty of antiquities, potsherds, and bricks and occasional finds of coins from the surface. Henry Cousens, who arguably identified the place with Brahmanabad-Mansurah-Mahfuzah, says about these remains to be most controversial of all such sites of the yore. The conclusions drawn by Cousens after investigations at the site were found to be holding good during later regular probes. The smaller mound, known as Dalur, represented Mahfuzah, the fortified city founded by the Arabs for the safety and security of the Muslims scattered in the area. The remains at Depar Ghangro were thought to be those of Brahmanabad on the spoils of which Mansurah was built. The ruins of this main mound were found encircled by the remains of fortification, about 2.75 metres thick and having semi-circular bastions at almost regular intervals. The *Ain-e-Akbari* tells of these bastions as to numbering 1,400.

This is the earliest known fortified city founded almost immediately after the conquest of Sindh at the hands of the Arab Army under the command of Muhammad bin Qasim. The credit of the establishment of this fort goes to an Arab governor, 'Amr Saqafi, sometime between 728 AC and 737 AC. 'Amr was the son of the famous Arab General, Muhammad bin Qasim, and came to Sindh in 723 AC. He served as a deputy governor under Hakam bin 'Awana Kalbi.



Mansurah: Excavated remains of
steps of a mansion by the fortification

The grand and imposing fortification wall once ran around the whole length and breadth of the city. It was originally further strengthened by semi-circular bastions at regular intervals of about 31 metres each. At places it has survived to a total height of nearly 3.35 metres while the original thickness as found in records has not been found anywhere during excavation.

The earliest sources based on the early Arab travellers, mention of four gateways provided in the length of the fortification. These gates have variedly been called Bab al-Bahr, Bab Sandan, Bab Multan, and Bab Turan. The extensive excavations carried out at the site during the second half of the twentieth century AC could uncover only two, one on the northwestern and the other towards northeastern side of the city. The gateway on the northwest was provided with pavement built in brick-on-edge. It was flanked by two massive semi-circular bastions. From the available evidence the excavators concluded that during its earlier period the gate was provided with elaborate arches. The other gate, located on the northeastern side where it faces the depression of the old bed of the river Indus, has only been exposed partially. The gate is no more than roughly one metre in width in its latest period. The archaeologists assume that originally, in the earlier period, it would have been of imposing measurements, which reduced with time when the city had lost its importance as a metropolis. It is inferred that this would have happened after the invasion of Mahmud of Ghazna in the eleventh century AC.

The archaeological excavations at the site of the Fort of Mansurah have yielded all the requisite buildings and the town-plan worthy of a great metropolitan city. Among these are the Remains of a Grand Mosque, a State Assembly building, the Dar al-Umra and the residential quarters. A tower, locally known as *thul*, stood high amidst the ruins of the ancient city. Due to its nearness to the Grand Mosque some people would tend to call it the place for the crier for the prayers (*mu'azzan*). However, there are others who prefer to reckon its use as a watchtower. Cousens, on the basis of his preliminary investigations at the site, thinks it to be the part of a later period stupa. He in fact found here decorative bricks of fine quality and workmanship, which he thought to have links with the Buddhist period.



Fort at Alor



Alor: A view of so-called Mosque of Bin Qasim

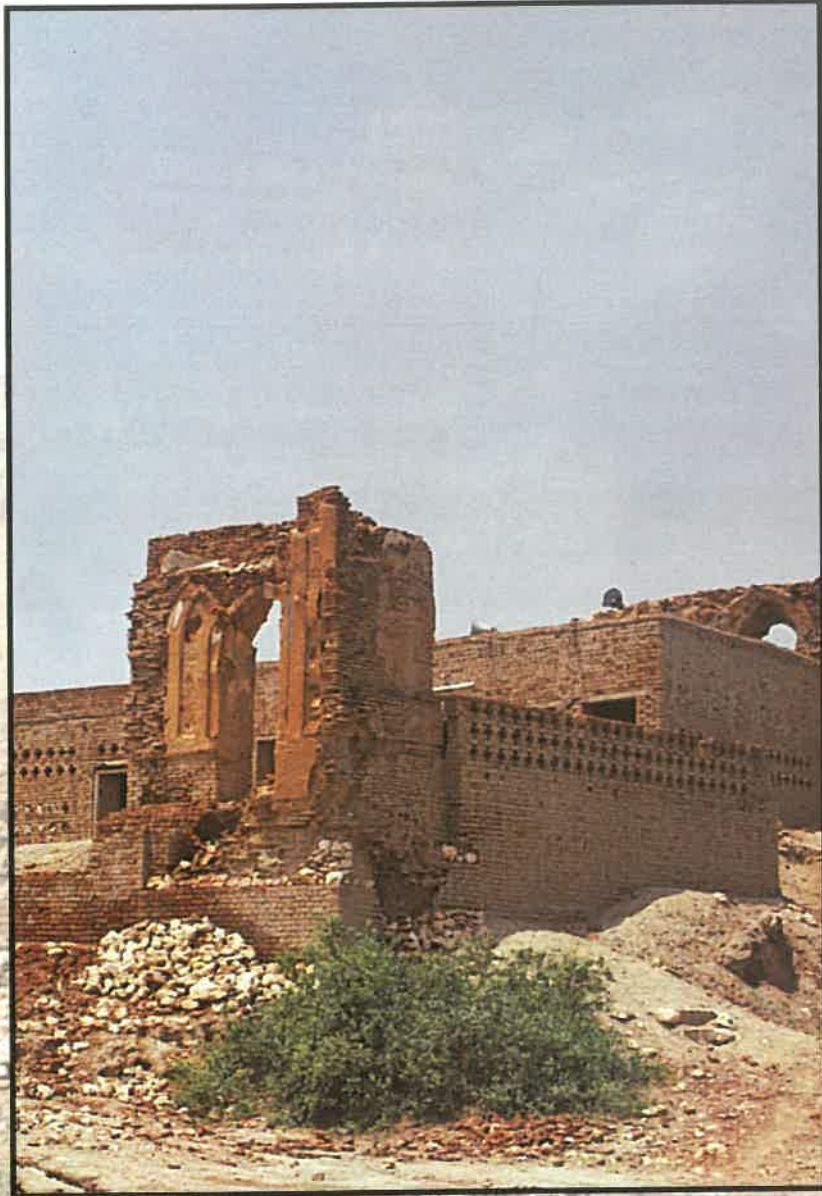
The remains of Alor, or Aror by which name the present village is known, are situated about 10 kilometres east of Rohri. The area is even otherwise rich in cultural remains with the nearby Rohri Hills being home to the Old Stone Age man. On way to Alor one can also notice a couple of beautiful Muslim period tombs, vaguely known as those of Duhagan and Suhagan. These tombs present a rare phenomenon of naked brick architecture in this region. The historical records of the town show that it had been variedly written by various writers like Al Rur, Al-Ruz, Dur Alrud, Aldaur or Al Dur. According to Elliot its real name could have been Rur, which still survives in Rohri. Raverty in Mehran of Sind explains that the letters *al* must not be taken as those of Arabic origin as the place existed much before any contact with the Muslims. He ascribes the origin of the name to Hindi 'written and styled Aror, with 'ar' as well as with 'al'.

The Chachnama mentions: "The town of Alor was the capital city of Hind and Sind. It was a town adorned with various kinds of royal buildings, villas, gardens, fountains, streams, meadows and trees (and was) situated on the bank of a river called the Mehran". About the extent and its sway it further says: "In this beautiful and splendid city, there lived a king whose name was Sahiras son of Sahasi Rai. This king had innumerable riches and immense buried treasures. His justice was well known in the world, and his liberality and bravery (were) widely spread. The limits of his dominions extended on the east to the boundary of Kashmir, on the west to Makran, on the south to the coast of the sea and Debal, and on the north to the mountains of Kurdan and Kikanan".

While wishing the history of the important events of the time to be written, the Chachnama tells about its fall, "...the death of Rai Dahar Chach, son of Selaij, who resided at the capital city of Alor, at the hands of the great Amir, the pillar of state and religion, Muhammad son of Kasim son of Ukail, Sakifi (may God have mercy on him!), and the transfer (of that) whole territory together with its dependencies to him...." Muhammad bin Qasim had marched towards Alor after reducing the stronghold of Brahmanabad about which Biladuri says, "at last he reached Alrur, one of the cities of Sind. It is situated on a hill". He further tells of the conqueror saying "the temples shall be unto us, like as the churches of the Christians, the synagogues of the Jews, and the fire temples of the Magians". He nonetheless 'imposed a tribute upon the inhabitants, and built a mosque in the city'.

The ancient fort at Alor is recognisable in the shape of high mound with bricks, brickbats and occasional potsherds lying scattered over it. The bricks seen in the foundations are of the large size, termed as of 'Hindu style' by the explorers in the region. Along with the modern village it stands by the side of the old bed of the river, which is thought to have changed its course away from the town because of an earthquake in the tenth century AC. It was perhaps the time after which no mention of Alor is found as a city.

Towards the northern side of the village there are remains of an ancient mosque, perhaps, erroneously attributed to Muhammad bin Qasim. However, the fragmentary tile-work, which was noticed here is thought to make it resemble the one at Sathyanjo Than, about ten kilometres away on the right bank of the Indus, thus possibly taking the present remains back to the 17th century AC.



Alor: General view locating site of so-called Bin Qasim mosque

15

Multan Fort

The origin of the Multan Fort like that of the city itself is not known. It is said, though with no definite proof, that Multan was the city of Malli, which was taken over by Alexander the Great with very swift action and where he was wounded. In historical literature it appears prominently in the Chachnama around the middle of the 7th century AC when it came under the sway of the Chach dynasty of Sindh.



Multan: Baab-al-Qasim

Multan in its long and chequered history has been known even by other names, which though most of them seem to be the variations of the same word. Alberuni mentions of it as Mulasthana which according to him was also called by the name of Al-Ma'mura by the Arabs. On the change of geographical names Alberuni's India, a treatise written in the beginning of the 11th century AC tells, "most of the names of countries under which they appear in this context are not those by which they are now generally known. Utpala, a native of Kashmir, says in his commentary on the book *Samhita* regarding this subject: 'The names of countries change, and particularly in the *yugas*. So Multan was originally called *Kasyapapura*, then *Hamsapura*, then *Bagapura*, then *Sambhapura*, and then *Mulasthana*, i.e. the original place for *mula* means root, origin, and *tana* means place". Still in another version in the vernacular it is also mentioned as Mula-trang or Mulataran.

The Multan Fort lies in the shape of a huge mound, now almost in the centre of the much-expanded city. The depression between the fort and the old city is said to be the old course of the river Ravi. Incidentally no serious effort has so far been made to its scientific probe. The knowledge of its long history is still based on the results of a well sunk by Sir Alexander Cunningham in 1853 AC. He assigned a date of around 800 BC to the earliest level while he ascribes the two ashy layers at different levels to those of the capture of the fort by Alexander the Great in 326 BC and by Muhammad bin Qasim in the 8th century AC respectively.

From the ruins of the fort it is gathered that its circuit was over 2000 metres, or more than 2 kilometres. It had as many as 46 bastions interspersed at regular intervals in the fortification wall. Each of the four gates of the fort was flanked by a couple of bastions, to fortify the strength and keep

guard on their security. The gate on the western side, now usually used by visitors, was named as De or Deh. According to Cunningham it represented 'Dewal' as in former times it led straight to the Dewal or temple inside the fort. The Khizri Gate was located on the northeastern side. It was named thus because of its location on the water, so under the protection of the patron saint of water, Khwaja Khizr. The third gate, on the southeastern side, was known as Seekhi, probably due to its facing the neighbouring town of Seekha, or simply because of its having *seekhs* or spikes in its leaves to ward off attacking elephants. The fourth and the last gate faced the Hussain Agahi and was named as Rehri because of a depression on this side. The last two gates have practically disappeared and could hardly be recognised in their remains.

Among the most ancient buildings inside the fort the Sun Temple had attracted almost all the conquerors and the writers. At present there is no sign of it on the ground but Chachnama is the first to mention it in connection with the fall of Multan at the hands of Raja Chach. It says, "when the fort of Multan was taken, Chach appointed a Thakur (a Rajput Chief) as his lieutenant there, and he himself went to an idol temple, which stood in a retired and solitary place, prostrated himself before the idol, offered sacrifices, and then proceeded on his forward journey".

Alberuni while writing about the idol at Multan says, "a famous idol of theirs was that of Multan, dedicated to the sun, and therefore called *Aditya*. It was of wood and covered with red Cordovan leather; in its two eyes were two red rubies. It is said to have been made in the last Kritayuga. Suppose that it was made in the very end of Kritayuga, the time which has since elapsed amounts to 216,432 years. When Muhammad Ibn Alkasim Ibn Almunabbih conquered Multan, he inquired how the town had become so very flourishing and so many treasures had there been accumulated, and then he found out that this idol was the cause, for there came pilgrims from all sides to visit it. Therefore he thought it best to have the idol where it was,..... On the same place a mosque was built. When then the Karmatians occupied Multan, Jalam Ibn Shiban, the usurper, broke the idol into pieces and killed its priests". He, in addition to his own mansion, also built a 'mosque instead of the old mosque, which he ordered to be shut from hatred against anything that had been done under the dynasty of the Caliphs of the house of 'Umayya'. "When afterwards the blessed Prince Mahmud swept away their rule from those countries, he made again the old mosque the place of the Friday-worship, and the second one was left to decay".

In addition to the famous Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsang, mentioning the Sun Temple in 641 AC, it also appears in records as late as 1666 AC when European traveller Thevenot made a visit here. It, however, is conjectured that it shortly afterwards was destroyed by Emperor Alamgir. Its place is said to have been taken by a Mosque, which in turn was made to serve as a powder magazine by the Sikhs during their sway in Punjab during the first half of the nineteenth century AC. It was blown up by a shell from the British batteries during the siege of Multan in 1848 AC. Its ruins were seen by Cunningham in 1872-73 AC almost in the middle of the Fort, towards west of the British period memorial.

The most important building in the Fort, however, is the Mausoleum of Shaikh Rukn-e-Alam, by far the most representative of the Provincial or Multan Style of tomb architecture. Located in the southwestern corner of the ancient Fort (now known as Qila Kuhna Qasim Bagh), the monument, in many ways, is a forerunner of a typical design and decoration in the South Asia Subcontinent.

The grandson of Shaikhul Islam, Shaikh Baha-ud-Din Zakariya, Shaikh Rukn-ud-Din Abul Fateh, commonly known by the title of Rukn-e-Alam (the pillar of the world) was born in 1251 AC. He succeeded his grand father as the head of Suharwardia *Silsila* (Chain) at the age of sixty. He was a man of great learning, piety and spiritual glory, in addition to having much political influence in the days of the Tughlaq Sultans of Delhi. In his establishment, *khanqah*, he had *madrassa*. Ibn-e-Batuta, the famous traveller, visited Multan in 1334 AC and stayed with the Shaikh for some time. The Shaikh died the same year and was buried at Multan in the mausoleum of his grandfather from where his mortal remains were shifted to the present mausoleum at a later date. Tradition ascribes that the latter-mentioned mausoleum was built by the King, Ghiyas-ud-Din Tughlaq, for himself during his lifetime but was given away by his successor, Muhammad Tughlaq, to bury the great Saint. The records do tell that it was constructed under the orders of the Delhi Sultan, Ghiyas-ud-Din Tughlaq, between 1320

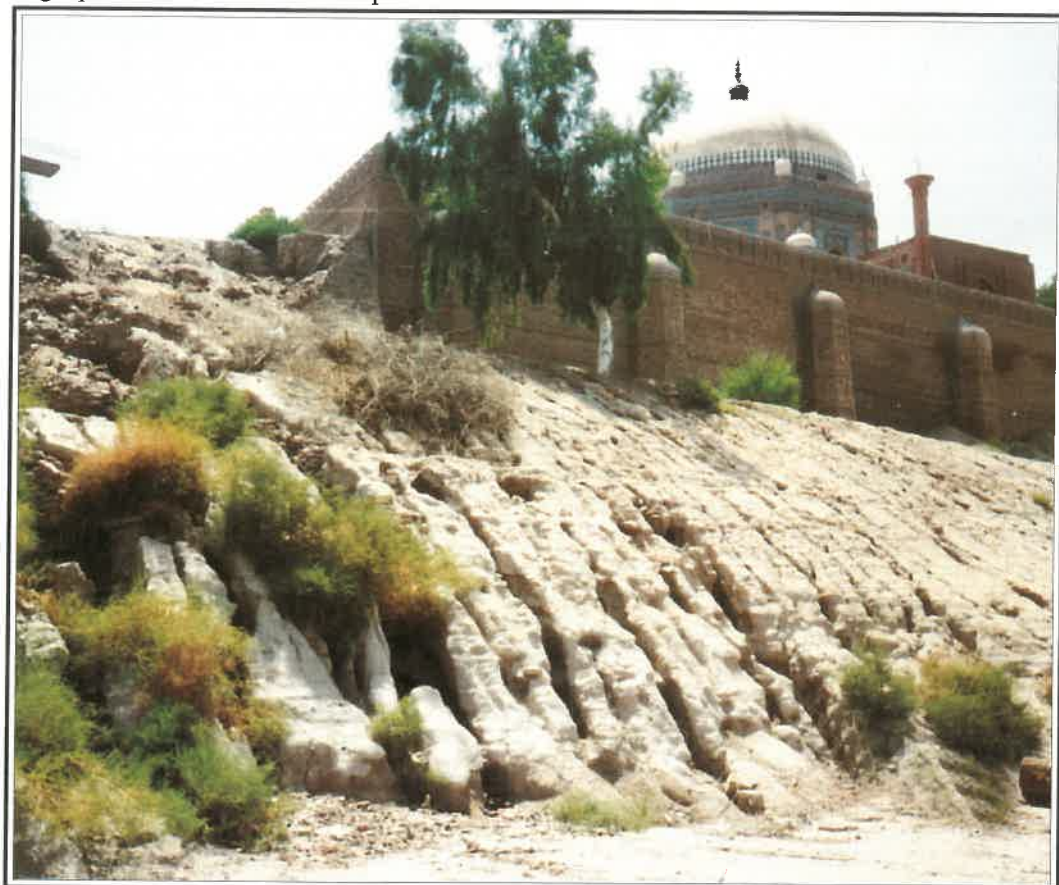
and 1324 AC. It corresponds in time with the construction of his own royal sepulchre, which he built at Tughlaq Abad during his lifetime and where he is buried. The romance of the traditional story ends here as it does not have any currency in the authentic history books.

The shrine is bold in character, harmoniously blended with pleasing embellishment of red bricks, blue tiles and timber laid in a discriminatingly schematic pattern appearing in the South Asia Subcontinent for the first time. The building is octagonal in plan and has battering walls characteristic of Tughlaq style of architecture.

The gigantic mausoleum of Shaikh Rukn-e-Alam rests on an elevated terrace from where it rises to a height of 35 metres. Its first two storeys, measuring in height about 15 and 7.6 metres respectively, lend it a very imposing look. The inner dimension of the dome is 15.52 metres. The base of the octagon on the outside is about 27.3 metres at the ground level. The building of the mausoleum is set within an enclosure wall measuring some 310 metres in length but built on an irregular plan.

The use of dressed and cut bricks laid in mud mortar is pleasing to the eye while wood-bonding sunk in brick work both horizontally and vertically enhances greatly the effect of decoration. The carved bricks, incised as well as in relief, present calligraphic, floral and geometric designs. The enamelled tile intarsia in white, cobalt blue or Persian blue, forming patterns also marks the beginning of tile-mosaic work in the South Asia Subcontinent. Another embellishment is the combination of carved and cut brick work with fillets of small enamelled tiles, called filigree work. In addition to these crafts we also see gilding work, lacquer work and highly delicate carved woodwork, to give the structure an exceptionally enchanting look.

In addition to the earlier-mentioned British obelisk in memory of Agnew and Anderson, a huge sports stadium now also occupies the Fort.



Bakhar Fort

This is still another Fort in the northern Sindh, which though has appeared in history over and over again yet its founding is shrouded in the haze of time. It was situated midstream of the great river Indus near the place where it entered the gorge of the Rohri Hills. Here was a chain of islands the largest of which was known as Bakhar, spelt differently sometimes as Bhakkar, Bakkhar, Bukur etc. It was a fortified stronghold serving as, sort of, northern outpost under Raja Daher. After its having been humbled by the army of Muhammad bin Qasim in the early eighth century AC it served as the headquarters of a district.



Bakhar Fort on the Indus.

The Fort of Bakhar lies almost between the towns of Sukkur and Rohri. After withstanding the vagaries of man and nature over many centuries it still stands as a reminder to its past glory. Ibn Battuta writes in his travels; "When I had spent five days in this city (Lahari) with 'Ala al-Mulk, he gave me a generous travelling provision and I left for the town of Bakar, a fine city intersected by a channel from the river of Sind. In the middle of this canal there is a fine hospice at which travellers are entertained". *A'in-i-Akbari* mixes it up with the fort of Mansurah, "Behkur is a good fort. In ancient books it is called Munsoorah. All the six rivers, before mentioned, pass by it in a collective stream, and afterwards dividing into two, one goes to the south, and other to the north of fort. Here is very little rain. The fruits are delicious". The physical attributions well fit the Bakhar Fort, but fall too short of any of the physical features around Mansurah.

The walls of the fort had been built with sun-dried clay bricks, and if they had the shell of burnt bricks it is hard to find now. The fortification, which was built in the style of doublewalling, rose to a height of about 9 metres to almost 10.5 metres. To provide strength to the fortification wall, semi-circular bastions were provided at regular intervals. There were two gateways, one of them facing west to the side of Alor and Rohri and the other towards east opening to the side of Sukkur. The observation about the fort expressed by Alexander Burnes, who visited it in 1831 AC, still holds good. He says, "it has no strength in its works, and is formidable only from its position". On the authority of *Tuhfat-ul-Kiram*, McMurdo states "that this town did not exist in the time of the Hindu Raj, and that it got its name *Bakar* ('the dawn') from Saiyid Muhammad Maki, of religious memory, some years after its foundation". The Chachnama says that 'I started from the blessed town of Uch for the towns of Alor and Bakhar, the leading men of which places are descended from the Arabs'.

The Fort of Bakhar has emerged as an important place in the annals of Sindh. Its history is full of its changing hands between different local powers, which fought their wars in its vicinity. It is also 'often mentioned in connection with the important forts of Multan, Uchh, Sehwan and Thattah'.

The fort fell to the Wazir of Sultan of Ghazni, named Abdul Razzaq, when he invaded Sindh in 1026 AC. Sultan Iltutmish of Delhi (1211 AC - 1236 AC) invaded Sindh in 1228 AC and defeated Qabacha, who was then ruling the country from Uch. When Uch was occupied by the Sultan's army, Qabacha fled and took refuge in the fort of Bakhar. The Sultan's minister, Nizam al-Muk Junaydi laid siege on this fort. Qabacha attempted to escape from here but was drowned in the mighty river Indus.

'One of the most noted local governors in Sind was Sultan Muhammad Kokaltash, governor of Bakhar.... Who was appointed to that post by Shahbeg, and subsequently confirmed in it by the emperor Akbar'. He continued to be in this position for fifty years. Cousens says, "Shahbeg, on one of his visits to the fort, divided up the ground, inside, into building sites for his chiefs and their families, and put the work in hand. At this time "the bricks of the ancient fort of Alor, the old capital of Sind, as well as the materials of the buildings belonging to the Turks and Sammahs, living round the town of Bakhar (on the north bank of the river), were brought and utilised in repairing the fort walls and building houses in it".

Jam Juna Tughlaq II, who ruled Sindh from 1428 AC to 1453 AC while trying to stop the Baloch incursion and their occupying the fertile lands of Sindh, suppressed the rebellion. It was around Bhakkar, that he punished the ringleaders, and appointed his brothers as Governors of Sehwan and Bhakkar to secure the northern frontiers of his kingdom. Next Bhakkar is mentioned with the march of Jam Sikandar Shah II, son of Jam Fateh Khan, who occupied the throne in 1453 AC. His uncles, the governors of Sehwan and Bhakkar, had stood up in rebellion against him. However, he had to retreat to his capital where another relative of his had proclaimed himself as king.

During his rule over Sindh, Jam Nizamud Din also stayed at Bhakkar for two years to make his northern frontiers safe especially from the marauding Balochs. During his stay here he is recorded to have 'strengthened the defences of the fort of Bakhar, filled it with provisions, and left his slave, Dilshad, in-charge of the fort to guard his northern borders'.

When Shah Shuja died at Agham/Aghamano, about 50 kilometres southeast of Hyderabad, in June 1524 AC, his body was temporarily buried at Bhakkar Fort, only to be removed for taking it to Makkah three years later. His son Shah Hasan, in order to secure his overlord's, Babar's, southern flanks attacked Multan. On this adventure, he made the Baloch tribes to run away from the northern Sindh where in Bakhar, while departing in 1525 AC, he left a garrison to defend the area.

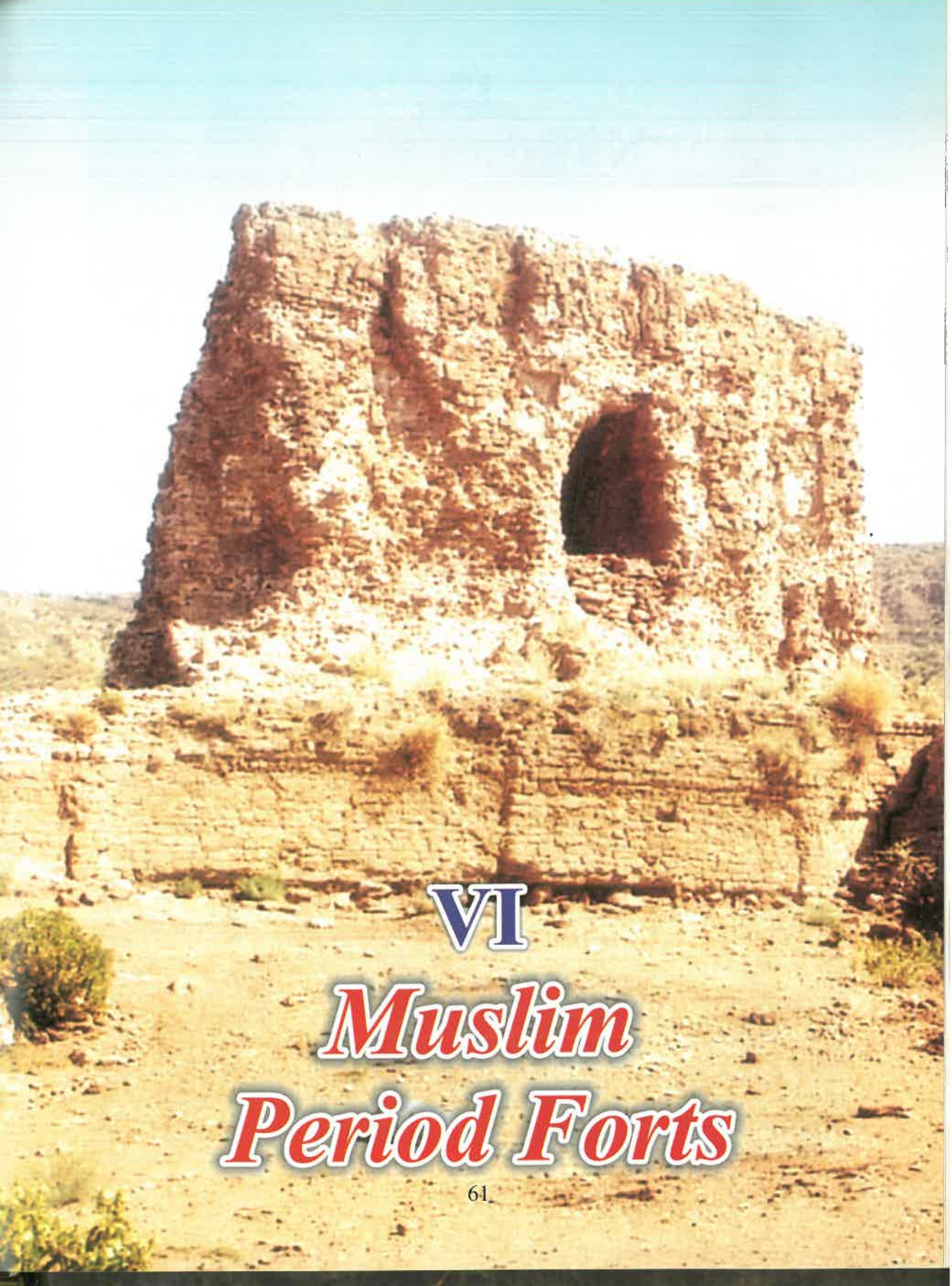
However, when the fugitive Emperor Humayun, son of Emperor Babar, was on the run in 1541 AC, Shah Hasan made 'Sultan Mahmud in-charge of the island fortress of Bakhar with strict instructions to shut its gates on the Emperor and defend it. At this time some additions were made to the existing fort to add to its invulnerability. An outer enveloping wall was built thus increasing the circuit of the fort to about 1715 metres, providing four gates and 70 bastions.

On the orders of Shah Hussain, Humayun could be allowed to encamp about seven kilometres away in the beautiful Char Bagh of Baberlu. Shah Hasan himself remained at Thatta all the time when the fugitive Emperor waited for his reply. He tactfully delayed any positive response and, in the end, sent back the message to march with his army to 'Chachgan as it had more resources than Bhakkar'. This, the historians say, was an attempt to get the Emperor bogged down in the desert and salt marshes of eastern Sindh.

When Shah Hasan died without an heir as his only daughter was away, Sultan Mahmud, the governor of Bakhar and Mirza Isa, the Tarkhan leader, divided the Arghun realm among themselves in 1555 AC. Sehwan, however, rebelled and Sultan Mahmud hurried back to his seat at Bakhar. Afterwards, it became the permanent seat of the deputy *subedar* of the governor of Multan.

The fortifications were rebuilt and restored for the last time by the governor Nawab Ghulam Sadik Khan around 1780-90 AC during the times of Taimur Shah, to whom Bakhar then belonged. It is said that to obtain bricks for the purpose 'he broke down the tombs of Paths, which covered the heights of Sakhar, and reduced them to a complete ruin'.

The British, during the *raj*, used it partly for military purpose by turning the governor's palace in the east wall into a powder magazine. After the departure of the British on the eve of independence in 1947, its partial use for military purpose continues.



VI
*Muslim
Period Forts*

Nandna Fort

About twenty kilometres east of Choa Saidan Shah in the District of Chakwal lies a village known as Ara. From here onward extends an open plateau, which has plenty of water in this region of the Salt Range. This point may also be taken as the starting point of the Nandna Pass which follows a steep winding road leading over the rocky scrap of the range for about three kilometres to a picturesque dip between the two sub-ranges of the outer Salt Ranges. From these sub-ranges descend two rivulets which meet below the remains of the ancient Fort of Nandna. The Fort is precariously entrenched between these two sub-ranges at a height of about 460 metres above mean sea level. It lies at 32° 32' East Latitude and 73° 17' North Longitude.

One of the most prolific Muslim Scholars and scientists, Abu Ar-Rayhan Muhammad ibn Ahmad Alberuni (b. September 973 AC, Khwarezm, Khorasan--d. Dec. 13, 1048 AC, Ghazna, Ghaznavid Afghanistan [now Ghazni.]) visited the Nandna Fort with the armies of the Sultan of Ghazna in the early eleventh century AC. He is famous for his works on astronomy and, it is said, that it was during his sojourn to this place that he established here an astronomical laboratory. He discussed with approval the theory of the Earth's rotation on its axis and made accurate calculations of latitude and longitude. With all the modern sophisticated gadgets a difference of only 43' in his calculation of the Latitude of Nandna could be found. Here he also measured the circumference of the globe, which came to 39805 kilometres, a variation of hardly 322 kilometres from the modern measurements. In his works on physics, he explained natural springs by the laws of hydrostatics and determined with remarkable accuracy the specific weight of 18 precious stones and metals. In his works on geography, he advanced the daring view that the valley of the Indus had once been a sea basin.



General view of Fort showing temple



General View Showing Muslim Graves

Sir Aurel Stein infers that it was the route starting from Ara that was adopted by the forces of Alexander the Great, using the Nandna Pass, to descend to the river Hydaspes (Jhelum), which he ultimately crossed at Jalalpur (Boukephala), less than 30 kilometres southeast of Ara. The same plateau of Ara was perhaps again the rendezvous for the battle between Mahmud of Ghazna and Bhimpal son of Trilochanpal, the last ruler of the Hindu Shahiya dynasty in the year 1014 AC. After a fierce fight, Mahmud captured the Nandna Fort and appointed here one Sarugh as *Kotwal* (officer-in-charge).



General view of remains of Fort



Detail of temple

These events of utmost historical nature only go to suggest that Nandna and the country around it carried importance since at least the 3rd century BC. In the later historical records it appears clearly when in 991 AC Raja of Lahore attempted an invasion from east and then in 999 AC Haj (or Chack?) of Lahore showed his interest in Nandna.

In the early part of the 13th century AC Nandna was held by Qamar-ud-din Karmani who was defeated at the hands of a general of Jalal-ud-din, Sultan of Khwarezm. The latter lost its possession to Chingez Khan when one of his generals, Turti, captured it and put its inhabitants to sword.

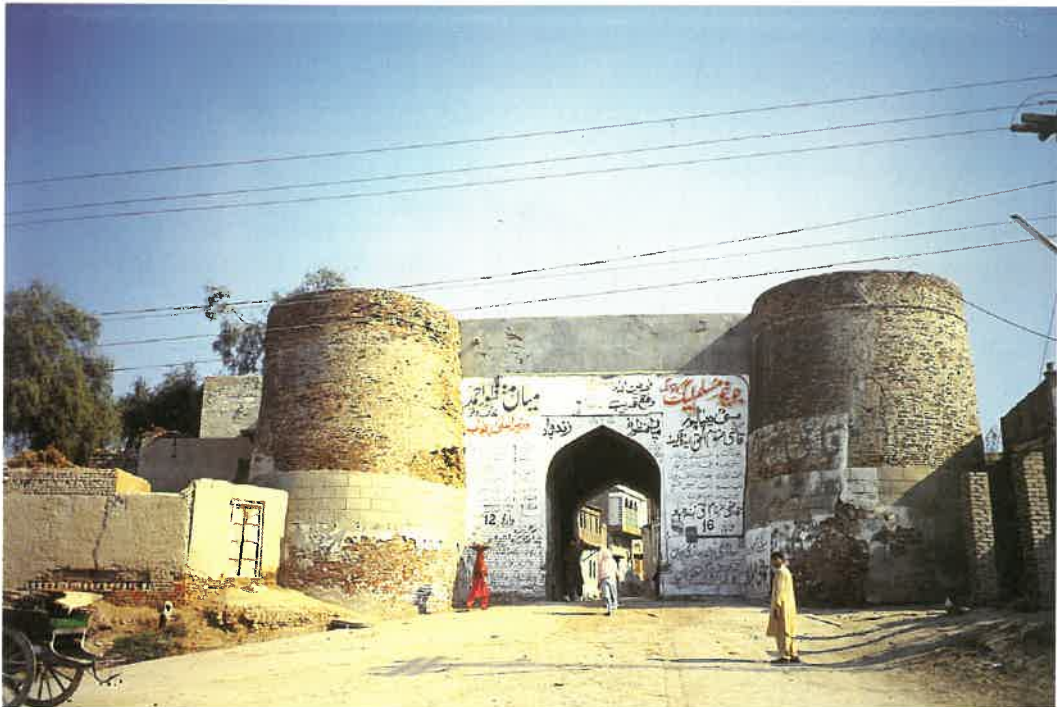
Nandna figures among the places conquered by Sultan Iltutmish of Delhi. His son Mahmud thought himself having been betrayed by Rana of the Salt Range as the latter had guided Mongol inroad in the year 1246 AC. To punish the Rana he sent an army in 1247 AC to the Koh-e-Jud, or the Salt Range. There is no mention of Nandna in the history of powers afterwards. It can, therefore, be inferred that it then lost its importance, thus neglected and ultimately fell into ruins.

There are remains of a temple inside the Fort. It is built in typical *sikhara* shape almost entirely using the locally available stone. Some scholars trace its origin to the tenth century AC.

Among the other structures here are the remains of a mosque, as also of a stupa which should not be later than 7th/8th century AC. There is a vast Muslim graveyard on the western slope of the hill with graves scattered all over the place. In the absence of any inscription or written record it is almost impossible to assign them any date.

Fort at Dipalpur

Dipalpur is presently a *tehsil* headquarter in the Okara district of Punjab. Although not a town of impressive dimensions presently it has, nevertheless, been playing important role in the medieval history of the South Asia Subcontinent. There is not much evidence on the surface to suggest about its origin. It is said that its foundations were laid by Raja Deva Pala, whose date is not known to any degree of certainty. The initial studies, on the basis of occasional finds of coins and household pottery, suggest that the place be of great antiquity. This is further verified by the fact that the interior surface, on which the town is built within the fortification, is on a level with the mound rising to its ramparts. The coins found from here also suggest that 'Dipalpur was in existence as early as the time of the Indo-Scythians'. After preliminary study Cunningham reaches the conclusion to 'identify it with the *Daidala* of Ptolemy, which was on the Sutlej to the south of *Labokla* and *Amakatis*, or Lahor and Ambakapi'.



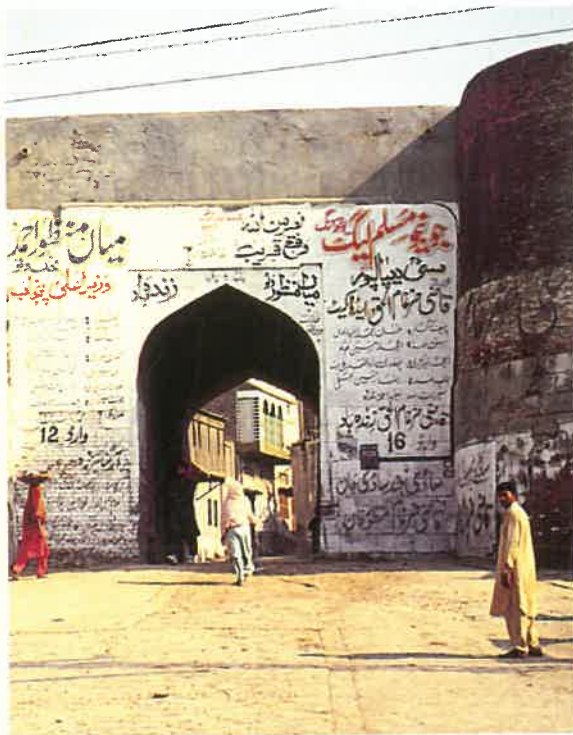
Dipalpur: Pakpattan Gate.

In its later history Dipalpur served as the capital of the northern Punjab during the period of the Pathan emperors of Delhi. It was a favourite residence of Firoz Shah Tughlaq (1351-1388 AC), who erected a large mosque outside the city. He is also credited with constructing a canal from the Sutlej River to irrigate its lands.

At the time of the great Mongol Timur, Dipalpur was a prosperous town, second only to Multan in size and importance. It had a strong fortification running round the town, having been further strengthened by 84 bastions. It is also said that at that time it also had 84 mosques and an equal number of wells. In 1524 AC Babar, having taken Lahore, marched on Dipalpur and took it by storm. The country of Dipalpur was then made over to Sultan Ala-ud-din Lodhi, who had been an



Divalpur: Lodhi Gate



Unsuccessful competitor for the throne of Delhi.

Later on, Babar had to fall back on Kabul, due to defection of Daulat Khan, who drove Ala-ud-din out of the country, which went under the sway of Multan. In 1526 AC Babar, having returned to the Subcontinent, defeated Ibrahim Khan Lodhi at the battle of Panipat, and became king of Delhi. Soon after he expelled Arghuns from Multan when the whole country was made over to him. Babar conferred it on his son Askari. However, after the death of Babar, his son and successor, Humayun had to give it up to his brother, Mirza Kamran, who held it till the successful revolt of Sher Shah Suri in 1540 AC.

On Humayun's return to the throne of Delhi, one of his lieutenants, Abu Moali, defeated the Afghans in 1555 AC at Divalpur. *Ai'en-e-Akbari* mentions Divalpur as one of the three *sarkars* of the *Suba* of Multan and contained 29 *mahals* or *parganas*.

The fortified city of Divalpur still has imposing gates. A large mound here was perhaps the site of the old ruined Fort. It is said that at the time of the invasion of Timur, the prosperous town had its habitational quarters even outside the Fort, and because of lack of space inside, the people had to seek refuge in the nearby Bhatner.

19

Rohtas Fort

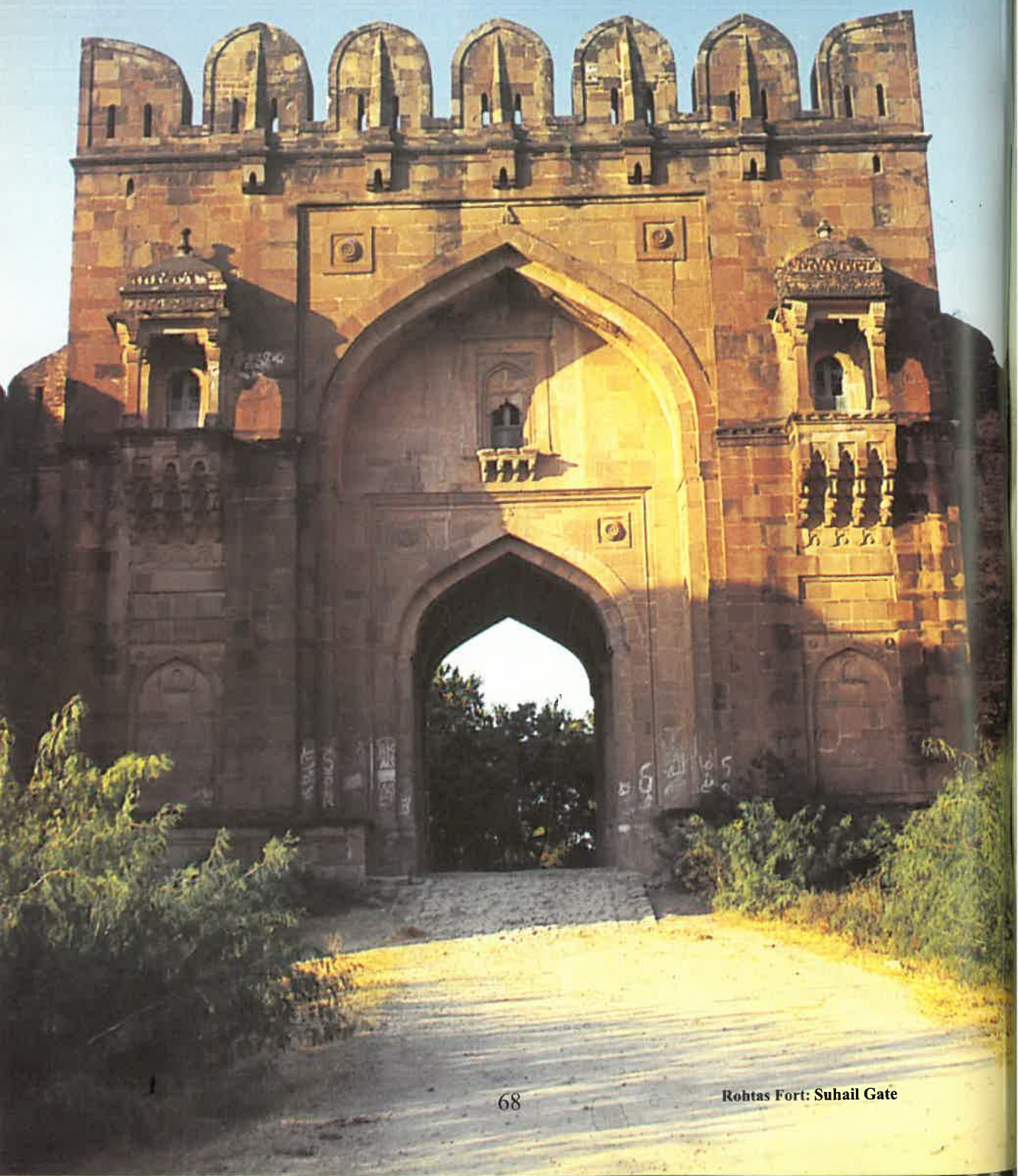
After expelling Emperor Humayun, Sher Shah Suri as king of Hindustan, caused to build two forts in the area what is now Pakistan. While the reason as to building a stronghold at Shergarh, now falling in the Okara district of Punjab, could not be spelled out by any of the historians the other fort at Rohtas, now in Jhelum district, had its strong points in favour of its strategic location. The shrewd and prudent ruler like Sher Shah could easily sense the threat to his supremacy from the direction of northern Punjab. The exiled emperor Humayun could join hands here with his brother in Kashmir, and helped by friendly Gakkhars of the area could make a serious effort to regain his lost empire of the South Asia Subcontinent.

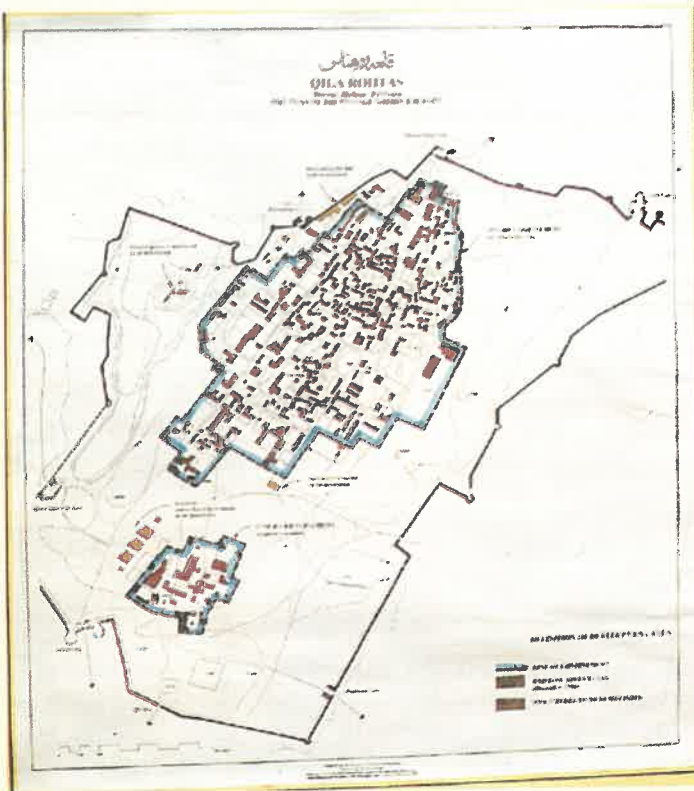


Rohtas Fort: Khwaskhani Gate.

Lying in the sub-mountainous region north of river Jhelum, the Rohtas Fort stands in a gorge over-looking the Kahan River, along the Tilla Range. About sixteen kilometres from the Jhelum City the Fort speaks high of its builder, Sher Shah Suri. Originally named Farid Khan, Sher Shah, belonged to the sturdy stock of Pathans inhabiting the highland home of Roh amidst the Sulaiman Range. After leading an unfavourable and disturbed early life, he entered the service of Emperor Babar whom he defected in favour of the Afghans. The luck would see him face to face with Emperor Humayun, son and successor of Emperor Babar, at Chausa. After a decisive defeat here, Humayun was forced to flee to Iran via Punjab and Sindh.

Sher Shah perceived a possibility of Humayun's joining hands with his brothers in Peshawar Valley and embarking on a triumphant march to reconquer his territory. The ever-willing help of Gakkhars, ardent enemies of Sher Shah and old friends of the Mughals, could play important role in this adventure. As the Gakkhars held control of the area through which old route to the heart of the Subcontinent passed, Sher Shah Suri planned this strategic stronghold to serve this purpose against Any such eventuality.





After selecting a spot, which seemed ideal to serve well his planning, Sher Shah Suri ordered to commence the work in 1541 AC with Todar Mal Khatri, his revenue minister, as in-charge of the project. As expected, the Gakkhars opposed the construction and vowed not to work even as day labourers. Faced with such problems Todar Mal chose to inform the King about the difficulties. Sher Shah Suri's reply was curt but clear, "I know you for a man of business, understanding and intelligence. I see now no work can be expected from you, because you consider money as your friend. When I have commanded you to do a thing you ought not to have cared for money in fixing the rate. Whatever be the expense, shall be borne by my government".

The order of the monarch was enough to encourage Todar Mal to fix one red *ashrafi* for each slab on the first day. The total cost on the construction of this huge undertaking, though fabulous, is not known to a safe degree of certainty. It varies from Rs.3,425,000 to Rs.110,107,975 in different accounts. The latter-mentioned sum, however, also includes the cost of maintaining an army.



Rohtas Fort: Battlements and machicolations

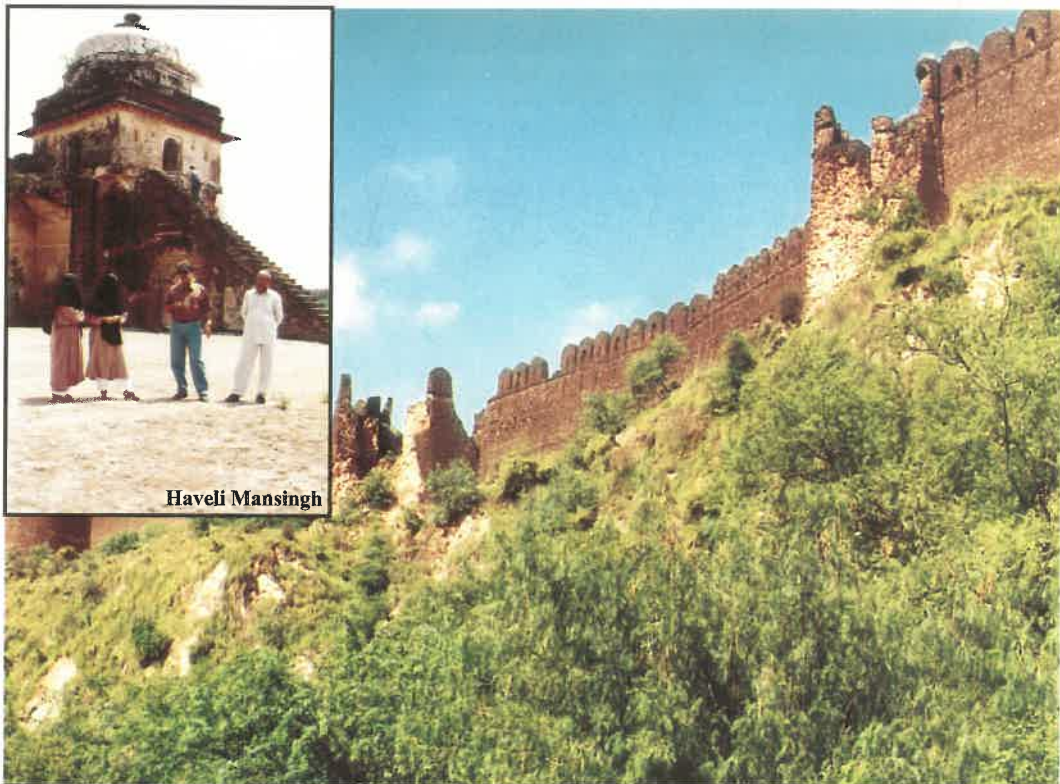
The Fort is irregular in plan and covers a circumference of four kilometres. The difficult contours of the hillock have been followed in aligning the fortification wall. The Fort is divided by a 533-metre long cross-wall which separates the citadel for the chieftains, from the rest of the fort. The fortification wall has 68 massively built bastions and three *baolies* (stepped-wells) to provide the occupants with the life-sustaining commodity of water. The huge fortification has as many as 11 accesses through gates named as Sohail, Kabuli, Shishi, Langarkhani, Talaqi, Mori or Kashmiri, Khwaskhani, Gatali, Tulla Mori, Pipal Wala and Sar Gate. A twelfth gate opens in the cross-wall to keep both the portions of the Fort connected with each other.

The Langarkhani Gate, which opens into the citadel, is a trap gate for enemy, which could come under direct fire from the bastions. The Khwaskhani Gate, opening on the north towards the river, is a superb example of a gate having double walling for better defence. A small enclave on the western end is a citadel within citadel and is defended with just one gate. In the western-most part of the citadel is a small but beautiful mosque known as Shahi or Royal Mosque. The living quarters are conspicuous by their absence. There is only one residential building known by the name of *Haveli* (mansion) Maan Singh, a general of Akbar's period. It occupies the highest point in the citadel. The remarkable feature of the *Haveli* is its balconies carried on four columns with equal number of brackets in *garuda* design.

The gigantic fort is not just massively built but has some delicate decorative motifs to remind us of the refined taste of its builder. These features include stone carvings in low and high relief, calligraphic inscriptions and plaster or glazed-tile decorations. The stone carving embellishes all the gates and the Shahi Mosque. The calligraphic inscriptions are predominantly religious in character, invariably in *naskh* script. The inscription carved on marble slab on the Shishi Gate is in Persian and mentions the date of the construction of the Fort as AH 948. The text is repeated in another inscription over the Talaqi Gate.



Haveli Mansingh



Rohtas Fort: General View of Fortification Wall and Bastions.



Baoli inside Rohtas Fort

The roundels on the spandrels of the mosque arches have been made in *gutch* plaster while enamelled tiles, the forerunners of the Mughals' technique in decoration, have been used to decorate the Shishi Gate.

It seems ironical that the prediction of Sher Shah Suri would come true in toto but the 'formidable' Rohtas Fort could not prove effective in blocking the re-entry of the exiled Mughal, Humayun. Sher Shah died even before the construction of the Fort was completed and the governor of Rohtas, Tatar Khan Kasi, did not give any resistance to the storming of the Mughals, now supported by Gakkhars, and fled. Legend says that Humayun had sworn to destroy the Rohtas Fort so thoroughly as to raze it to ground completely. However, on seeing such a magnificently built stronghold he was prevailed upon to resist his vow. He thus destroyed one of the gates to fulfil the spirit of his pledge.

This imposing stronghold somehow never remained a favourite spot with the Mughal rulers. Emperor Akbar used it once to rest for a night while Jahangir, on some of his pleasure marches to Kashmir, visited it for a few times. He, however, speaks high of its strength in "Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri".

The fort, which is now a protected antiquity inscribed on the World Cultural Heritage List of UNESCO, is accessed from Dina situated at the junction where road from Mangla/Azad Kashmir joins the G.T.Road, 12 kilometres from Jhelum while going to Rawalpindi/Islamabad. One has to brave through the Kahan, which becomes very nasty during rains. However, a bridge over it is in the offing to facilitate an unhindered access in all weathers.



Rohtas Fort: General view from outside

Attock Fort

The gorge, situated about a few kilometres downstream of the confluence of the waters of the river Indus and the river Kabul, has always commanded one of the most important crossings to enter the plains of South Asia. It was the exit point to the hordes of invaders entering the Subcontinent from the gates of the Khyber. To check any such movement, and to control the entry, Akbar the Great built a fort at the place where the Indus passes through this narrow gorge. It was named as "Attock Banaras" by Emperor Akbar keeping in line with that of "Katak Banaras", the chief Fort at the other extremity of his empire. Along with the construction of the Fort, a Ferry Crossing and a Boat-Bridge were also constructed at Attock. The Emperor was so fastidious about it that to maintain regularity in the Ferry Crossing and the Boat-Bridge services, he imported Boatmen from Katak Banaras. The descendants of these immigrants still live in Malahi Tola, a village lying very close to the Fort. Simultaneously, the work on the construction of re-aligned portion of Grand Trunk Road running south of Kabul River through Peshawar valley and Khyber Pass was completed. Emperor Akbar gave the responsibility to Malik Akoray Khattak, great grand father of Khushal Khan Khattak and after whom a famous town still exists, for the protection of newly constructed portion of the Grand Trunk Road. A mint was also established here.

Perched on a hilly terrain on the left side of the Indus, the Fort presents a unique view of the meeting of the waters of the two rivers Indus and Kabul. Badayuni, the chronicler of Akbar, writes that the Emperor ordered a fort to be built here in AH 989/ 1581 AC. It was completed within two years, in AH 991/ 1583 AC as is evident from a marble slab inscription now set above the inner north gateway. The work of the supervision for the construction of this fort was assigned by the Emperor to Khwaja Shamsuddin Khwafi, who was also responsible for building the Hakims' Tomb at Hasan Abdal almost simultaneously.



Attock Fort: Kabuli Gate flanked by bastions

After the downfall of the great Mughal Empire, Durranis gained control of the Fort in 1741 AC. In 1812 AC Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh ruler from Punjab, seized the Fort from the Wazir of Kabul. In order to consolidate his control and to check Afghan inroads, the Sikhs crossed the Indus and established posts on the other side of the river. The Fort remained nominally in their hands until the end of first Sikh War. It then fell to the British possession in 1842 AC. It remained under their control, except for a short period when it was recaptured by Sikhs after the Second Sikh War. It was used by the British to station different units of the army, till 1947 AC when it became a part of the newly independent Pakistan. Since 1957 it is in the active control of the Pakistan Army and has the status of Protected Antiquity under the Antiquities Act of 1975.

Although it has gone tremendous structural changes in the form of additions and alterations since 1812 AC, to suit its use to the respective army, yet most of its original features have more or less stood out in their recognisable form. Such features consist of the grand fortification wall, major gates, gallows, Turkish baths, tunnel gates etc.



The fort is in the form of a rough parallelogram stretching in east-west direction along the slope of low ridge of the mountains, which descends to the water level in the river Indus. From the top, in the east, near Mori Gate the ridge slopes down both towards south and west when it meets a rainy nullah and river Indus respectively.

Internally, the fort is divided in clearly two portions, the lower, which is smaller portion, and the upper or the larger portion. A huge wall, running north-south, separated the two portions. A medium sized gateway, *Delhi Darwaza*, links the two portions.

The Fort has been provided with four gates to access it from outside. Three of these gates are named after the great cities of the time in whose direction they open. These are called as Kabuli Gate, Lahori Gate and Delhi Gate. The fourth, known as Mori Gate, is said to have been named after one of the wives of Emperor Akbar, which though seems highly unlikely as its origin could be traced only to the Sikh period. A number of other forts in the South Asia Subcontinent, though not necessarily of Mughal origin, also have gates named as Mori. The smaller size, as compared to the rest of the gates, may have secured them this particular nomenclature following the literal meaning of the word, hole or aperture. The heavy wooden leaves provided to the gates are with such arrangements of iron spikes as were designed to halt any attack of the invading forces' elephants or combined force of soldiers to break it open.



Attock Fort: Detail of spiked wooden gate

The Fort, which obviously guarded the river crossing through the boat-bridge on the Grand Trunk Road, is purely a military post and unlike the palace-forts at Lahore or Fatehpur Sikri, is not studded with civil buildings or any sort of palaces or mansions inside.

The huge fortification wall runs over about 1.5 kilometres, normally following the natural contours of the hill. The wall is further strengthened with more than eighteen bastions. All, except one, of these bastions are circular in shape. The remaining one bastion is a fine example of rectangular order. They are built mostly of a local shaly rock set in thick lime mortar. However, in the vaulting, domes, and external string-course small Lakhuri brick is used, while for the original gateways sandstone resembling that found at Taraki in the Jhelum district has been utilised.

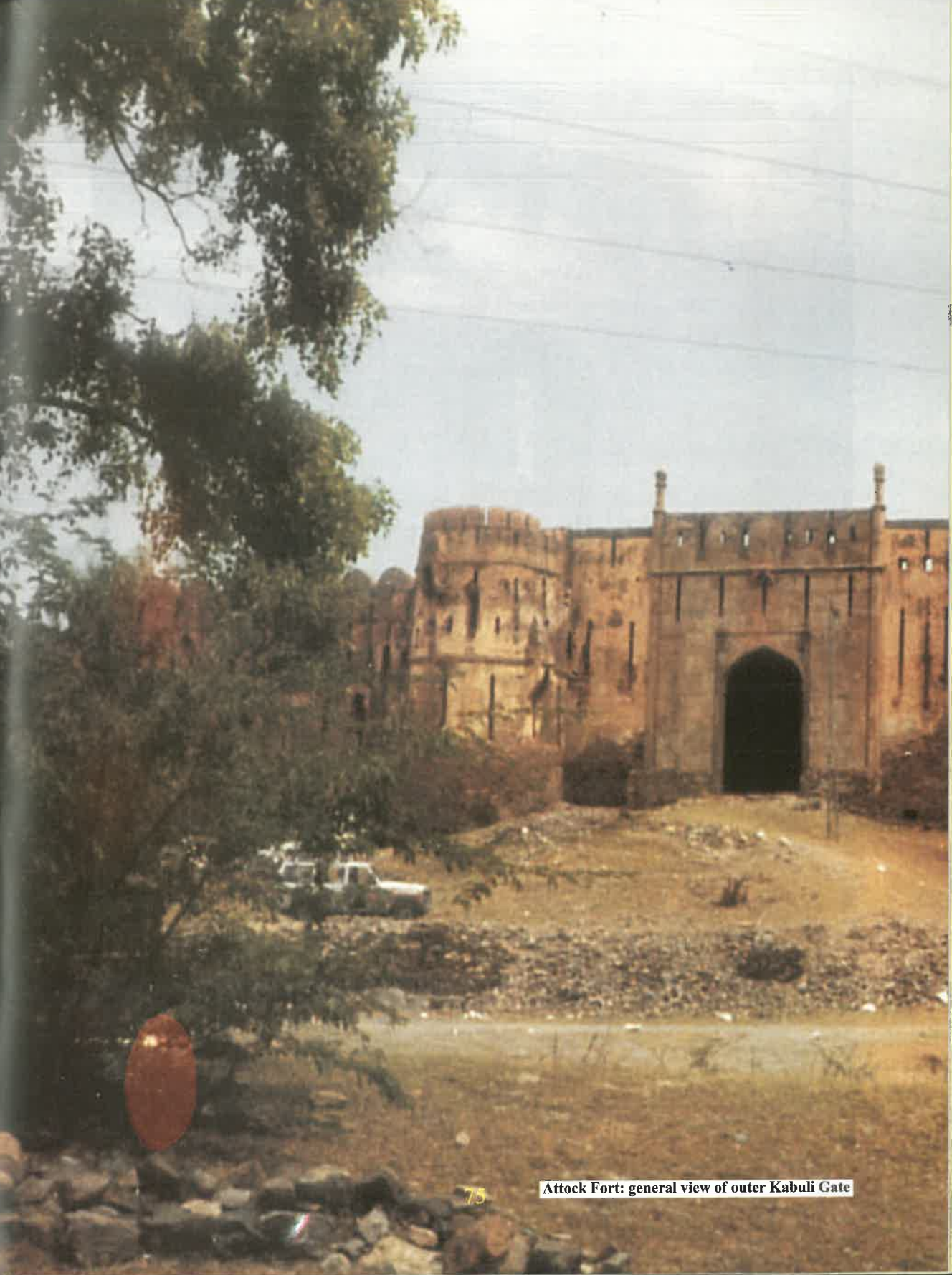
An interesting feature of the fortification is a narrow gallery contrived high up in the walls to give the defenders head and back cover. The greater part of the gallery has vaulted roof. In one stretch, however, thick and flat roofing-slabs replace the brick vaulting. The battlements, loopholes and machicolations bear evidence of changes to meet new needs arising from changing armament.

Midway up the wall of a tower on the north and overlooking an extensive stretch of the river is a balcony approached through a four-centred doorway in the front of the tower, and sheltered by a *chhajja* (eaves) above. This is the only building within the fortification, which is designed for residential purposes and, with alterations, is still used as such.

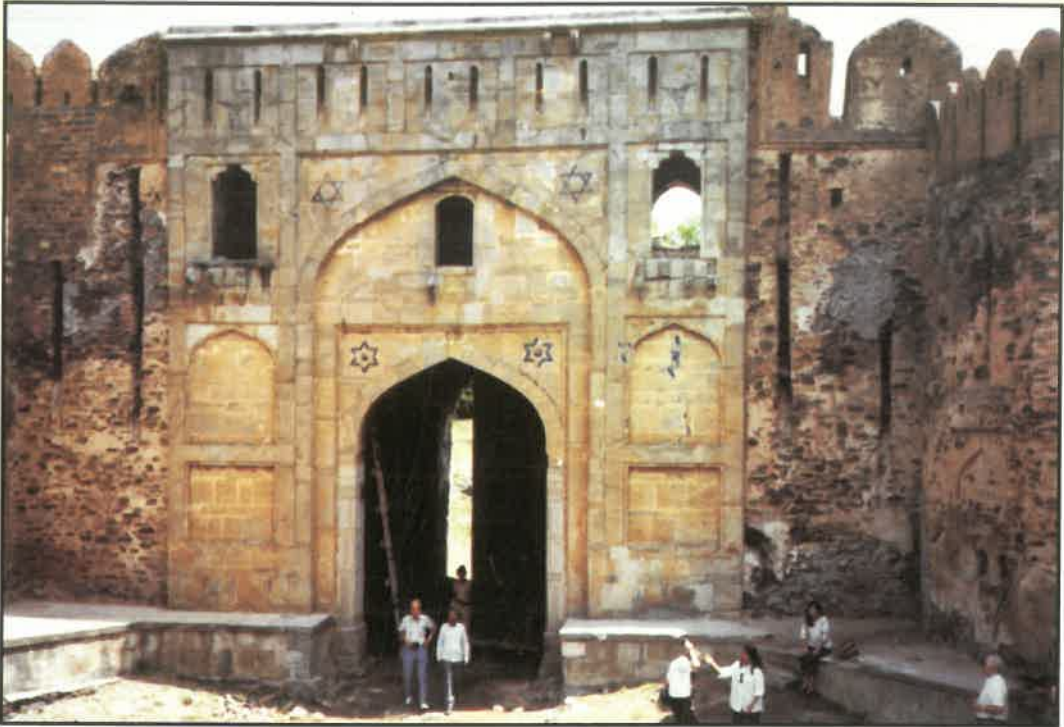
The Kabuli Gate on the west is the only old entrance now open to view. It is built in the usual double-style and is flanked by round towers; the outer gate is in line with the fortification wall, and is backed by a square court from which the inner gate opens into the interior. In this way making a trap-gate for added security and more power to defend or attack the enemy. The gates are of sandstone, with four-centred openings under musketry-slits. The inner gate also has three windows with balconies, and is panelled.

In the centre of the north wall is a rectangular projection known as the Magazine. Originally this must have been the principal entrance to the fort. The top of the inner gateway is still visible and is surmounted by an inscription, which reads: {Translation} "Shield of the kings of the World King Akbar, May God increase his glory: God is Great. 991 AH" (1583 AC). This tablet commemorating the founding of the Fort was originally set in facade of the Lahori Gate. During British period, it was removed and placed in the facade of Mori Gate, which had become main entrance to the Fort after the construction of modern rail and road iron-bridge a short distance down the river. In general design this gate resembles the Kabuli Gate but has on either side a small oriel window with *chhajjas* (eaves) and decorated cresting.

There are no old buildings in the interior except some underground chambers in the upper part near the modern Delhi Gate. At present these are inaccessible, but traces of water-channels and reservoirs had been observed by the scholars in one of them and they appear to have been cool chambers for use in summer. In the lower fort area the small road from the Clyde Battery to the modern Lahori Gate at many places cuts through old walls and ruined vaulted chambers built in small bricks.



Attock Fort: general view of outer Kabuli Gate



Attock Fort: A view of inner Kabuli Gate



Attock Fort: Outer Kabuli Gate

21

Lahore Fort

The Lahore Fort is a unique ensemble of buildings, which portray an almost continuous history of architecture from Emperor Akbar the Great (1556-1605 AC) to Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir (1658-1707 AC) and even later Sikh and British rulers. It is located in the northwestern corner of the old city of Lahore. Presently on its northern side, across the Circular Road, lies the Iqbal Park - and Minar-e-Pakistan - while towards west is the Hazuri Bagh with the Badshahi Masjid at the far end. Although approachable from eastern and southern sides its present main entrances lie in its west and are connected with the Circular Road by a black-top link road.

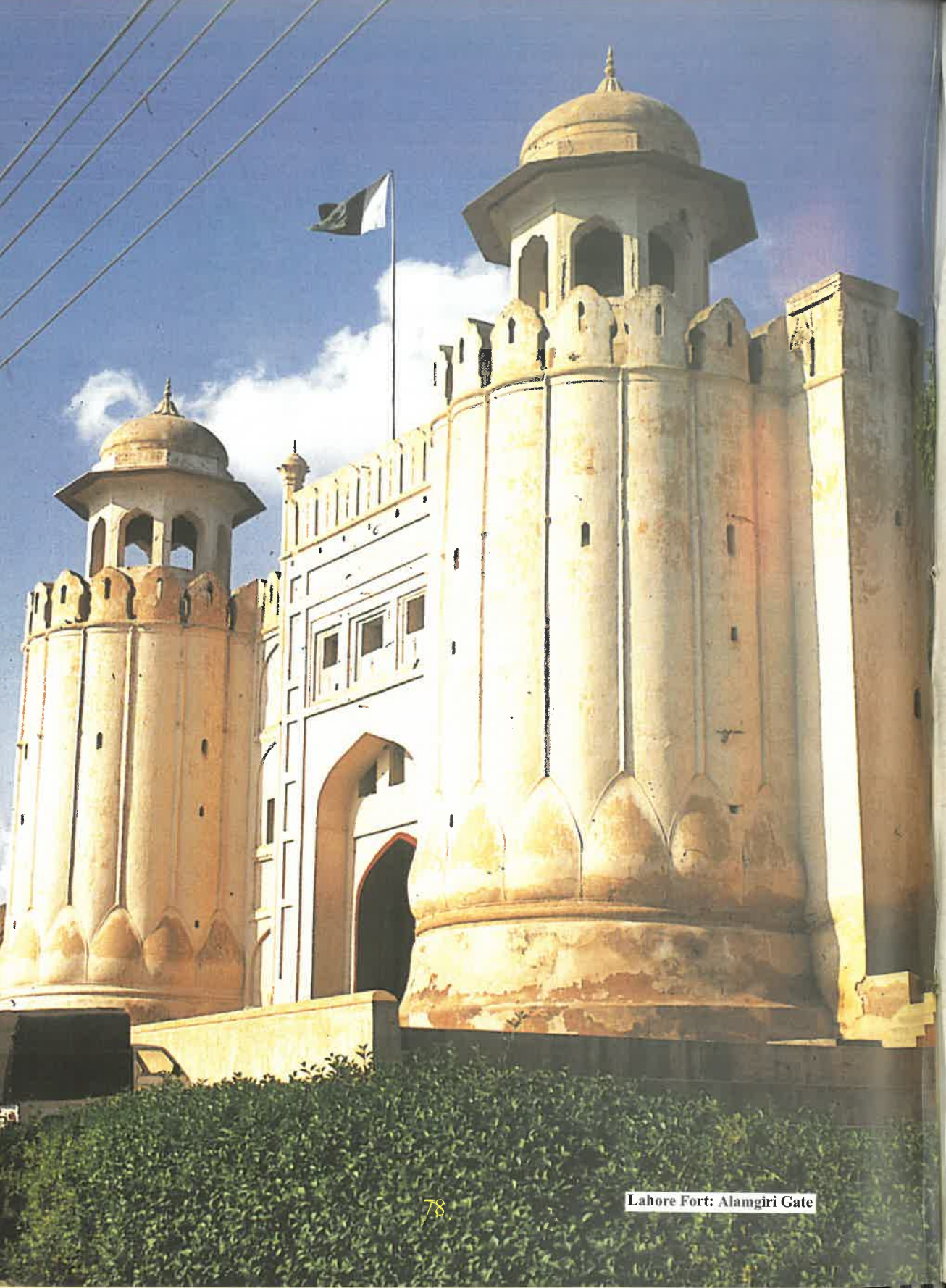
In the absence of any definite records the theories of its origin are based on conjectures and scanty archaeological evidence. It is generally believed that the Fort came into existence with the founding of the city itself. The hero of the famous epic Ramayana, the mythic Prince Loh, is generally given the credit in this respect. However, limited excavations carried out in 1959 revealed the remains of five distinct periods namely the British, Sikh, Mughal, Sultanate/Ghaznavide and Hindu.

Its recorded accounts begin with its capture in 1021 AC by Sultan Mahmood of Ghazna. After going through a number of ups and downs of history the Fort entered its golden age with the advent of the Mughals in the South Asian Subcontinent. The first two rulers of the dynasty, Babar and Humayun, did not leave any mark on the Lahore Fort. However, their successors not only contributed a great deal to the buildings but also extended it during their respective reigns.



Lahore Fort : Western pictured wall

The earlier-period mud-fort was demolished by Emperor Akbar and rebuilt in burnt bricks, around 1566 AC. It appears that the mud fort was rectangle in shape and occupied the southeastern part of the present fort, with its northward extent to the *Diwan-e-Aam*. The Fort, being at considerable height than the adjoining river Ravi and the intervening uneven area on the north, could only be



extended if the same level were attained. Emperor Akbar constructed here basement chambers, which rather offered three-fold advantages of bringing the area in level with the existing fort, providing additional usable space and, most of all, offering stability to the super-structures. The following Mughals while further extending the Fort utilised the same technique with the result that almost half of the fort covering northern portion has such chambers.



General view of British-period steps with original bastion



Lahore Fort: Masti or Akbari Gate

Important Buildings

An imposing fortification wall runs round the Fort. However, much of its southern portion was demolished and replaced by brick-stairs by the British for political reasons before it was handed over to the Department of Archaeology in 1927 as an antiquity. The wall, constructed in different periods following the expansion of the Fort and shifting of the course of the river on its north, is built in small burnt-bricks and strengthened with semi-circular bastions at regular intervals.

The Fort can roughly be divided into six blocks or quadrangles, *Shah Burj* Complex, southwestern segment and the moat on the northern side. Almost all the mentionable buildings are situated within these divisions. These areas and their important buildings are as under: -



Lahore Fort: Jahangir's Quadrangle

A. AKBAR'S QUADRANGLE:

It is a vast court occupying the southeastern area of the Fort. Most of the buildings have now disappeared, partly demolished by Emperor Jahangir to build his *Daulat Khane-e-Khas-o-Aam* and partly by Shahjahan to erect the *Diwan-e-Aam*.



Lahore Fort : Northern pictured wall

1. Masti Gate:

The perfectly surviving building of Akbar's period is the *Masjidi* or *Masiti* (after *masit* as Mosque is called in Punjabi) Gate, which opens on the east. It is called so because it faces the famous Mosque of Maryam Zamani, the mother of Jahangir. The word in its corrupted form has made it

'Masti'. The Gate is a huge building, very bold and masculine in character, flanked by two heavy bastions with battlements and machicolations to add to its military character.

B. DIWAN-E-AAM QUADRANGLE:

It is a vast court, which was originally enclosed by a range of vaulted chambers with central gateways. The apartments unfortunately have not survived and have since been replaced with plants and shrubs. The buildings in this quadrangle are as follows:

2. Diwan-e-Aam (Hall of Common Audience):

It stands almost in the middle of the northern part of the Quadrangle. Built in red sandstone it consists of an open hall of forty pillars (*chahl satun*). It was built by Shahjahan in 1631-32 AC, in front of the *Daulat Khana-e-Khas-o-Aam* of Emperor Akbar.

The building suffered immensely and perhaps collapsed during the Sikh war of succession around 1841 AC. It was reconstructed during the British period making a random use of the red sandstone pillars.

3. Daulat Khana-e-Khas-o-Aam (Hall of Special and Common Audience):

It is the portion of the buildings at the back of *Diwan-e-Aam* and consists of double-storey apartments with a *Jharoka* (royal balcony) opening on to the south. It was built by Akbar the Great in about 1566 AC. The interior of these apartments is embellished with stucco tracery and gild work.

C. JAHANGIR'S QUADRANGLE:

On the north of the *Daulat Khana-e-Khas-o-Aam* lies a vast quadrangle. Its construction was started by Emperor Akbar but completed by his son and successor, Jahangir, in 1617-18 AC. It is flanked by a row of '*dalans*' on its east and west. The sandstone façade of these *dalans* presents extensively carved columns and beautifully done brackets with animal designs.

There is a large *charbagh*-style garden in the Quadrangle, having a spacious tank with a square marble *mahtabi* (platform) in the middle. The mentionable buildings in this quadrangle are:-

4. Bari Khwabgah (Large Sleeping Chamber):

Belonging to Emperor Jahangir, it occupies the middle of the northern side of the quadrangle. The frontage of the building is the British period reconstruction while the rest of it is the original structure. The whole building now serves as a museum.

5. Haveli Kharak Singh

Built over the Mughal period structures in the southeastern side of the Quadrangle is the *Haveli* (mansion) of Kharak Singh, son and successor of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The building now serves as the administrative offices of the Northern Circle of Archaeology and the main Circle Library.

D. MOTI MASJID QUADRANGLE:

6. Dalan-e-Sang-e-Surkh:

It is situated between Jahangir's and Moti Masjid Quadrangles. The lower portion belongs to Jahangir's period while its upper storey called the *Haveli* of Mai Jindan, wife of Ranjit Singh, was added during Sikh period.

Both the storeys of the building now house two galleries of the museum.

7. Makatib Khana (Clerk's Quarter):

The building with its high gate served as the entrance to Jahangir's Palace (*Daulat Khana*), where clerks regulated the entry. A Persian inscription fixed at the gate tells that it was built in 1617 AC, in Emperor Jahangir's reign.

8. Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque):

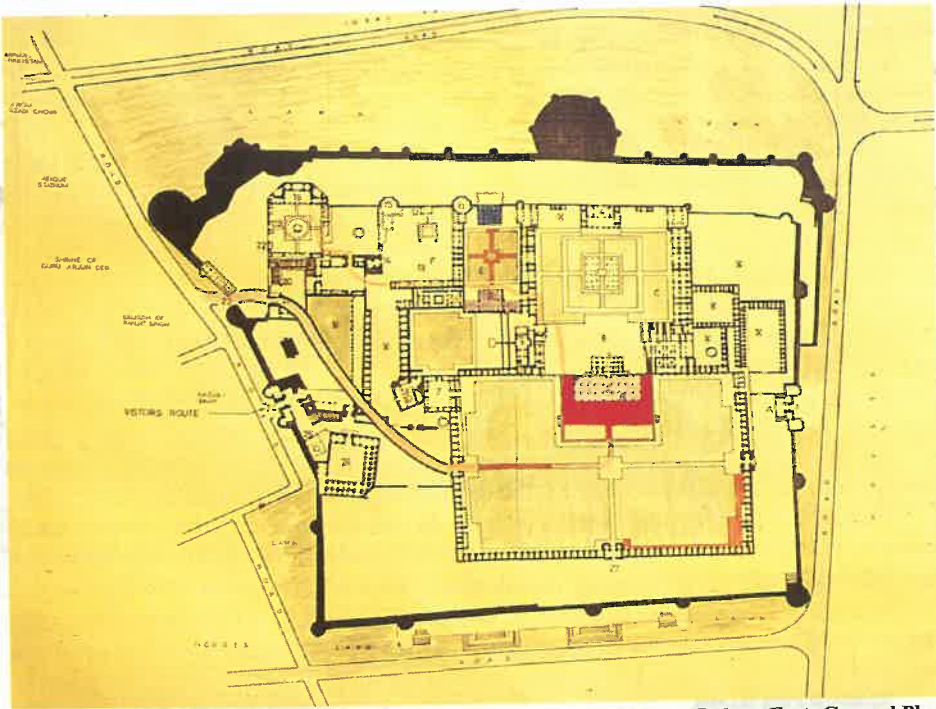
A very graceful but small mosque, wholly built in white marble looking like pearl (*moti*), is located west of the *Makatib Khana*. It was constructed around 1645 AC by Emperor Shahjahan and is the forerunner of the three such mosques, the other two being at Agra and at Delhi.

E. SHAHJAHAN'S QUADRANGLE:

9. Khwabgah-e-Shahjahani (Shahjahan's Sleeping Chambers):

It is a complex of five rooms laid in a row, lying north of the *Moti Masjid* Quadrangle. It was

constructed in 1633 AC under the orders of Shahjahan. The original embellishment in stucco tracery had been covered during Sikh period. The same including the frescoes in its western part were recovered in the 1960s after clearing the whole area of the superfluous white wash done also in the Colonial period. The stucco tracery work has been redone in its eastern part during 1997 under the supervision of Director Ihsan H. Nadiem.



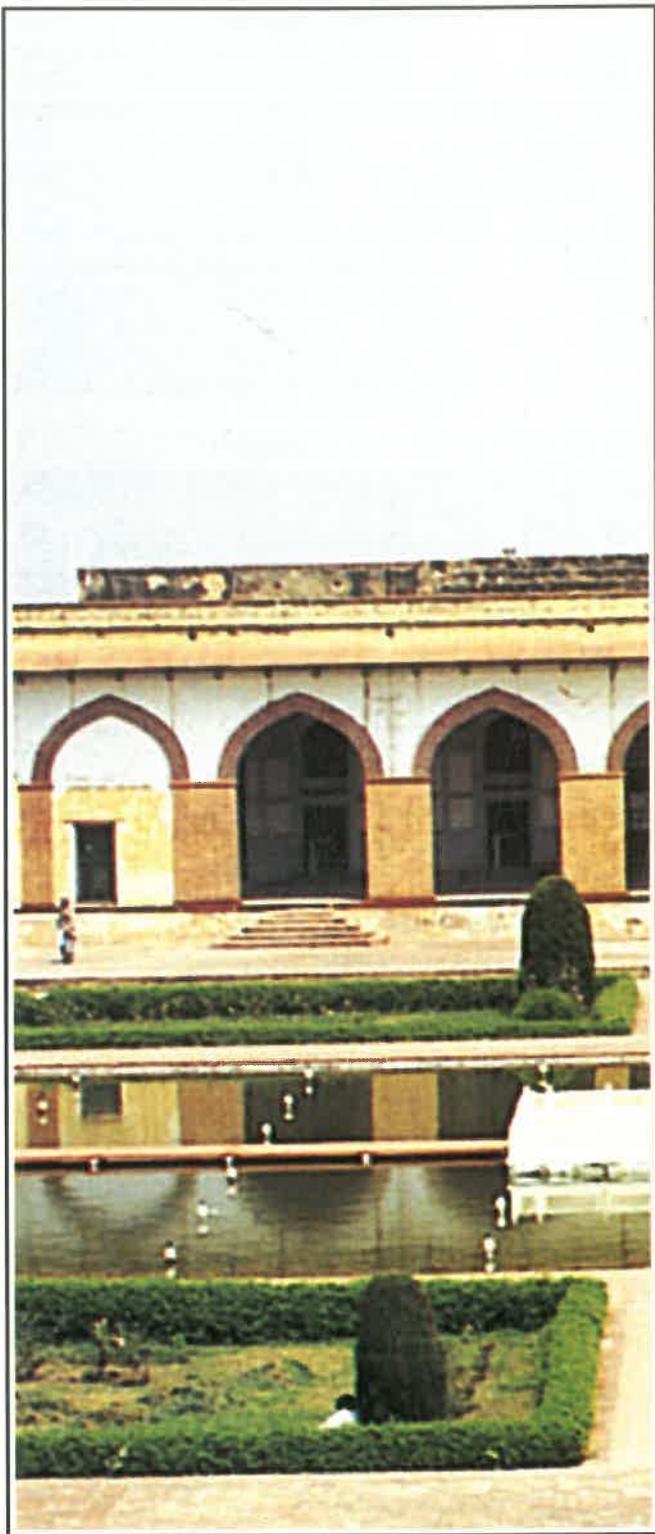
Lahore Fort: General Plan



Lahore Fort: Shahjahan's Quadrangle

10. Diwan-e-Khas (Hall of Special Audience):

Situated in the northern part of the Shahjahan's Quadrangle, it is an arcade pavilion in chaste marble, built in 1645 AC by Emperor Shahjahan. All the openings on its north are fixed with skilfully



Lahore Fort: Barri Khwabgah with water tank in front

cut marble screens.

It served as a military church during its occupation by the British, when in 1904-5 it was taken into pieces and reconstructed on the old plan.

11. Lal Burj (Red Tower):

It occupies the northwestern corner of Shahjahan's Quadrangle. It comprises of three storeys; the first having been built during Jahangir's, the second in Shahjahan's and the uppermost during Sikh period.

F. PAIEN BAGH QUADRANGLE:

12. Hammam-e-Shahi (Royal Bath)

It lies immediately west of the *khwabgah-e-Shahjahani* and was built along with it. It comprised of *Jama Khana* (Dressing Room), *Nim Garm* (Warm Bath) and *Garm* (Hot Bath). There also lies the *Bait-ul-Khila* (Lavatory).

13. Paien Bagh (Side Garden):

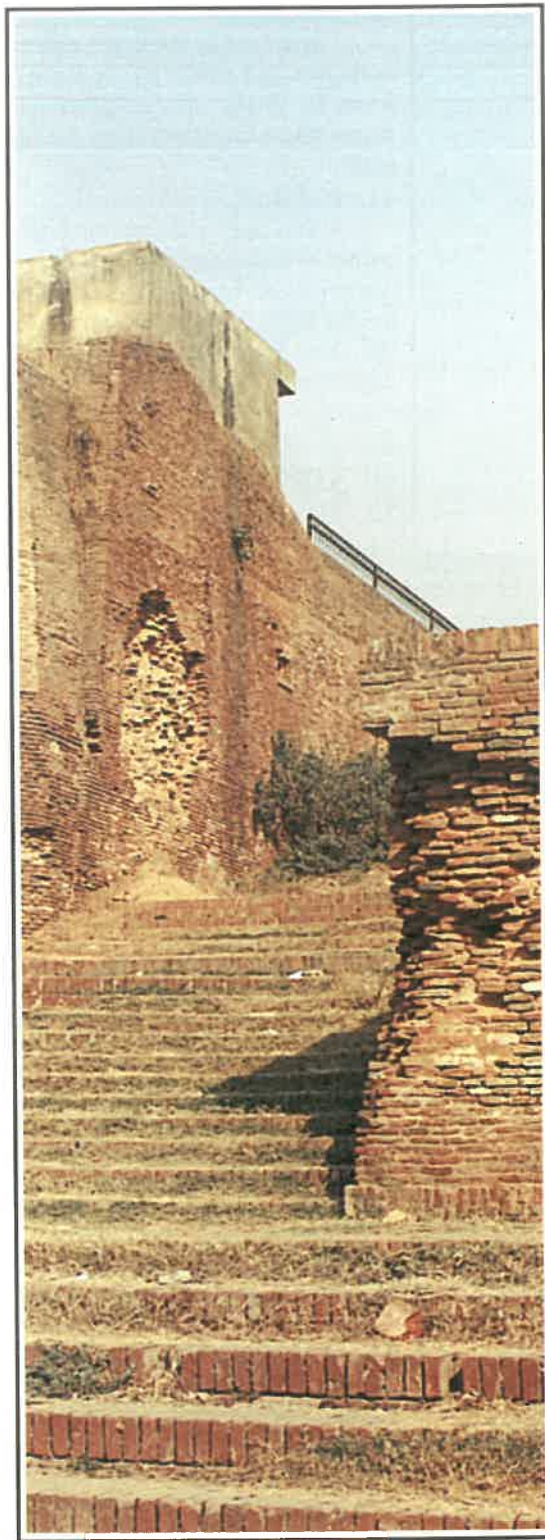
Situated north of the Royal Bath, the small garden was laid by Shahjahan. It was meant exclusively for the ladies of the *harem*.

14. Khil'at Khana (Royal Robes Chamber):

The only surviving building in the court north of *Paien Bagh* is also called *Ghusl Khana* (bathroom) and has a water tank at its front. The Basement chambers can be approached from the east and west of this court.

15. Kala Burj (Black Tower):

Situated in the northwestern corner of the court occupying *Khil'at Khana*, the *Kala Burj* is similar to the *Lal Burj* in many respects. The top-storey appears to be in addition to the Sikh period construction, while floors and some of the roofs belong to British period. Some of the Jahangir period fresco paintings have lately been uncovered here.



16. Ladies Mosque:

In the southwestern corner of the same court lies a small mosque built originally in red sand stone and marble. It was meant for the ladies of the *harem*.

17. Athdara (Pavilion with Eight Openings):

Situated in the northwestern side of a part of the forecourt of *Shish Mahal*, the *Athdara* was built by Maharaja Ranjit Singh with the marble obtained by despoiling different Mughal buildings. The Maharaja held *Katchehri* (court of Justice) in this building which is profusely decorated with frescoes.

G. Shah Burj Complex:

18. Shah Burj or Shish Mahal (Palace of Mirrors):

Situated in the northwestern corner, it is one of the most beautiful palaces of the Mughal period. Built in 1631-32 AC by Emperor Shahjahan, it consists of a large lofty hall with several rooms at the back and sides. As many as five decorative crafts embellish the building. The chambers were originally decorated with fresco paintings and gilding work but later on covered with glass-mosaic work done on the walls.

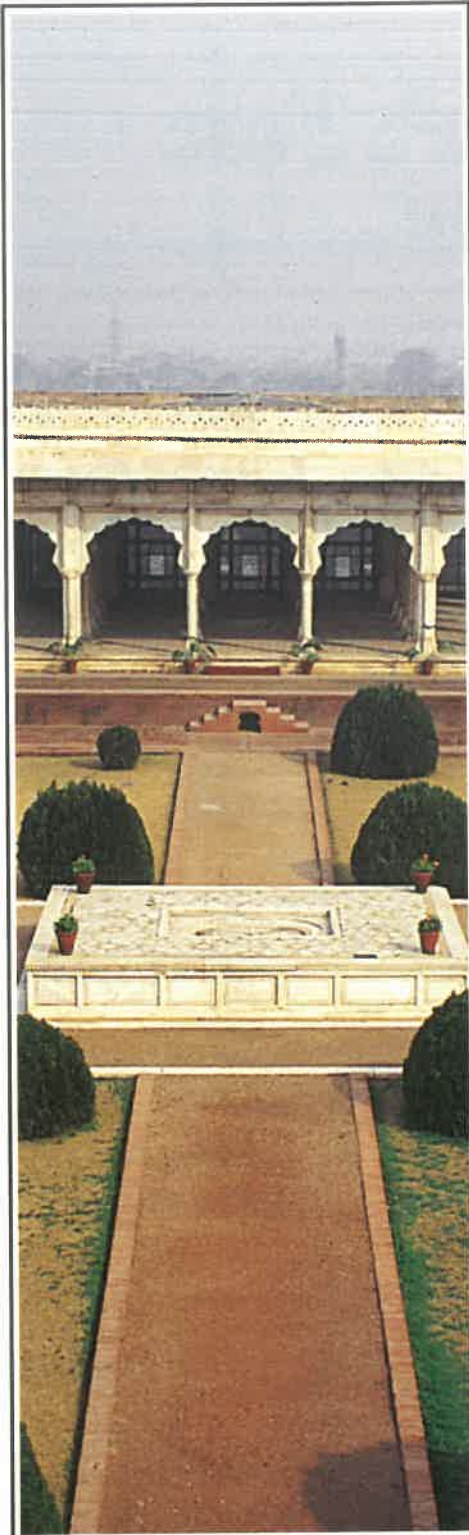
There is a spacious courtyard in front of the *Shish Mahal* having a shallow water basin with a *mahtabi* and four fountains. Four water channels, one on each side, connect the basin with other buildings.

19. Naulakha:

Situated in western side of the court, the small pavilion is in the shape of a royal-tent. Popularly known as *Naulakha* (costing nine lakhs or 900,000), the building is in white marble exquisitely decorated with delicate pietra-dura work using semi-precious stones.

20. Hathi Pol (Elephant Path):

Built simultaneously with the Shah Burj it is a staircase consisting of 58 low but broad steps, connecting the *Hathi Pol* Gate with the outer courtyard of the *Shish Mahal*, and meant for elephants of the royalty from and to the palace. It is flanked by high-panelled walls with imitation brickwork. The Western Wall is provided, in both storeys, with niches wherein stood *Khwajasaras* (Eunuchs) and *Naqib* (Drummers). The upper gallery known as *Ghulam Gardish*, meant for servants, was connected to the *Shish Mahal*.



21. Shah Burj Gate:

It was meant as a private entrance of the royalty. It leads to the *Shah Burj* and the *Harem* portion of the Fort. The inscription over it mentions the date of its completion as 45th regnal year of Shahjahan (1631-32 AC).

22. Pictured Wall:

One of the most outstanding architectural features and decorative arts of Mughals is the gigantic wall on the north and northwest. Its construction was started by Jahangir and completed by Shahjahan in 1631-32 AC. It is profusely embellished with panels of tile-mosaics and frescoes presenting a unique harmony in composition and variety of design.

23. Postern Gate:

To facilitate entry of vehicular traffic into the Fort, the British constructed the Postern Gate in 1853 AC. The adjoining barracks over the Sikh period fortification wall were also built by the British.

24. Alamgiri Gate:

Presently the main entrance to the Fort, the Alamgiri Gate, was constructed along with the Badshahi Mosque by Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir in 1673-74 AC. It is a double-storeyed, massive and imposing gateway that matches the grandeur of the gate of the Mosque lying opposite to it. It is flanked by robust and heavy-built semi-circular bastions having huge lotus petals at their bases and pronounced fluting over the whole height. They are crowned with small but graceful domed kiosks.

25. Loh Mandir (Temple of Loh):

The small shrine still exists, supporting the legend of giving the name to Lahore. The present structure, however, dates back to the Sikh period (1799-1846 AC).

H. Southwestern Segment:

26. Mughal Kitchen and Stables:

The southwestern corner of the Fort has a large L-shaped Mughal building with Sikh period second storey added to it. There also used to be an assortment of Mughal, Sikh and British period structures, many of which were recently removed by the unmindful authorities in the Department of Archaeology in the name of development thus ruining the architectural evidence. The area is believed to have been used as *Matbakh* (kitchen) and, further south, stables.

This area had for considerable period of time served as the notorious sub-jail. Restituted from the Police, it has now been converted into the Campus of Pakistan Institute of Archaeological Training and Research.

Mir Chakar's Fort At Sibi

Sibi, also locally known as Sivi, is a major, and one of the oldest towns of Balochistan. It is situated at the eastern fringes of the historic Bolan Pass, towards the Indus Plain. It serves as the main railway junction on the Karachi-Quetta main railway line. The major road joining the main National Highway at Sukkur on the other side connects it also with Quetta through the Bolan Pass.

On the northwestern side of the present town of Sibi are located the remains of an old fort, now hardly a reminiscence of its past glory. Its unique location, at the mouth of the Bolan Pass, has afforded it to become witness to many an important event of history. Over the scores of centuries it has seen duels between archrivals from different countries. *Mahabharata* records an episode of a famous battle between Kurus and Pandus having taken place here. In this combat the local warriors of Sibi sided with the Kurus against their bitter enemy.



Closer Look of the Wall of Mir Chakar's Fort, Sibi.

Sibi also finds place in the popular accounts of the Chachnama wherein it is narrated that the king Chach defeated Sewas, pushing them out of this place and captured Sibi Fort. The Hindu rulers, Sewas, had kept this territory under their control for considerable length of time, having lost ultimately to King Chach in 550 AC. The Brahman rule continued here till the early part of eighth century AC when the young Arab general, Muhammad bin Qasim, held sway over the whole of these areas. During the 11th century Sibi was included in the vast Ghaznavide Empire. The Muslim rule continued here as it remained a tributary of the *Suba* of Multan under Nasir el din Qubacha (1210-1228 AC). According to *Ain-e-Akbari*, the Sibi Fort was conferred by Nizamuddin of Sindh as fief in 1488 AC on Shah Beg who was the ruler of Qandhar.

The Baloch ballads and epics clearly attach the Fort of Sibi with the name of their hero Mir Chakar Rind to whom they also give the credit of its founding. Mir Chakar Rind Baloch also known as the *Chakar-e-Azam*, has been amongst the greatest and most respected Baloch heroes since 15th century. He was born in 1468 AC and became the chief of the Balochs after the death of his father Shaikh whose capital was at Shoran. He was only 18 when the region experienced the long battle known as the thirty-year war between the Rind and the Lashari tribes of Balochs. This long war was fought twenty-five times and ended with the last but decisive engagement, fought in 1486 AC, in which the Rinds emerged victorious. He fought his last battle in Sibi sometime around 1518-19 AC. Immediately afterwards he left Sibi, at the time it fell during the days of Jam Nizamuddin of Thatta as is clear from his Ballad, "I will leave man-devouring Sibi, curses on my infidel foes". The bloodshed had pained Mir Chakar a great deal and that was the main reason of his migration from his homeland to the central Punjab where he settled at Satghara, now in Okara district. The *Tarikh-e-Farishtah*, banking on the *Tabaqat-e-Akbari* by a contemporary Mughal historian, mentions of Mir Chakar Rind as holder of a big *jagir* and commander of hordes of warriors in Punjab.



Mir Chakar's Fort: Fortification Wall with Bastions.

On one occasion, Sher Shah Suri succeeded in separating the Chiefs of Derajat from Mir Chakar and snatching his property at Satghara. This Baloch Chief was thus obliged to join hands with the Mughal Emperor Humayun. He visited Iran and Qandahar and induced Humayun to attack South Asia, where he supported the latter on his return.

According to traditions Mir Chakar Rind ruled Sibi but the Afghan traditions deny it. According to the historical accounts, after Afghans Sibi appears to have come in the possession of the Panni tribe of Ghurgust Pathans. The Governor of Bhakkar captured the Fort in 1576 AC and it remained in the possession of Kalhora rulers from 1712 - 1739 AC when Nadir Shah annexed it to his Persian Empire. After the demise of Nadir Shah, Barozais established their position, recognised by Durrani of Quetta and confirmed as Hakims of Sibi. The Barozais ruled over Sibi till its occupation by the British in 1879 AC. The mud fort was deserted during British rule and never regained its ancient grandeur.



A bastion and wall

The main entrance to the fort is located in the middle of the eastern wall. It is flanked by two bastions, both of which have already fallen into partial decay but still present all the decorative features. The domical chambers are set along the eastern part of the fortification wall in the south of the main entrance. Except the roofs, which have already fallen, these structures are more or less intact. The chambers at present are plain internally and externally and if there was any ornamentation it has already disappeared. The army stationed at the Fort has constructed an over-head water reservoir, a tube-well and two other structures in the centre of the Fort while close to these a sliding board is also provided.

Due to vicissitudes of time and vagaries of nature together with human vandalism the Fort has since suffered a great deal. At present it is in a dilapidated condition having lost all its original beauty. Except the two domical chambers and the remains of fortification wall, every other structure seems to have been washed away. The fortification wall is in an advanced stage of decay. The western part of the wall has been bulldozed to make out a level surface for military use in whose possession it stands now.



Main Entrance flanked by Bastions, Mir Chakar's Fort, Sibi

Satghara Fort

The small town of Satghara lies about 20 kilometres east of Okara, the district headquarters. The name means 'seven houses' or 'seven castles', which no longer exist at the site. There is a fort of considerable dimensions located on one of the several high mounds concealing in them the cultural deposits of a considerable antiquity. The habitation houses of the town are built not only inside the fort but also against its wall and around it. The fortification is built in baked-bricks with bastions provided at regular intervals. With no dated material to suggest the age of the fort it is inferred from its architectural style that it is not as old as the mound on which it is built, or those lying around it.



The other mounds, which were strewn with baked-brick bats, have been yielding stray antiquities consisting of potsherds and coins in considerable numbers. Some of these coins take the age of these mounds to the Indo-Scythian period.

The northwestern corner of the fort is occupied by the Tomb of Mir Chakar Baloch. From the fact that it has been built against the fort, replacing its corner bastion but not inside the bastion, it is easy to assume that it was built later than the fort, which also does not seem to go beyond Muslim period.

Mir Chakar, perhaps the greatest chief of the Balochs, had migrated from Balochistan and settled here. He had fought for the exiled emperor Humayun against the Pathan king Sher Shah Suri to regain the Delhi throne. On regaining his empire at a later date, Humayun bestowed on the Mir Satghara and the vast territory around it. He died here at the age of 97 in 1565 AC. A tomb with not much pretension was erected here over his grave.

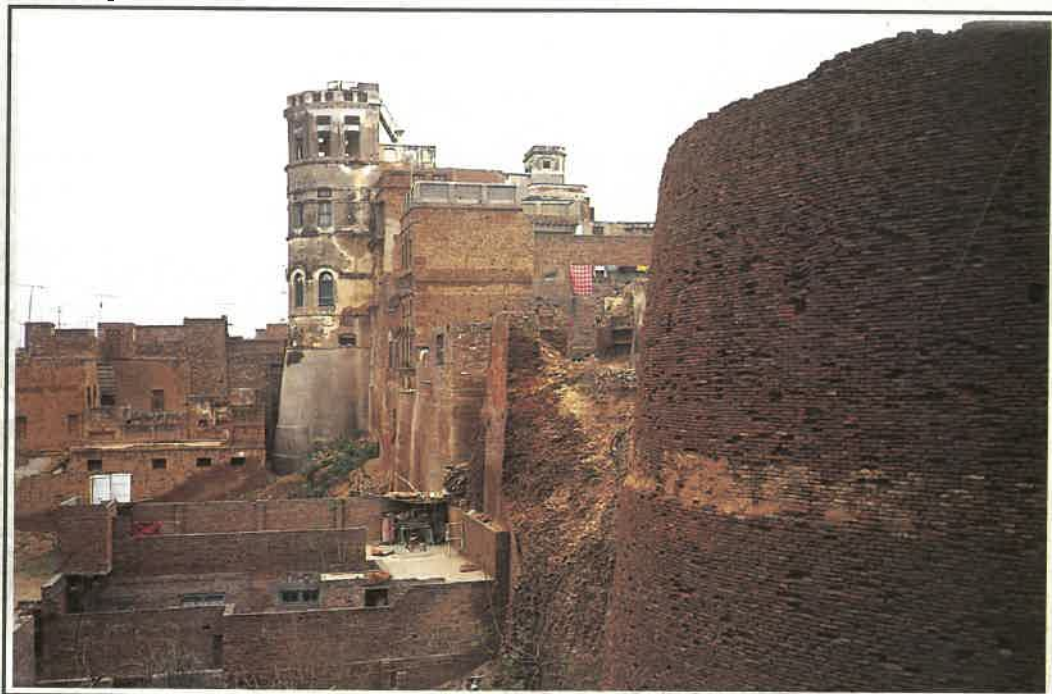
The building is octagonal in plan with thick walls. The entrance to the tomb is provided on the eastern side. The tomb structure is built in two stages, supported on high arches at each side of the octagon internally. Over these arches the circular base of the dome was built, which in turn supported a single dome, now collapsed.

The tomb of Mir Chakar Rind is built in baked clay brick-tiles measuring 16.5 x 10 x 2.5 centimetres and found laid in mud mortar. Now looking like a naked-brick building, it was originally plastered with fat lime cream, traces of which still could be found.



Fort at Gujrat

The city of Gujrat, which once stood by the River Chenab, is now some 15 kilometres away from it. It is located on the main highway between Jhelum and Lahore and has seen many ups and downs in its long history. Being of considerable antiquity, the city is said to have been called as *Hairat*, literally meaning 'astonishment'. The region of Gujrat thus was named as '*Hairat Des*' or the country of *Hairat*. Tradition says that it was founded by a Surajbansi Rajput called Bachan Pal, who had migrated from the Lower Gangetic Doab and settled here. He named it as 'Udenagri' which meant 'everlasting' or 'sweet-smelling' town. Though on the ground nothing of that period could be found today yet the recovery of a statue of Buddha at considerable depth on excavations suggests its existence during the Buddhist period in the northwest of the South Asia Subcontinent.



A view of Gujrat Fort Bastion

According to some scholars Gujrat town 'existed prior to Alexander's invasion in 326 BC'. It does not appear in legends for a considerable time afterwards. It is said to be under the rule of Raja Gopat who founded another city some eleven kilometres away. This city was known as 'Kula Chor' and, being very prosperous, was of considerable dimensions.

When the region fell under the control of Raja Salivahan or Salbahan of Sialkot, a lady of his house founded a city here, which was named after her as 'Kurjan Nagri'. It was thus a Hindu city enjoying much prosperity for considerable length of time before it fell before the armies of Mahmud of Ghazna during his sixth invasion of the Subcontinent. He plundered the city and left it in a ruined state.

Another city seems to have sprung up on its ashes, which is recorded to have been destroyed in 1303 AC, during the onslaughts of the Mongols in the reign of Ala-ud-din Khilji. The city does not appear in the annals again till the time of Emperor Akbar the Great. The Mughals had no stronghold in

this area which was the target of considerable tension between the Gujars and Jats over the land for cattle-grazing rights. The Emperor decided to establish a power-point here to control both the tribes and keep a check on the country. On his second march to Kashmir in 1582 AC when he passed through this area he selected for the fort the site of the ruined city, a mound about 12.5 metres higher than the surrounding land. This would serve his purpose of settling permanently the dispute between the Gujars and Jats while also facilitating effective control over the region.

The Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri imparts on the construction of the Fort at Gujrat in the following words. "Having reached the Chenab in two marches on Thursday, the 21st Zil-Hijja, I crossed the river by a bridge which had been built there and my camp was pitched in the neighbourhood of the *pargana* of Gujrat. At the time when His Majesty Akbar went to Kashmir, a fort had been built on that bank of the river. Having brought to this fort a body of Gujars who had passed their time in the neighbourhood in thieving and highway robbery, he established them here. As it had become the abode of Gujars, he made it a separate *pargana*, and gave it the name of Gujrat".

In addition to the fortification wall, Emperor Akbar also built here a *Haveli* (mansion), a *baoli* (stepped-well) and a *Hammam* (Turkish bath). The construction of the fort and the public-facility buildings was carried out under the supervision of Dianath Rai and Wazir Khan.

In 1605 AC the rebellious Prince Khusrau was captured on the bank of the Chenab near Gujrat and handed over to the Emperor Jahangir. Later, Shah Jahan is recorded to have visited the Fort



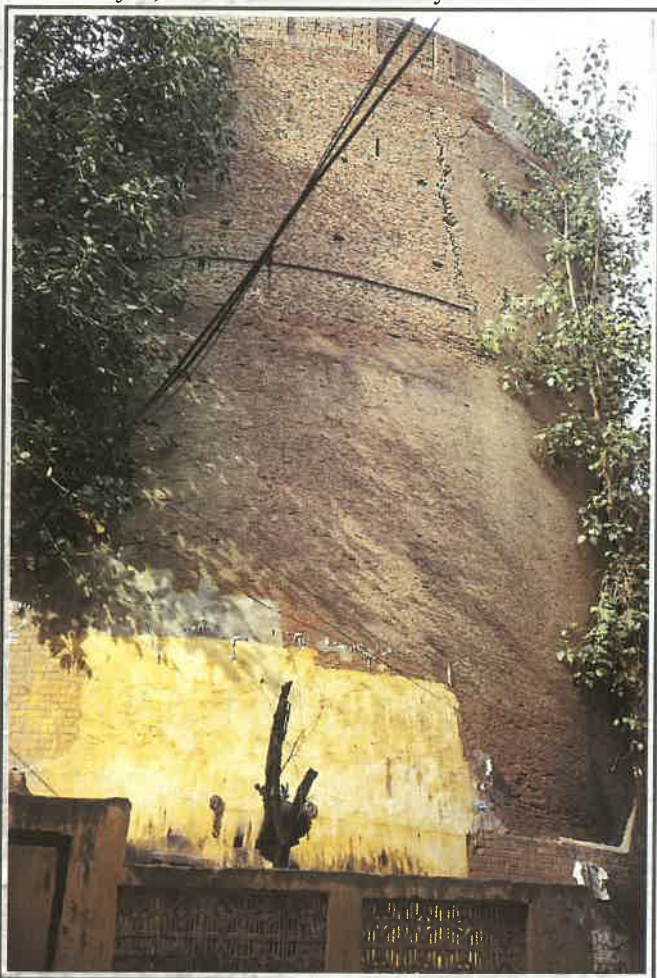
Gujrat: General view of City from the Fort bastion.

in 1634 AC when he stayed here for some time. It was during the period of this Emperor that the famous saintly personage, Pir Shah Daula, made Gujrat his residence. He is also credited with building tanks, wells, mosques and bridges in the area. As the population of the town had overgrown, it spilled over and residential buildings were also built outside the fort. Shah Daula thus also built his *khanqah* (hermitage) on the southeastern side of the fortified town.

During his reign, Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir is also mentioned as staying at Gujrat several times while on his marches to or from Kashmir. The peace, tranquillity and prosperity of the town of Gujrat were disturbed when Nadir Shah ravaged and looted it in 1738 AC. The area was overrun by the Gakkhars from its northern country under their chief, Sultan Mukarrab Khan, who established himself at Gujrat in 1741 AC. The Fort being on the way of the armies of Ahmad Shah Durrani while on marches to and from Kabul saw much unrest during the period from 1748 AC to 1761 AC.

The much decayed fortification wall was restored or rebuilt by the Sikhs who possessed it. Shah Zaman stormed it twice but the Sikhs were able to repel him without his taking the fort. After seeing minor turmoils it also witnessed its besieging by, and later murder of the father of Ranjit Singh. After occupying the throne at Lahore in 1799 AC, Maharaja Ranjit Singh invaded Gujrat twice, finally occupying it in 1810 AC.

In 1846 AC Gujrat came under the supervision of the British officials. After two years, a series of skirmishes occurred here and as a result of the decisive battle with Sher Singh in February 1849 at Gujrat, it also came under the sway of the British.



Another bastion of Gujrat Fort

Among the features of the Gujrat Fort, which still survive, are some portions of the fortification wall along with bastions, Akbari *Hammam*, Akbari *Baoli* etc.

The *Hammam* still has its four-room set with entrance lobby and the space for firing of the fuel. It was in working order till very recent time. The *Baoli*, which was built by Emperor Akbar along with the Fort at a cost of 10,000 rupees is also situated inside the Fort near the Kabuli Gate. It is built on the north-south axis, steps descending to the water level from the southern side. The well, built with the *Baoli*, is accessed from the higher level, probably for the convenience of the residents of the area. The flight of steps of the *Baoli* descends in three stages, with a total depth of over 22 metres from the top. Although a protected monument, the *Baoli* mainly serves as unauthorised dumping of rubbish, periodically cleaned by the authorities. However, absolutely no steps seem to have ever been taken to conserve, preserve or repair the existing original features of the Akbar-period fort with the result that they are now fast disappearing.

Bala Hisar, Peshawar

Bala Hisar, literally meaning 'high fort', is a nomenclature assigned to quite a few forts in the Pashtu speaking regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan. In addition to the one at Peshawar there is also another Bala Hisar in Charsadda, about thirty-two kilometres away from the former one, and still another at Kabul. They are known thus as they occupy mounds considerably higher than the adjacent areas.

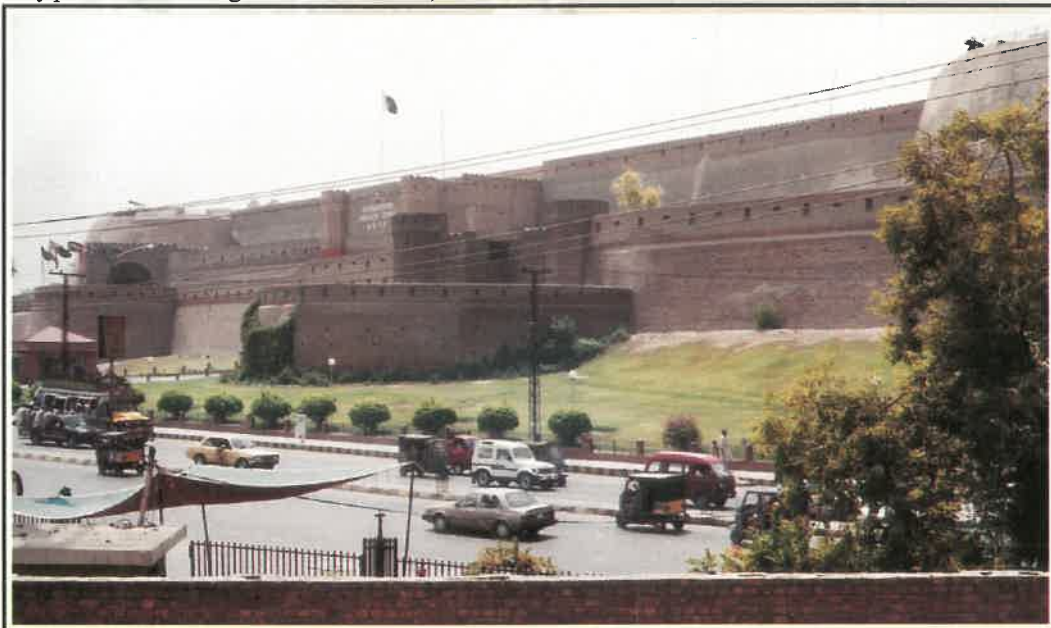


Bala Hisar, Peshawar: An aerial view

The Bala Hisar at Peshawar, with its high walls and prominent bastions, once stood in the northwestern corner of the old city. It now conspicuously occupies the central place of much-expanded city and the cantonment close to the railway line, running on its high embankment to Rawalpindi, along its western side. This embankment is said to have been built in the yore against the flooding water of the Bara River, which is thought to have gone round the Bala Hisar. The early English travellers mention of a *Fil-khana* (Elephant lines) and *Shuter-khana* (Camel lines) lying outside the Bala Hisar just close to the *Dhakki Nalbandi* (the high point for fixing horseshoes). None of these establishments, however, survives any more.

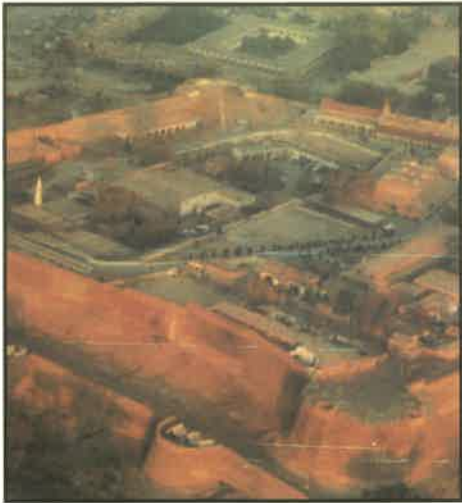
The fort of Bala Hisar indeed has a long and a very eventful history. The famous Chinese Pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang mentions of a "fortified or walled portion of the town, in which the royal palace stood". Identifying the place with Bala Hisar, Dani says, "in view of this explanation and again a separate mention of the city, which was apparently not fortified, it seems that the royal residence formed the nucleus of a citadel which must have been further protected by a moat. If this reconstruction is accepted, it is not difficult to identify the site of the royal residence". And, "the Bara channel surrounded a high spot in the old city, which includes the area of Bala Hisar and Andar Shehr. This higher area could have been the citadel....."

Tradition ascribes its foundation to the great Mughal Emperor Babar but there is nothing in the records to prove its authenticity. It is, however, a fact that Babar strengthened the Bala Hisar Fort. During the eventful reign of the Mughals it saw many ups and downs. It was then occupied by the Durranis. Elphinston describes it at length when he came to see Shah Shuja in this Fort in 1809 AC. He says, "At length we reached an open space under the palace, or castle, in which the king resides; this space was filled with people, who covered the side of the hill on which the castle stands, like the audience at a theatre. When we reached the gate, over which the king's band was playing, we were requested to leave the greater part of our attendants behind, and here our drums and trumpets were required to cease playing. Some time after we entered the gateway, we dismounted, and, after walking about one hundred yards, we ascended a flight of steps, and entered a long narrow room, where about one hundred and fifty persons were seated in great order along the walls. This was called the Kishki Khauneh, or guardroom. ... The Chaos Baushee came to us....He then conducted us up the sloping passage, and through a gate, after which we passed behind a sort of screen, and suddenly issued into a large court, at the upper end of which we saw the king in an elevated building. The court was oblong, and had high walls, painted with the figures of cypresses. In the middle was a pond and fountains. The walls on each side were lined with king's guards three deep, and at various places in the court, stood the offices of state, at different distances from the king, according to their degree. At the end of the court was a high building, the lower storey of which was solid wall, ornamented with false arches, but without doors or windows; over this was another storey, the roof of which was supported by pillars and Moorish arches highly ornamented. In the center arch sat the king, on a very large throne of gold or gilding. His appearance was magnificent and royal, his crown and all his dress were one blaze of jewels. He was elevated above the heads of the eunuchs who surrounded his throne, and who were the only persons in the large hall where he sat; all was silent and motionless".



Balahisar Fort

The Sikhs during their early sway destroyed the splendid fort of Bala Hisar. According to a source it is said to have been re-built by Sikh general, Hari Singh, after the battle of Nowshera. Amongst the English sources Burnes suggests its re-building in the times of Sardar Khurruck Singh while Raverty notes that "the present Fort was erected by Sher Singh, the son of Ranjeet, at his father's order, and in consequence, whatever remained of the old Bala Hisar was razed to the ground. It was built mostly of unburnt bricks, and is rather imposing in appearance, but of no great strength". Its mud-wallings were later replaced with burnt brick fortification during the *raj* by the British.



The present fort, as the name implies, is perched on a considerably high mound. Its main entrance is accessed from the north after passing a steeply rising road. The fort is roughly in the shape of a quadrangle with the double line of fortification wall running around it. This wall, in turn, is interspersed at regular intervals with heavy and strong bastions, shaped in the form of semi-circle or octagon. The approach to the main area is through crooked access and a number of entrances. On the inner side of the last entrance there is a marble inscription, which reads:

(Translation) *Victory to Porakh. Through the grace of Sri Akal. Under the liberal Government of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh Bahadur over the region of Peshawar, in the year 1891 (Vikram Samrat) (=A.D. 1834) this was built by Raja Bikramjit and was named Samir (correctly Samar)-garh. (After Dani)*



Sheikhupura Fort

The town of Sheikhupura, some 35 kilometres from Lahore on road to Faisalabad, has grown from a village Jahangirpura founded by the Mughal Emperor Jahangir near his famous hunting resort, now known as Hiran Minar. The name later turned to Sheikhupura after the Emperor Jahangir who was called Sheikhu Baba by his father, Emperor Akbar the Great. The area was a favourite spot with the Mughals as it lay at the edge of thick forests of Rachna Doab where there was abundance of antelopes and other wild hunting animals. The place also served as a halting stage for the imperial entourages proceeding on pleasure trips to Kashmir, in the north, through Jandiala Sher Khan, or towards Kabul in the west through Khanqah Dogran, Khushab and Bannu.

The Fort, which does not lay any claim to grandeur extra-ordinaire, lies on the southern side of the town of Sheikhupura after whose name it is known. It is located on the artificially raised ground, some 3.5 metres higher than the area around it. In its present state it cannot claim to be entirely representative of the Mughal architectural style. Most of the structures lying inside the fort represent mainly the local building traditions, chiefly of the unorthodox Mughal and Sikh creations of the subsequent phases. They have further been disturbed with frequent improvisations by the British during the *raj* to suit their requirements.



Sheikhupura Fort: General View From South East

The *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* mentions that the Emperor assigned the job of constructing a fort at this place to Sikandar Moeen on his hunting visit to the Hiran Minar in 1607 AC, during his second regnal year. Jahangir visited this place once again in his fifteenth regnal year, 1621 AC. During this visit he is recorded to have appreciated the work done by Sikandar Moeen, continued by Iradat Khan after former's death, though without specifically mentioning the fort. Some scholars think that on this particular visit Jahangir might have also stayed in this fort rather than exposing himself in the somewhat open pavilion within the masonry tank at Hiran Minar to better face the chill of the winter months.

Emperor Shahjahan, like his father Emperor Jahangir, is recorded to have visited the royal hunting resort for as many as four times. In the absence of any mention of the Fort, the historians infer that he and his retinue might have stayed here but, as the stronghold was not of any particular importance, there was no specific mention of it. He, however, is mentioned as to have ordered some

additions and alterations to the buildings at Sheikhpura during his visit to the place in 1634 AC. Again, as the Fort does not appear in the account it is only guessed that, along with works at the Hiran Minar, the stronghold might also have been attended in a similar fashion.

Shahjahan again camped in Sheikhpura during his hunting trips in the winters of 1048 AC and 1050 AC, when he is thought to have stayed in the cosy camp at the Fort rather than the more-exposed pavilion of the Hiran Minar complex.

The *Badshah Nama* mentions last of the visits of Emperor Shahjahan in March-April of 1056 AC. The Emperor is said to have camped here this time for a whole week before proceeding to Kashmir. During his stay here he also invested the Robe of Honour on Mullah Abd al-Hakim of Sialkot. The Ceremony took place in the premises of the Sheikhpura Fort. When the Emperor with his entourage moved on, his son and crown prince Dara Shikoh had to stay back in Jahangirpura due to the illness of his wife.



Sheikhpura Fort: Fresco painting inside Zanankhana

The Fort, after having enjoyed its early period of two great emperors of the South Asia Subcontinent does not seem to have the same role afterwards except that it remained vibrant during the governorship of Prince Dara Shikoh at Lahore. The prince may also be credited with some of the later structural additions of imposing *hevelis*, mansions, in the Fort. The additions and alterations to the earlier buildings carried out to the existing structures were done at such a large scale during the Sikh period that those caused by the Prince became almost indistinguishable.

The fortification wall running around makes the Fort almost a perfect rectangle, measuring some 128 metres from north to south and about 115.5 metres from east to west. The wall itself varies in height between 11.12 metres to 12.14 metres.

The fort was originally built with small sized bricks and plastered with *kankar*-lime mortar of a light reddish tint. Such evidence survives in the portions of wall or other structures preserved in their original state. The use of red sandstone, though at a very limited scale, is also evident especially in the recessed part of the main gateway, stone lattices for screening arched windows and in some of the column bases, now though dislodged and lying in ruins.

There is an octagonal bastion at each of the four corners of the Fort. Each of them measures about 8.3 metres, slightly tapering on the rise. Each of the longitudinal sides of the Fort has two semi-octagonal bastions set at equal distances. The southern wall has a single semi-octagonal bastion in the

middle while it is balanced with a rectangular offset projection in the northern wall. This protruding portion measures about 10.8 metres in length and is projecting to some 3.65 metres outside the straight line of the wall.

From the surviving evidence at some places it is clear that the whole top of the fortification wall, including the bastions, originally had merlon crestings. The level of the occupation floor inside the fortification wall is in the form of an elevated terrace, which is 10 metres higher than the plane around the Fort. The terrace is mostly compacted to make a solid mass except on the northeastern parts where there are double-storeyed basement chambers 'built beneath the northern portion of the rampart between the rectangular offset, and the northeastern octagonal bastion of the Fort'. The upper storey of the basements appears to be the likely place where emperors and princes camped during their halts in Jahangirpura. The later unmindful use (or was it misuse) of these chambers by the Sikhs and then the British has mutilated all the possible paintings and decorations. Now several layers of whitewash cover all such fine works of the Mughals. Some of the spanning arches and columns also bear signs of subsidence in earthquakes under the load of the tall mansions built above, whose foundations overlap the basement buildings.



Sheikhupura Fort: Sikh Period Havelis

The main entrance to the Fort is through the elegantly built gateway, 'situated towards the southern end of the eastern wall in the space between the octagonal bastion at the corner and next semi-octagonal bastion. The frontal of the gateway slightly projects out of the wall as an offset, and has a sunken four-centred arch to frame the main arched entrance of the same shape'. Red sandstone facing has been provided to the ring-shaped space between the two arches. There are also traces of decorative designs of white marble inlay work at this spot. A cavity probably left by removing the slab, which might be mentioning the date of the construction of the Fort, above the entrance arch was later plastered and whitewashed.

On either side of the inner tier of the gateway, flanking the framing arch, is a sunken panel above which is an arched window, covered with a lattice screen, *jali*, carved in red sandstone. The top of the main gateway still shows the merlon crestings intact to this day.

The massive arched-gateway is provided with equally massive wooden door-leaves, which have decorative panels. Some scholars think that these leaves may not be the original ones as the Fort has seen a number of sieges, storming and fighting especially during the Sikh period.

On the inner side of the gateway is a square vestibule chamber at ground level. Facing the entrance there is a deep alcove beneath an arch in two stages, possibly to balance the architectural scheme. The northern and southern sides of the vestibule chamber have arched openings to access the areas inside the Fort. This vestibule chamber reduces upward through arched squinches on the four corners to the domed ceiling, which is formed of concentric rings of tile bricks held by thick layers of mortar. The whole building was plastered in *kankar*-lime, which has mostly fallen down. The remnants of the plaster at some places, however, show that it was decorated with tracery of geometric patterns and some *ghalibkari* work.

The access on the southern side opens to the internal terrace level through a flight of steps while towards north it rises as a ramp taking sharp turns, first to the west then again to the north. The left side of the curb has flights of steps going up to the terrace level. The passage is paved with brick-on-edge masonry. The whole passage is flanked by brick wall, holding the earth-fillings of the elevated terrace of the Fort enclosure.

The water requirements of the inmates of the Fort were met by two wells, one lying on the southeastern side while the other situated on the western side of the terrace. There are also remains of a small mosque adjacent to the rectangular bastion on the northern side.

There is no building of the Mughal period standing to any height in the northern part of the Fort. However, the remains of dislodged elements of red sandstone column-bases, carved with acanthus motifs, do suggest the plan of the architectural scheme followed by Sikandar Moeen or Iradat Khan in the time of Emperor Jahangir. Almost all the structures standing to their full height are the later additions made during the Sikh period, ranging in time roughly between the middle of the 17th to the second decade of the 19th Centuries AC. In the absence of any written record these buildings may, however, be placed in different time-brackets within the earlier-mentioned main timeframe purely on the basis of the architectural style or other circumstantial evidence.



Sheikhpura Fort: Interior of Zanankhana

The buildings of this period, consisting of a number of multi-storey mansions, may be divided into two groups on stylistic basis. The first group may include the tall mansions, or *havelis*, rising to four storeys and plastered and whitewashed on the outer side. In the second group would generally fall the single but massively built rectangular building with a basement crowned by a double-storeyed mansion constructed with red tile bricks left naked.

The first group is assigned to bear *transitional architecture*, 'not in the sense of its relative age but in that it forms a link between the conventional Mughal architecture, and the so-called Sikh architecture, which took on a separate identity during the suzerainty of Ranjit Singh over the Punjab'.

The buildings of this group roughly form an L-shaped block. They consisted of the typically oriental quarters with *zanankhana* (ladies' portion) and *divankhana* (men's portion), duly segregated from each other. Most of the buildings extending as leg of this L-formation collapsed during the devastating earthquake in the later half of the 19th century AC, and were thus subsequently cleared. Even the existing buildings stand precariously, with wide cracks and mostly out of plumb on the outside.

The salient features of the transitional phase of construction are the oriel windows having prominent balcony projections and fluted half-dome awnings; and a versatile use of the subdued, compressed, or horizontally stretched multi-cusped arches as articulation over entrances, sunken panels, niches, windows etc.

After the fall of the Mughal Empire, and immediately before the consolidation of power by the Sikhs the Fort served as a convenient place for the Sikh robbers, looting the countryside. The Durrani king Shah Zaman during his invasion of Lahore in 1797 AC briefly besieged the Fort only to clean it of the robbers. Soon after his departure it was again occupied by Inder Singh. Lehna Singh Bhangi, an ally of Ranjit Sindh, invaded it and put Inder Sindh to death. In the following days the Fort passed on to the ownership of Bhai Singh. After changing hands between certain Sikhs it was in the possession of Sahib Singh and Sahai Singh in 1808 AC when Ranjit Singh marched upon it and caused its surrender without any resistance.

Maharaja Ranjit bestowed it as *Jagir* on his queen Raj Kauran, commonly known as Rani Nikayan, mother of the crown prince Kharak Singh. The queen, after falling from Maharaja's favour, lived here up to her last day.

According to some scholars the excellent wall paintings in the distinctive Kangra style found in the parlour and in the two chambers at the first floor of the *haveli*, could possibly be attributed to the good taste of Rani Nikayan. She is also credited with building a palace here, precisely to the west of the so-called transitional period buildings.



Sheikhupura Fort: Sikh Period Havelis

After the Sikhs, the British used the Fort for a brief interval as a prison to encamp Maharaja's last queen, Mai Jindan. It was then used as the administrative headquarters of the Gujranwala district from 1849 to 1851 AC. However, on transfer of the district headquarters to Gujranwala town it was left to serve for some time as military outpost. After the bifurcation of the administration, a new district of Sheikhupura was created in 1918 AC. It thus passed on to house the police headquarters of the newly created district. After independence from the British in 1947 it was briefly used by the immigrants from Indian Punjab and later by encroachers from whom it came to the possession of the Department of Archaeology of the Government of Pakistan as a protected monument.

Umerkot Fort

Umerkot, now a district headquarter in the Province of Sindh, lies at the edge of the Thar Desert, about 150 kilometres south-east of Mirpur Khas. The town provides a very clear boundary to the great desert, which extends on its one side, merging into green irrigated plain on the other. A burnt-brick Fort of considerable dimensions stands guard in its northwestern corner.

The knowledge about origin of Umerkot is such a riddle that has not yet been solved with any degree of certainty by scholars. Its founding is attributed to Umer Soomro the Second, who ruled it from 1355 AC to 1390 AC. However, the old writers prefer to mention it as Amerkot and argue that it is much older than the said period in the 14th century. According to them its earliest mention is met in connection with the marriage of Yadvansi Raja Mandam Rai with the daughter of Parmar Raja Sodha of Amerkot. As Raja Mandam Rai is recorded to have ascended *gadi* or throne in Sambat 616, which makes the year 559 AC, it would be fair to assume that the town of 'Amerkot' had already been founded. The establishing of 'Amerkot' in this case is attached to Parmar Sodha Raja, Omrah Soomra, after whose name it is said to have been called. It would thus suggest that even if it was that old it would be correctly called 'Omrkot' or simply Umerkot - without any reference to Umer Soomra the Second, who came to rule the place much later.



Umerkot Fort: Shahi Darwaza

The founding of the fort is supposed to have taken place along with the town itself. The present fort, however, is not that old. Its recorded history shows that it had been constructed by Mian Noor Muhammad Kalhora in 1746 AC. In the background of this fact some writers are tempted to believe that the Mian in the process destroyed the earlier fort lying a couple of kilometres north of the present stronghold. They are of the view that the spot presently marked as the birthplace of Akbar was the site of the old fort where Humayun and his entourage enjoyed the hospitality of the Rana in 1542 AC. This hypothesis may not have much currency as even after deep survey no signs of any earlier fort, or even a habitation, have been found around this particular spot. The possibility, however, of the place of birth of Emperor Akbar away from the fort may be justified by the fact that the first halt of Emperor Humayun in Umerkot was outside the fort. This school of thought, however, thinks instead

that the Mian did not build it afresh but renovated the old fort, which was situated at the very place of the present fort. From the circumstantial evidence and the examination of the locale the present writer is convinced that while building the fort anew the Mian did not change the site. This theory is amply supported by the fact that cultural material is found buried within the fort denoting an earlier occupation of the place.

The fort is roughly rectangular in plan measuring 292 metres in length and 228 metres in width. The fortification wall, which is 3 metres thick, gives a tapered look both on the exterior and the interior sides. It has four semi-circular bastions at the corners. At present one of the bastions has completely vanished while still another reduced to shambles.

The walls and bastions have burnt-brick facing with the filling of sun-dried bricks or simple mud and earth.



Umerkot Fort: Inner entrance

The main gate, also known as *Shahi darwaza*, is situated roughly in the middle of the eastern wall. In plan, it is a crooked type of entrance, with an arched opening and a couple of bastions, all built in sand stone. The parapet, which seems to be of later period, is built in burnt-bricks and has musketry holes. The bastions are also provided with machicolations for pouring hot water or molten lead or oil on the advancing army trying to force their way through the entrance. Such machicolations are also found provided in the brick-wall around the fort.

Close to one of the bastions, there seem impressions of hoofs of a horse imprinted on the bricks making the facing of the Gate. These are locally attributed to the legendary Rai Rattan Singh's horse, which had tried to cross over the wall when its master was about to be hanged in the fort by the British.

Almost in the centre of the fort, in front of the main entrance or *Shahi Gate* mentioned earlier, is a large *burj* or watchtower. A flight of 58 steps, about 3 metres wide, is provided on the eastern side. The *burj* rises a little over 17 metres above the level ground around it. It is made with burnt-bricks and so clearly showing many repairs at different times of history.

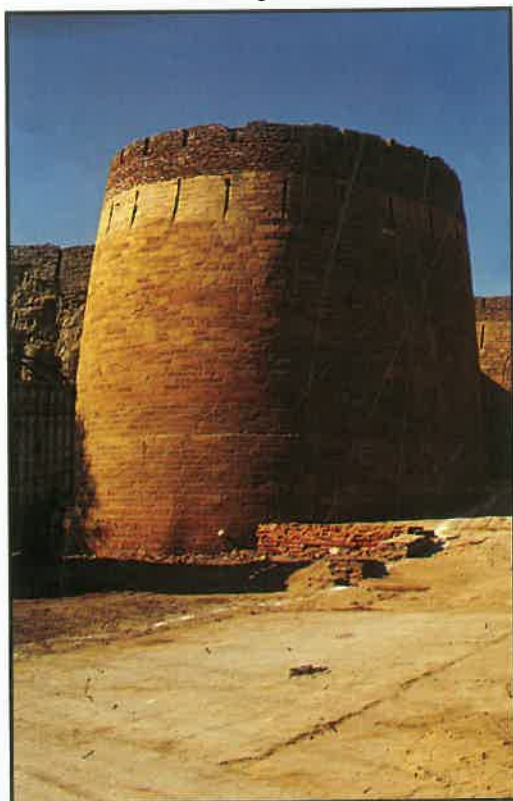
On the top of the *burj* are fixed seven cannons with their barrels jetting out of the parapet. These cannons rest on platforms constructed on an equal distance from each other.

Immediately south of the *burj* is a British period Circuit House still in use even after over hundred years of its existence, the fact in itself enough to treat it as antiquity.

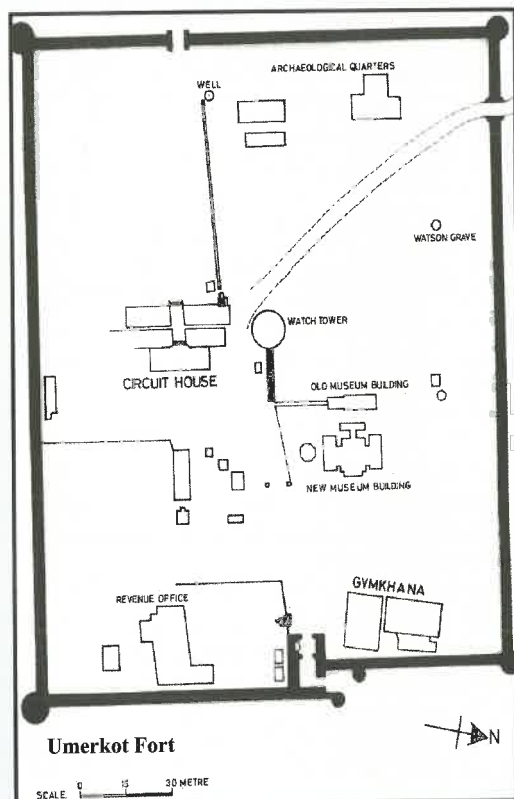
In addition to the main *Shahi* gate the fort now has two other simple entrances. The one with a rampart on the outside opens on the Umerkot-Mirpur Khas road. The other, a little east of the northwestern doorway, is situated in the middle of the western fortification wall, opposite Circuit House. This doorway was probably affected during the British *raj*. Both of these entrances are devoid of any special features. Close to the northern entrance there is a brick-built pond-like depression which opens to an arch-shaped tunnel made to discharge the water collected inside the fort.

A beautiful *chhatri*, umbrella-like structure in *sang-e-khattu*, yellow sandstone, supported on eight pillars, stands in northwestern side of the fort. Here in the shape of a cross is built the grave of H.E. Watson, sometime Deputy Commissioner of Thar and Parkar district. There are three inscriptions in English on this grave.

There are some other buildings, though not of any historical or architectural consequence, in the fort. Near to the northwestern gate are some residential quarters for the staff of the Umerkot Museum. In the southeastern portion are the buildings housing provincial government offices while on the other side in the northeastern corner is the newly built, ugly looking and still unfinished building of the 'gymkhana'. On the western side of this building is yet another scar on the historic fort, this time in the name of a new museum building. The old museum, lying immediately west of it, is set in a single hall of considerable dimensions. It was set up under the direction of its then Curator, Ihsan H. Nadiem and opened to public after its inauguration in 1968. Still serving well the scholars and general visitors alike its inception was conceived keeping in view the importance of Umerkot as birth-place of Emperor Akbar the Great. On display are some of the rare manuscripts, *framin*, specimens of calligraphy, miniature paintings, coins and armoury. Some cannon balls and stone carvings retrieved from random excavations in the fort are displayed in the open outside the museum. A war-memorial between the two buildings of the museum reminds one of the 1971-war with India.



Umerkot Fort: A bastion



Kalan Kot Fort

Around a couple of kilometres south of the famous Necropolis of Makli there lie scattered remains of an old fort. The place has been known in history by different names. Presently it is called Kalan Kot while it has also been named as Kala Kot, Kalyan Kot, Tughlaq Abad or Tughral Abad at different times in the history of Sindh. Some writers suggest that the name of Kalan (literally large in Persian) Kot might have been attached to it because of its expansiveness. Its other names might point to the names of the rajas, chiefs or the rulers holding sway over this fort and the area.

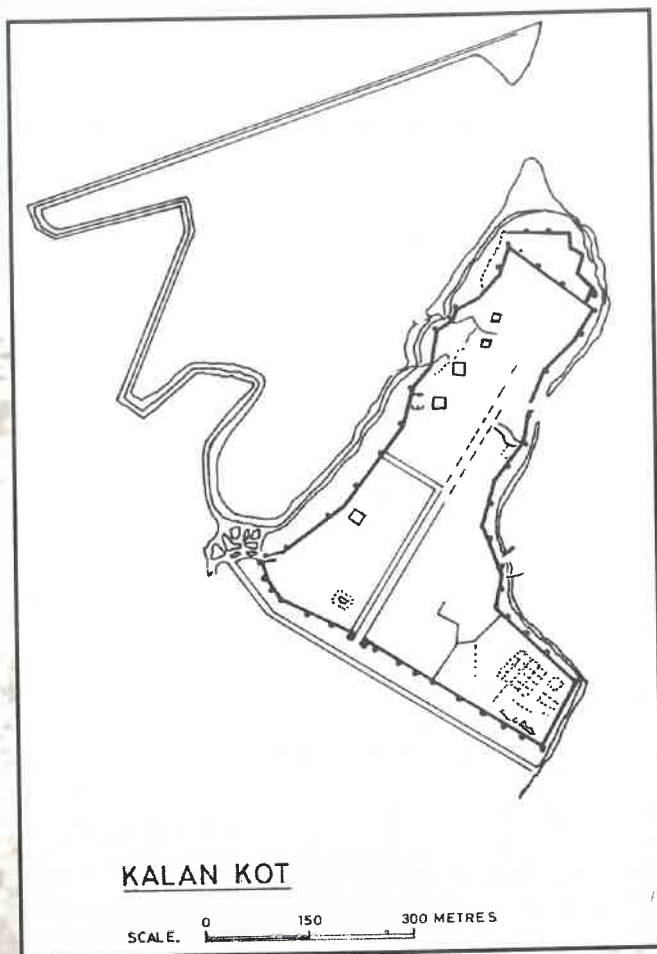


Kalan Kot Fort : General View of Remains

It occupies a spot on the eastern side of the Makli Ridge, south of the famous Necropolis, from where it gives a clear view of the plain beyond thus enhancing its usefulness and the reason for its locating here. It is some 10 to 72 metres above the mean sea level. The fortification wall follows the shape of the Ridge making it broader at one end while much less in width on the other. Its such location on the ridge betrays its basically being a military or defensive place. However, it seems that over the years some residential buildings were also added according to the needs of the rulers or the chiefs.

Some of the scholars suggest its origin in the remote antiquity, even prior to the visit of Alexander the Great in the fourth century BC. However, on the ground there is no evidence to corroborate such a hypothesis. Its earliest reference is met at a time when the area was under the control of the Arghuns. It is thought that this fort served the rulers of Thatta in times of extreme difficulties when they would be in need of a safe haven during adverse conditions. Some historians expressly give its credit to Jam Tughlaq Juna II (ruled 1428-1453 AC) saying, "he built a strong fort at Tughlaqabad at the southern end of the Makli hills which is known as Kala or Kalan Kot". Similarly in the absence of any definite evidence they advance different conjectural reasons as to its turning into ruins. Mir Sher Ali Qani', the famous historian of Sindh finds it in shambles and without habitation in 1760 AC.

The fort is some 670 metres in length from north to south while it measures around 514 metres at the broadest and about 170 metres at the shortest points in its width. The main gate, named as Shahi or Royal Gate, is found in the southern side. It was flanked by bastions. Another gate seems to



have been located in the eastern fortification. There is strong evidence that the wall was provided with bastions at regular intervals throughout the length of the wall. From the remains it appears that their number would well be around 58. Mir Qani' has eulogised the awesome nature of these bastions by saying that they looked to have met the sky above.

The fort is now devoid of any building remains, which might suggest their true significance or use. However, the remains of a mosque stand very prominently. Some of the writers suggest its origin in the Samma period though there are others who tend to place it in the Tarkhan era. The arches and the niches, however, seem to place it sometime during the Mughal period, especially towards the reign of Shahjahan when there was quite a bit of architectural activity in this region.

There are also quite a few remains of water reservoirs or ponds, possibly to store this life-sustaining commodity in such a quantity as would last the longest of the sieges.



Kalan Kot Fort : General View of Mosque

Pucca Fort, Hyderabad

The Fort at Hyderabad, commonly known as Pucca Qal'a or the Fort built of terracotta bricks, does not seem to go much in antiquity though the city itself can claim its origin in the remote past. Once a seat of the rulers of Sindh, Hyderabad is now the fourth most populous city of Pakistan. Legend attached it with some sort of worship place located on the nearby Ganjo Takar Hill during early antiquity when the history of the city was still not being written. Arguably, it has also been identified with the capital town then known as Nerun Kot, which was trampled by the young Arab General, Muhammad bin Qasim, in the early second decade of the eighth century AC. He is said to have built here a mosque at the site of a Buddhist Stupa, though nothing on ground can be traced now.



Hyderabad Fort: Shahi Darwaza

In the later part of the 17th century AC, Hyder Quli Arghun is said to have laid the foundations of Hyderabad at the site of Nerun Kot. *Tarikh-e-Sindh* of Ghulam Rasul Maher mentions that the forefathers of the Kalhoras came to Sindh from Iraq and settled at Nerun (Hyderabad) during the rule of the Mu'tasam Billah. However, when the Kalhoras came to power in Sindh they are said to have shifted their capital for seven times using the cities of Khudabad, Mamudabad, Ahmadabad, Khanot, Shahpur, and Shahgarh finally settling at Hyderabad. When Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhora decided to abandon Khudabad, possibly due to shifting away of the River Indus, he chose the place at the Ganjo Takar as his new capital. Here he ordered the construction of a new fort, and designated it as Hyderabad after the name of the fourth Pious Caliph, Hadhrat Ali. It was built on the plateau about 3.25 kilometres long and rising to some 8 metres. The fort is located at its southern extremity with its outer wall supported by the perpendicular elevation of the plateau thus furthering its strength and impregnability.



Hyderabad Fort: Mirs' Haram

The location of the Fort, overlooking the surrounding areas, adds to its strategic importance and is enough to overawe any army designing to invade or put it under siege. Its construction work was supervised by Mirza Ahmad Khurasani, a renowned architect of the time. Among the artisans, some historians say, was Ustad (Master) Shafi Muhammad Multani, who was assisted by scores of other bricklayers and craftsmen. The inscription on the stone fixed at the main gate bears date of its foundation as AH 1182, corresponding to 1769 AC. There is also an Arabic supplication, [transliteration] "*Rabbi j'al ha_zal balada a_minaw*", a verse from the Holy Quran (*Surah 14, Ayah 35*), which translates into English as 'O my Lord, make this city one of peace and security'. This also is the chronograph, which calculates the date as AH 1182. The inscription also bears:



Hyderabad Fort : General view of old buildings

At the right side: *Allah-o Akbar Allahumma salle ala wasallam ala Muhammadan wa al Fatimah;*

Above: *Wal Hasan wal Hussain wa 'Ali wa Muhammad wa Jaafar wa Musa wa 'Ali;*

Below: *Ba amr 'aali mazhar walayat Mian Ghulam Shah Khan 'Aali bin Mian Noor Muhammad bin Mian Naseer Muhammad 'Abbasi bana yaft.*

The first mentioned two lines denote the blessings and peace being prayed for the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be on him) and members of his house. These are followed by the mention that it was built by Mian Ghulam Shah Khan son of Mian Noor Muhammad son of Mian Naseer Muhammad.

The fortification wall rises to over 12 to 15 metres. In length it runs over a circumference of more than 2.5 kilometres. The longest part of the Fort, from east to west, is a little over 740 metres while the widest point measures 274 metres from north to south. It is all built in baked clay bricks, varying in texture and size depending on the period of their use in its building or subsequent repairs. These bricks, however, generally measure 25.5 x 17.8 x 3.8 centimetres. The thickness of the wall varies at different points and different heights. The wall is supported by semi-circular bastions only in its northern length.

The Fort had only one access provided on the northern side, facing the Shahi Bazaar. The gate was named as Shahi *Darwazo* or the Royal Gate and above its arch it has the fore-mentioned stone inscription. The Gate was provided with thick wooden leaves, and was decorated profusely. On the outer side, the leaves had strong iron spikes against any eventuality of breaking open by force in an invasion.

Among the buildings inside the Fort included the *Diwan-e-Khas*. It was built by Mir Naseer Khan for his holding the court. The walls and the ceiling of the building were profusely decorated with fresco paintings. The other building, known as *Diwan-e-Aam*, is also built by its side almost in front of the Shahi Gate.



Hyderabad Fort: General view

Mir Murad Ali Khan, the ruler of the Talpur dynasty, had established a mint in the Fort. It was also located inside the Shahi Gate and minted gold, silver and copper coins of the rulers of the Talpur dynasty. It ceased to work with fall of Sindh to the British.

After serving as seat of the government of the Kalhoras it continued to serve as the capital of the Mirs' Hyderabad faction. During these periods it was used as a stronghold-cum-palace. When the Mirs were defeated at the hands of the British in the battle of Miani in 1843 AC, they fled to the safety of the Hyderabad Fort and closed its door but only to surrender the following day.



Hyderabad Fort:

From the original structure there now remain some portions of the fortification walls, and the bastions. The Mirs' Harem of the Kalhora period also stands to this day, though in a pathetic condition because of its incompatible use especially in the modern days. The building, which was very beautifully decorated with fresco paintings, has remained in the possession of the law enforcement agencies whose members played havoc with them. Almost all the original structures were destroyed during the siege of the Fort by the British Artillery. Afterwards, in 1857 AC, the British cleared most of the remaining buildings to accommodate the troops of the occupying power. The blast caused to the stored explosives inside the Fort in 1906 AC also devastated the buildings, which might have survived the earlier onslaughts. The large influx of immigrants from India, on the eve of the emergence of independent Pakistan in 1947 AC, badly mutilated the remaining features and the Fort became a large area of slums. It is also heavily encroached upon along its periphery wall by small time businesses with shabby shops completely blocking any effort on its conservation. The lack of proper drainage with mushroom growth of the houses and their toilets/bathroom virtually dug into or placed over the defence wall has told upon the stability of this huge structure. It is thus no wonder then that one hears of big chunks of wall giving way not very infrequently after rains. The standing portions of this fortification also clearly show the effects of the very harmful seepage of water into its core.



Hyderabad Fort (entrance)

Katcha Fort, Hyderabad

Katcha Qal'a, also known as Pir Makki Fort, lies towards the west of the Hyderabad Fort, commonly known as Pucca Qila, on small hillock. It is called Katcha unbaked because of its fortification presently showing built with sun-dried bricks without any, even, facing of the baked clay bricks. However, baked bricks could be seen used in the foundations. The affect of centuries of rains is very obvious on the whole structure as furrows and cavities are seen all over. The overall condition of the wall is also not very encouraging.

The Fort is built in the shape of an elongated triangle, with two sides having long arms and the third one much shorter. The wall has seven bastions, three on the corners and two each of the longer arms. The drains meant to discharge out water from inside the Fort are also made with burnt clay bricks.



Katcha Fort , Hyderabad: Also Seen Darbar Zinda Wali

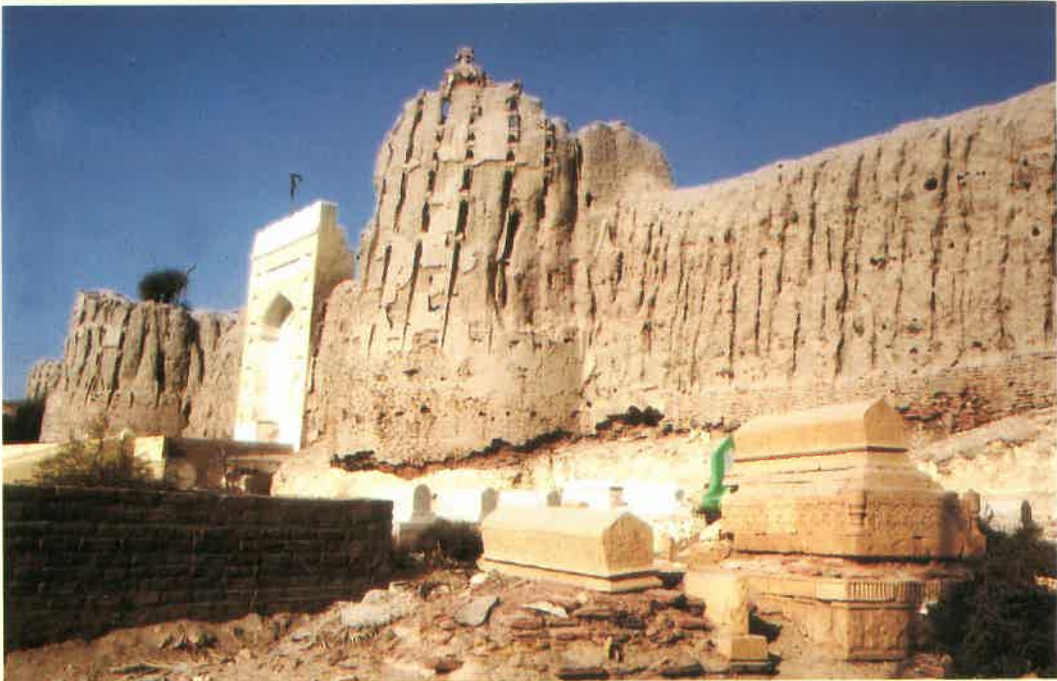
There are two gates provided in the length of the southern fortification wall. One of them is the main Gate to reach the interior of the Fort while the other, which is smaller in size, is meant to access the tomb of Pir Makki Shah, lying in the western side. To access the Fort there is a long landing of stairs. The Gate presently at the site is a simple arched entrance without any ostentation of the like of other forts. It is generally said that the Fort also had a secret gate, which though is not traceable at the moment.

The saintly personage lying in the tomb in the Fort is Pir Makki Shah. He was known as Makki because of his birth in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, from where he is said to have migrated to Sindh in AH 560 to preach Islam as he was commanded in his dream by Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). It is also said that during his sojourn he also went to Punjab where, in Lahore and Ludhiana (the latter now in India), he also had many followers.

Some writers are of the opinion that Pir Makki had founded this Fort but there is nothing on ground to support this idea. The date of founding which is derived from the verses still found in the inscription is AH 1083, which comes to 1671 AC, a period preceding that of the founding of the Pucca Fort. Mirza Qalich Beg though says that this Fort was founded in 1772 AC, towards the south of the Pucca Fort to serve as a watching station for the latter. Some other writers also give the credit of its founding to Ghulam Shah Kalhora saying that he built a fort of sun-dried bricks at the place where there was the tomb of Pir Makki, in addition to many other graves.



General View: Katcha Fort Hyderabad



Katcha Fort Hyderabad : Main Entrance, Bastions And Fortification

Fortress at Ghulam Shah Kalhora's Tomb

In Hyderabad there is a fortress that houses a tomb instead of habitation quarters or defence establishment. From outside it gives rather the impression of a military outpost than the last resting-place of a ruler. Inside this fortress lies buried Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhora, the founder of Hyderabad and the Pucca Fort.

The fortress is built in the shape of a rectangle in plan, measuring some 77 metres in length and 71 metres in width. The fortification wall was all built by using sun-dried bricks in the core provided with facing of the burnt bricks. With the most of the facing gone, the shell now stands to make the enclosure. There are as many as 11 semi-circular bastions, four on the corners with two each on the northern and southern sides and one facing the crookedly placed main Gate. The bastions on the three unbroken walls are placed at regular intervals of about 24.4 metres. The fortification wall is 4.26 metres wide at the bottom while it rises to over 7.6 metres.



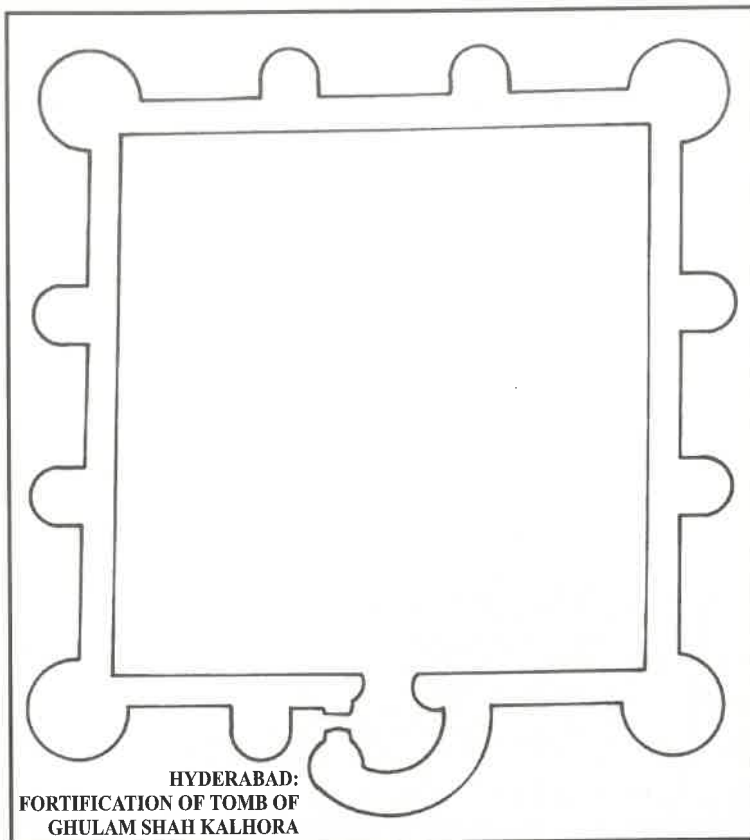
Fortification Of The Tomb Of Ghulam Shah Kalhora, Hyderabad

The main gate, normally known as *Shahi* (royal) Gate, is flanked by bastions, one alongside it though in the shape of a wall providing a sort of courtyard before entering the second or inner gate. The other bastion faces this outer gate making the entry highly controlled through the crooked door. The outer Gate measures some 2.5 metres in width while the inner gate, which is smaller, is a little over 2 metres wide and about 2.5 metres high.

In the middle of the interior of the Fortress lies the tomb of Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhora, placed on a raised platform. It depicts the typical architecture of the Kalhora period. It was constructed in 1772 AC by his son, Mian Sarfaraz Khan. The whole of the exterior of the tomb is covered with glazed coloured tiles, in a great variety of geometric and floral patterns. The interior has been very elaborately painted and deep bands of coloured glazed tiles run around the walls.



Inner Entrance Gate
Ghulam Shah Kalhora's Tomb, Hyderabad.



The rectangular platform is about 36 metres long and 35 metres wide with a height of about

1.2 metres. The main tomb takes a total height of about 11 metres above the platform. A couple of minarets stand on its two sides, each rising to a height of 17 metres.

The interior domed-chamber is octagonal in plan and in addition to gilding work has been decorated with white marble. Besides other decoration couplets of Persian verses are inscribed on the tombs lying in the middle of the chamber.



Kot Diji Fort

After a twenty kilometres drive on the National Highway while going to Karachi from Khairpur Mirs, the spectacular view of a unique fort built entirely on the hillock breaks the monotony of the skyline. This grand stronghold, known as Kot Diji Fort, lies just across the road, and opposite to the remains of the ancient site which in itself was a fortified town more than five thousand years ago. This, however, relatively modern Fort, like so many other forts of Sindh was also built by Talpurs (1783-1843).



Kot Diji: A General View Showing Water Tank

Talpurs followed Kalhoras (1700-1783) in Sindh, but only to see it apportioned into three parts among themselves. One of the parts came under the rule of the Mirs of Hyderabad, the second portion went to the Talpurs of Mirpur Khas while the third was held under control by the Talpurs of Khairpur Mirs.

It is recorded in history that the first Talpur ruler of Khairpur Mirs, Mir Sohrab Khan (1803-1830 AC) founded a number of forts to safeguard the frontiers of his rule. He is credited with constructing forts like Imam Garh in the Thar region, Shah Garh towards Jodhpur, Jaisalmer and Ahmad Abad at Diji. The last-mentioned stronghold with fortification wall, machicolations and battlements was built entirely on the hillock twenty kilometres from Khairpur Mirs. The same fort turned to be known by the name of Kot Diji later on. The Persian inscription found at the Main Gate of the Fort mentions it as Qal'a Ahmad Abad, or the Fort of Ahmad Abad. The fort was built under the supervision of Mir Sohrab Khan's minister, Serai Muhammad Saleh Zehri Baloch.

This fort stands on a hillock composed of sandstone and has a difficult access on all sides. It is built in burnt-bricks though at some places use of sandstone is also seen. Some researchers are of the view that the stone available at the site, and in the vicinity, is not of the required strength for such a huge building, and might also have been comparatively expensive in use. This could precisely be the reason for the large-scale use of burnt bricks. The bricks normally measure 3.8 x 11.4 x 24.15 centimetres.

The plan of the fort shows that it is narrow and oblong running from the eastern side towards west, then expanding, again in narrow fashion, over the north-south grid of the hill over its top. The fortification rises with the contours of the hill and gives it an irregular shape following the height of the place.



Two Tiers Kot Diji



Kot Diji Fort

The whole fort has only one main entrance on the eastern side, fortifying its strength against any invading enemy. The gate known as *Shahi Darwaza* or the Royal Gate in itself is a marvel of engineering. Built on the plan of a crooked entrance, it has a small 'courtyard'-access from outside. The space is further fortified by two heavy bastions providing the space to trap the advancing army to fully destroy by attacking from the musketry holes and battlements on the top. The access through the

bastions is from the eastern side while the wooden gate with heavy iron spikes, numbering 234, stands towards the western corner of the northern wall. Such an arrangement would ensure that no heavy contingent, or elephants, could be employed to break open the wooden gate. The Shahi Gate measures about 4.8 metres in height while it is around 3 metres in width. A small opening within one of the heavy wooden leaves of the door was perhaps used without endangering the safety of the fort by opening the gate for general movement of the inmates. There is a flight of 39 steps by the side of the Gate to access the top from inside.

In addition to the only main entrance through Shahi Gate, the fort has as many as three secret though very small approaches, perhaps to be used in emergency.

After crossing the Shahi Gate, one enters a small semi-circular open space with high walls on three sides, providing a climbing access to the main fort on the fourth one towards the western side. A large well is placed at this point to provide water to the inmates.

After crossing the second gate a tunnel-like access is provided to reach the top through a third gate. The main portion of the fort is beyond this point. Here it occupies a single elevation on top of the hill. It is a military fort fully equipped to offer defence and to withstand an invasion in addition to serving as the administrative or command headquarters. This portion of the fort, thus, contains all the important paraphernalia like heavy *burjs*, towers or bastions, the ammunition depot, water reservoir, *Mirs' harem*, a prison, *takht* or the place of holding court and the cells to accommodate guards, sepoys etc.

In addition to the two at the Shahi Gate, the fortification wall is provided with bastions at regular intervals throughout its length. These bastions, especially at the top plain, are also provided with cells on their inner sides. These cells must have been used for accommodating the guards and *sepoys*. These *burjs* or bastions were also used to mount cannons at their tops. The available source indicates that these cannons were of different sizes, but with the provision of sufficient space on each bastion, these could be moved to aim them towards different directions.

Some of these *burjs* or bastions have also been named to identify them. There is one such bastion, which is known as *Fateh Thul* and is located beside the third gate while climbing from below from the Shahi Gate. This *Thul* or tower is so strategically located that most of the fort, above and below this point, is in visual contact for better safety and security. The other bastion having the name of *Saffan Safa*, *Malik Maidan Burj* is located on the western side. It is known thus as two cannons, *Saffan Safa* and *Malik Maidan*, used to be mounted here. The *Shaheed Badshah Burj* is located towards the northwestern side of the fort. At the foot of this bastion is the tomb of one *Shaheed Badshah*, martyred king, which sufficiently speaks the reason of its being called thus.



General view of Kot Diji Fort

Still another bastion, which stands towards the eastern corner of the fort towards the direction of Jaisalmer in the Desert hence called Jaisalmer *Thul*. The next named-bastion is the Maryam *Thul*, which is said to have the cannon named Maryam. The cannon has since been removed from the site and put on decorative display at one of the crossings, on the National Highway, in the Khairpur City.

On the top-level plain the area of the fort is provided with, sort of galleries or cells, inside the fortification wall. These are called *ghulam gardish* and might have been meant for the use of those who attended the royalty. These *ghulam gardish* start from the Saffan Safa Bastion in the southwest corner and end in the northeastern corner where lies the Jaisalmer *Thul*.

In the plain area between the Fateh *Thul* and Saffan Safa Burj of the fort there is a depression constructed with white marble. It is a pond, which had been used for storing sweet water. This pool is about 3.75 metres in depth and measures around 11 metres in length and a little less than 7 metres in width.

Almost facing the third gate on the climb, and lying on its west, there are some roofless rooms beside the *ghulam gardish*. These are thought to have been used as ammunition depot or what is locally known as *Barood Khano*.

The living quarters or the Harem of the Mirs lie on the northeastern side of the top-plain area of the fort. The chroniclers record that this apparently military fort was also used by the rulers during the times of peace. Mir Sohrab Khan made it his abode a few years before death, after having handed over the power to his sons. In January 1843, the British troops also stayed here at a time when Charles Napier was on his military adventure to invade and conquer Imam Garh.



A corner bastion of Kot Diji Fort

Naukot Fort

From Mirpur Khas a fairly good road runs towards south to the great desert of Thar. After covering a distance of about 65 kilometres one reaches a small town, Naukot, with its roadside cafes, motor and tractor workshops and a number of other small-time shops running a busy business. Another 3 kilometres on the road to Mithi, one is attracted by an awe-inspiring fort on the left side, which area otherwise is nothing but wilderness. It is said to have been constructed by Mir Karam Ali Khan in 1814 AC to consolidate his power in the desert and to subdue the Thari people and make effective - and forceful - arrangements to collect *dhal*, revenue.



Naukot Fort

The Fort well served its founder, Mir Karam Ali Khan. But after his death none of his successors cared much about it. However, when Tari Khan came to power he continued to focus his attention on the Thar and added many areas to his rule. He arranged to have the presence of army in almost all the forts of Thar, which included Fatehgarh, Islamgarh etc. He died in 1829 AC and was succeeded at the seat of Mirpur Khas by Mir Sher Muhammad Khan, commonly known as 'Sher-e-Sindh' or the Lion of Sindh. He fully understood the importance of the Thar and, using his power, brought almost the whole of the Desert under his control. Keeping in view the strategic importance of the forts in a wilderness like the Thar, he ensured that all of them, including that of Naukot, were kept fully armed. He also camped in this Fort for a number of times.

In the meanwhile the British power in this part of the South Asia Subcontinent was gaining foothold by all means of crooked machinations. By then they had started interfering not only in the personal and family matters of the Mirs but were also turning some of them against the rulers by winning them over with false promises of granting power. Mirs proved no match to the Britons' manoeuvres and, in order to save themselves, even lost everything at the battle of Miani. Thus the Mirs' ruling branches at Hyderabad and Khairpur were humbled. Mir Sher Muhammad, the ruler of the Mirs' Mirpur branch of rule, decided to fight the British in order to take revenge. He collected his forces and marched towards Hyderabad. He faced the army of Charles Napier at Dubbi near Phuleli but, because of the internal intrigues, faced no different fate than that of his Khairpur or Hyderabad brothers.

After meeting the decisive defeat at Dubbi, Mir Sher Muhammad returned to Mirpur from Nasrpur. He sent his family to the Thar and, transferring his belongings also to the Desert, collected his scattered followers. Additionally helped by some disgruntled factions of the Mirs, he embarked on a sort of 'guerrilla' warfare against the British intruding forces. H. T. Lambrick gives fairly detailed account of the Mir's actions in his book 'John Jacob of Jacobabad'. As the men of the Mir had virtually cut off the lines of the British between Bombay and Sindh, John Jacob started his march with two squadrons to humble Naukot. However, Napier did not agree with the plan and directed him to attack Tando Muhammad Khan, about 30 kilometres from Hyderabad. Here the British force met with defeat and returned with all ignominy.



Naukot Fort: Part Of The Squarish Construction Housing The Gateway.

Mir Sher Muhammad was giving the British a great headache, as he would use the forts of the Thar to serve as his bases to launch attacks on the latter's interests in Sindh. Mir Sher Muhammad had been operating in his own fashion for quite some time. However, some of his leading men, aspiring to get more power, abandoned him and joined the lines of the British. On this, the Mir went to Qandhar to seek assistance. Disappointed from the treatment meted out from there, he at last surrendered at Lahore.

With the removal of the Mir from the scene, the same forts of Thar, which had served effectively against the British, were now in their total control. Fearing their future use against them they razed them to ground except the ones at Umerkot and Naukot, which have also lost their original grandeur because of a lack of maintenance over all this period.

The fort at Naukot overlooks the great span of the desert on one side and the green extent of land caused by the irrigation system on the other. It is built of burnt-bricks in mud mortar and measures about 113 metres in length and 98 metres in width. Another squarish construction on the southern side of the fort, measuring 15 metres by 13 metres has in it the only entrance and narrow access to the interior of the fort. All the walls and bastions give tapering look. The narrow entrance is approached through a crooked passage formed by two heavy and semi-circular bastions. The bastion close to the doorway, and making a part of the squarish construction, is about 9.5 metres high with a diameter of about 42 metres at the base.

The arched entrance is around 7 metres in height and about 4 metres in width. The approach to the interior of the fort is through a causeway-type hall and a room, which make part of the squarish construction, in itself giving the look of a fortress.

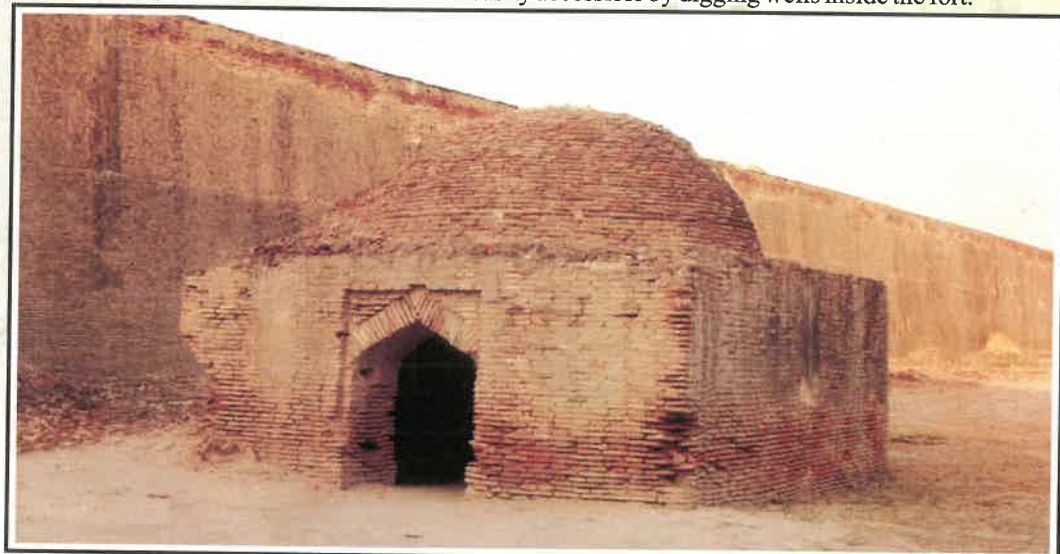
The fort has nine semi-circular bastions, two of them guarding the main entrance, four at the corners and one each in the middle of the northern, southern and western walls.

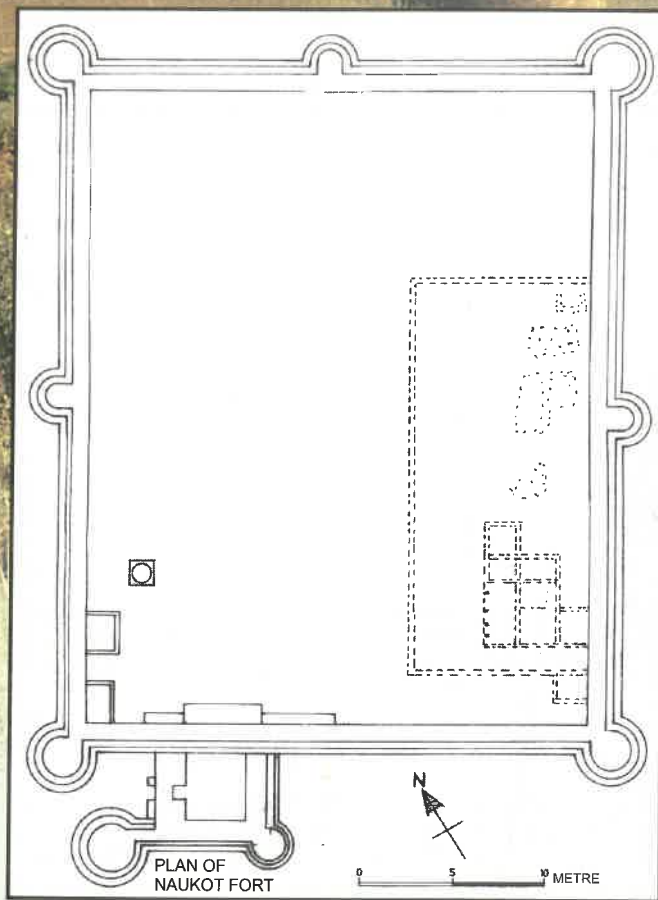
A four-metre high wall runs on the four sides of the fort. From inside the fort it has two burnt-brick stairs to climb to the top.



Naukot Fort: Barood Khana and other building

Inside the fort there are a few remains of rooms etc., which may go to suggest that these were the residential quarters. A domed though small room, looking like a dungeon, may well have served as *barood khana*, or the ammunition depot. Because of the nearness to the old beds of rivers, now got dry on the outside, the water seems to have been easily accessible by digging wells inside the fort.





Ranikot Fort

There may not be a single Sindhi who is not fascinated by the stories attached to a very unique type of Fort in the heart of the Province. Here legend and factual statistics are so much intertwined that it becomes difficult to distinguish one from the other. Except just few serious researchers most of the writers have written about it under its magical spell. They could not take into consideration its legitimate data mainly because of its relatively difficult accessibility, tedious location in the hills and its expansive girth over the changing contours of the Lakki Range.



Ranikot: General View Near Sunn Gate

Along the right bank of the river Indus, a hilly range known as Kirthar runs over a length of about 240 kilometres, mostly separating the province of Sindh from Balochistan. Its height varies at different points and may reach over 2000 metres at some spots. Near the Sehwan-San axis, the ribs of the Kirthar are named Lakki, which at the highest point may rise to about 610 metres from mean sea level. This range consists of north-south running three almost parallel hills, which are named differently as the *landi*, the *daphro* and the *karo*. The Fort of Ranikot spreads over all these hills, with its eastern wall located on the *landi* and western one on the *karo* while east-west walls crossing over the middle range, the *daphro*. In this way the fort rests between north latitudinal lines of 27°55', in the north, and 26°15' in the south.

The expansiveness of the Fort, as also its difficult access, has in itself been a deterrent to researchers to take its exact measurements. A recent survey, however, lay claim to have physically reached all the points in the whole area and taken measurements which could be relied on. According to this survey the circumference of this great fort is about 32970 metres, or simply 32 kilometres and 970 metres. Out of the whole circuit, stone fortification wall is built over a length of a little over 8 kilometres while for the rest natural precipitous of the hills has been used as defence.

The whole man-made fortification wall is built at open places or relatively plainer areas, and rises or dips with the natural contours of the hills. The natural defences are in the shape of suddenly rising hilly rocks, which may even rise to 610 metres at some places.

The outer stone fortification wall is further supported by 47 bastions at regular intervals. About seven of the bastions are in rectangular shape while the rest, 40, bear round or semi-circular form.

The stone used in the fortification and the bastions is locally available which is reckoned as sandstone. The masonry is set mostly in mud though the use of *gutch* (thick lime paste) and *chiroli* (calcinated gypsum powder prepared into paste) is also found at places.

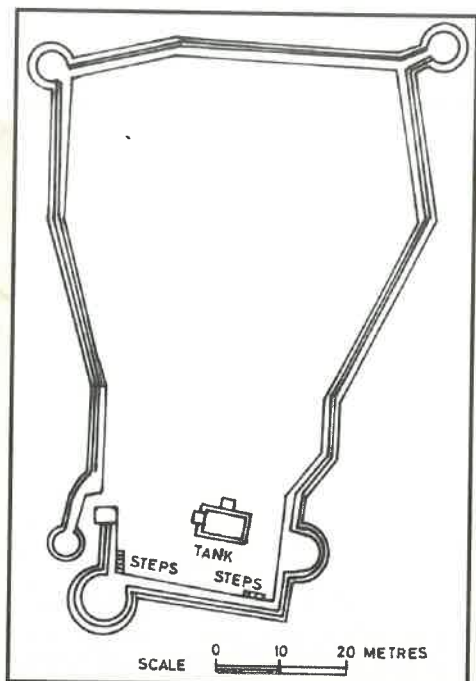
Water is the basic need of any habitation place, more so when it could have been aimed to sustain considerable population and army for longer periods of siege, as it could have been in the case of a fort like Ranikot. It is, however, much surprising that there is acute shortage of this commodity in this huge Fort. Some experts are of the view that rain water used to have been stored for later consumption during most of the period of the year. There are certain pond-like depressions, which could have been caused to serve as water storage by putting up *bunds*, or embankments. The lifeline of the Fort, however, is the Rani Nain, or Rani Stream, which probably also gave the Fort its name. It is thought that on the western side of the Fort, near the Mohan Gate, there is enough supply of subterranean water, which comes out in the form of springs and feeds the Rani Nain. This water flows from here through the Kari hills towards the San Gate, which lies on the eastern side of the Fort. In its earlier part of journey it has somewhat larger depth and width but narrows down as it travels further.



Mohan Gate of the Ranikot Fort

There is hardly one well in the whole of the Fort, to draw water for sustenance. It lies within the smaller fortress of Miri and suggests that the water level inside the Fort is as deep as 29 metres, making the task of having more wells a difficult proposition.

The Fort is accessed through two main gates, each of them lying in the eastern and western walls. The eastern gate, known as San Gate, is the most commonly traversed now to access the interior of the Fort from the Indus Highway with which it is connected by a metalled road. This gate is so known as the San Nain, stream, is located on this side and flows in and out of the Fort here. It also had a bridge built over it during the days the place was in use. On the left side of the stream, and the Gate, there is a huge circular bastion rising to a height of over 10 metres, with the circumference of about 8 metres. After a length of about 38 metres towards south, the wall has a horn-like twist. Here is another strong bastion, 6.25 metres higher than the ground and measuring about 4.5 metres in circumference. The San Gate lies towards south of this bastion, where the wall and the bastions make a courtyard well defended on all sides. From here about 5.5 metres wide access makes the main Fort approachable. This sort of arrangement makes it a trap gate, which could be defended very effectively. There are signs that the gate was provided with heavy wooden door-leaves.



Plan of shergarh, a fortress inside

the view that these are only the spots, which have provided access only after falling of the stones of the fortification wall. They especially back up their theory by taking into account the inadequate breadths and unevenly poised positions of these openings.

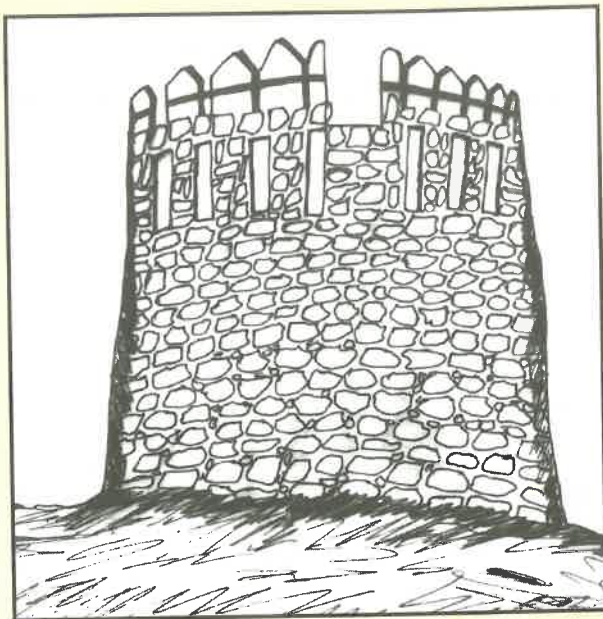
There are three small fortresses in the interior of the Ranikot Fort. They are named as Miri Kot, Sher Garh and Mohen Kot.

After entering the Fort there is a square room, each side measuring about 3 metres. It is crowned with a round dome and looks odd, the whole are being devoid of any structure in its vicinity. Different writers have interpreted its use or nomenclature differently. However, it most probably served as storage for ammunition. Another such room is seen in the Naukot Fort (built in 1814 AC by Mir Karam Ali Khan Talpur) where it has definitely been assigned the name of Ammunition Storage Depot.

The other entrance, called Mohen Gate, lies towards west. It is here that the Nain stream enters the Fort. Here is also provided a bridge, with hardly a 25-metre span. The Gate is provided in the wall, which is a little over 3 metres at this spot. It is a simple gate and is not supported by the paraphernalia that make the San Gate a trap entrance. There is a large valley on the outside of this Gate.

Some writers have enumerated as many as four gates. They have named them as, 1) San Bharendo Gate, 2) Aamri or Northeastern Gate, 3) Shah Pir or Southern Gate and 4) Western or the Higher Gate. Their viewpoint has, however, been contested by those who have closely surveyed the fortification wall. They are of



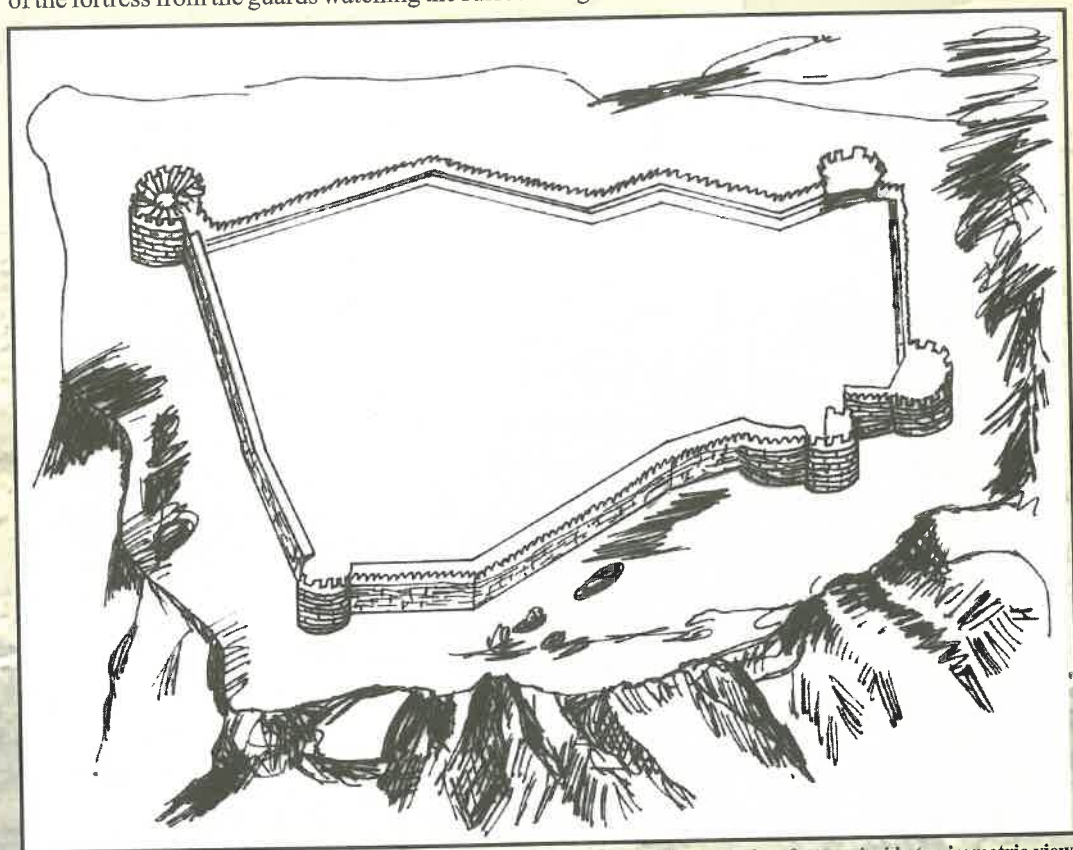


Rani Kot: Construction of a bastion

outer side only while on the inner side it is provided with a rising masonry probably to keep the privacy of the fortress from the guards watching the surroundings.

The Miri Kot Fortress lies almost in the centre of the Ranikot Fort. 'Miri' in Sindhi means 'hill-top' or the place where Mirs would reside. The Fortress is located on top of the hilly ground access to which is difficult from three sides, making it safe and secure.

The wall of the Fortress runs over a length of 437 metres on all of its four sides and is further supported by five bastions. The main Gate opens by the side of a sizeable bastion, which measures a little less than 7 metres in circumference. The other four bastions are placed at each of the corners of the Fortress. The thickness of the wall measures about 3.4 metres at the bottom while in its upper portion it is some 2.5 metres. The wall is surmounted by machicolations on the



The right-angled access to the interior of the Fortress through the Main Gate is decorated with carved motifs. The arches of 'guards' niches' are made of sandstone. These have different geometrical and floral designs. The sunflower motif is very prominent. There are also stone-steps leading to the top of the wall, that rise from the squarish courtyard making the part of the access.

The arrangements of the Miri Kot suggest that it might have served the chiefs or the army head as, in addition to its defences, it also houses residential quarters. A large well inside the Fortress also points towards the same end, as it might have been aimed at sustaining the important inhabitants during any eventuality.

The Sher Garh Fortress is situated in the northeastern part of the Ranikot Fort. The Fortress is perched over a high point of the hill, at a height of about 450 metres from the mean sea level. It can be accessed by climbing the difficult approach on the eastern side. The approach is strengthened by stone-supports at regular intervals.

The Fortress is oblong in plan, with one side considerably larger than the other. Though lengthwise it looks that both the walls meet at equal points yet they do not run parallel to each other. The only entrance is provided in the southwestern side where it stands flanked by two bastions, each of which rises to a height of about 10.6 metres. The bastions taper inward on the rise. In addition to these bastions there are three more such supports, two on the northeastern and northwestern corners while the third one is in the eastern wall, close to the southeastern corner.



Ranikot Fort: A niche of Miri's Entrance

A 3.65-metre wide access opens towards the interior of the Fortress. It is very strange that there are no structures built inside the Fortress. The only construction in the shape of a tank for storing water welcomes near the entrance.

Mohen Kot is built about 460 metres away from the Mohen Gate. It is surrounded by deep ditches on the three sides. The length of the Fortress is 37.5 metres on the eastern side while it measures about 39 metres on the western side. Its breadth measures some 10 metres in the northern and 18 metres in the southern sides. The buildings inside the Fortress would suggest that it could also have served as the secure residential place of some chiefs, while also meeting the requirements of watch post. The wall of the Fortress is further strengthened with semi-circular bastions.

From the present condition of the Ranikot Fort it appears that it would never have served the purpose for which it might have been built. Rather it seems to have been abandoned even before the planned fortification wall and other auxiliary buildings would have been completed. If this theory is correct then the question as to its true purpose of building it at this large scale in such a difficult area arises. It is also very strange that such a large monument does not appear in the annals of Sindh, nor is mentioned by any of the contemporary historians. The only plausible answer to these questions and queries could be that it was built much late in history. It could have come up

possibly during the reign of the Talpurs in the first half of the 19th century AC. It was the time when Talpurs might have thought of some safer haven in the event of any invasion by the Sikh ruler of Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who is on record to have had nurtured the desire to control the whole of Sindh. Moreover, the motivation behind having a stronghold at such remote, or difficult, place could well be the fear of the growing power of the British during that particular period. However, the fast-events of that era perhaps did not give much time or the strategic foresight to complete this fort much less use it to ward off any eventuality. Another plus point that favours its origin in the period of the Talpurs is the fact that no other dynasty had built as many forts at strategic locations in relatively much less time as did the Mirs.

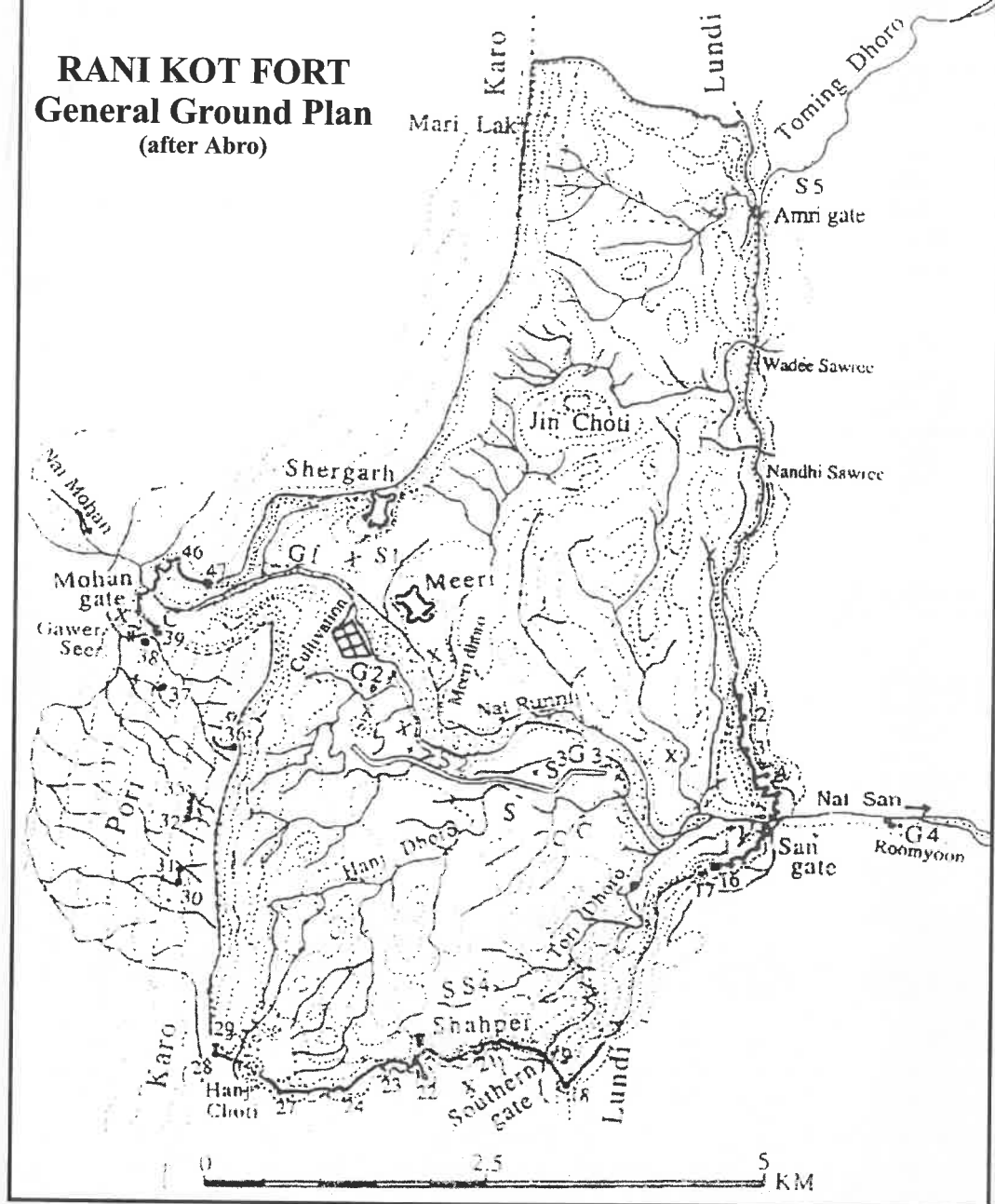


Ranikot Fort: Fortification following hill contours



Shergarh Fortress

RANI KOT FORT **General Ground Plan** (after Abro)



35 Kharan Fort

The Fort, commonly known as Kharan Fort, is situated in the outskirts of the town of Kharan (Balochistan Province) towards its southwestern side. Although not very old, the exact date of its construction is not known for want of any written records. The elders of the town, however, ascribe its foundation to Sardar Amir Azad Khan, some time during the eighteenth century AC.

The Fort is a huge rectangle-shaped building that is constructed with thick fortification wall having a core of mud-bricks with burnt-bricks facing. The masonry is set in mud mortar. The wall rises to a height of over 10.5 metres and is a little over 4.5 metres in thickness. It was provided with machicolations at the top, breaking the otherwise monotonous skyline of the area. Its interior is about 76 metres in length, in the northsouth direction, while it measures some 46 metres in its breadth. It is accessed by one gateway, built in arched shape, lying in the eastern fortification towards southeastern side. There are four semi-circular bastions provided in the wall. These are located in each corner of the fort.

In the thickness of the fortification wall there are chambers of different sizes, which might have been used for various purposes, ranging from residential to storage. These chambers have vaulted roofs, and were plastered in lime and concrete on the inside. In the interior these cells are provided with niches and recessed panels of different sizes. On the inner side of the wall, close to the main entrance, were located kitchen and auxiliary chambers for storage of kitchen material. Along the wall is an elongated cell having vaulted roof and arched entrance. It is generally known as the Cannon Hall, where the cannons were stored.

A mosque was built in the eastern wall, north of the Main Entrance. It measures some 18 metres in length and about 5 metres in width. The interior of the mosque is decorated with panels of geometrical and floral designs in relief.



Forts of Cholistan

Cholistan, or Rohi as is generally called locally, is a barren desert tract, bounded on the north and west by the Hakra depression rich with cultural mounds along its high banks. Under these high and low mounds lie buried the old settlements. This deep mass of sand is the northward continuation of the 'Marusthali' or 'Maruthali' meaning the 'region of death', as Thar, the Great Pakistani Desert is known. Although rich in ancient sites belonging to the Harappan period, there have not been found remains of any fort or fortification going that far in proto-history. However, this perhaps is the only single region which is dotted, almost in a single line, with as many as fifty fortresses, most of them of relatively later origin. Some of these fortresses stand built on the earlier period defences. The forts like Marot, Derawar etc. are thought to have existed around the 8th century AC, though in their present shape they do not go beyond two hundred year. It may be of interest to note that most of the other forts are the works accomplished between 17th and 19th centuries AC.

The forts and fortresses lying in the Cholistan area are mostly sort of watch posts, positioned on the route from Uch to Delhi, or across the desert to the other side of Rajasthan. These defences are also known to have served as caravanserais for the camping of the traders on these routes as, Cholistan being very sparsely inhabited, the habitational stations were hardly to be found in the desert. Most of these forts barely had a thin population or basic requirements needed by such caravans while on the move through this sea of sand. At least two of them, Marot and Derawar, were residential forts for the use of the rulers and their retinues.

The activity of building fortresses in the region of Cholistan took a new turn with the advent of the reign of the Daudpotra Abbasides. As rulers of Sindh when they defied King Nadir Shah and acted against his agent, they were defeated all ends up. Those who survived ran across Indus under Bahawal Khan, who later on founded the city of Bahawalpur and a kingdom in the area but never to return to power in Sindh. They are credited with building of many forts and fortresses mainly to protect their newly acquired territory against the hostilities of the Rajputs in addition, of course, to further facilitate the movement and security of the caravans. These forts and fortresses are all known by the name of *Qal'a* or fort although most of them are mere outposts or caravanserais. Some of these include the following: -





Maujgarh Fort



Derawar Fort



A cannon inside Derawar Fort



Maujgarh Fort : Wall And Bastions

1. Sardargarh Fort, 2. Mirgarh Fort, 3. Jamgarh Fort, 4. Maujgarh Fort, 5. Dingarh Fort, 6. Khangarh Fort, 7. Fatehgarh Fort, 8. Islamgarh Fort, 9. Sahibgarh Fort, 10. Mubarakpur Fort, 11. Rukunpur Fort 12. Ghauspur Fort, 13. Qaimpur Fort, 14. Ahmadpur Lamma Fort, 15. Tajgarh Fort, 16. Phulra Fort, 17. Winjhnot Fort, 18. Moonday Shaheed Fort, 19. Walhar Fort, 20. Bahawalgarh Fort, 21. Fatehgarh Fort, 22. Mirgarh Fort, 23. Dingarh Fort, 24. Jamgarh Fort, 25. Bahawalpur Fort, 26. Sahnwala Fort, 27. Paloli Fort, 28. Thatta Waran Fort, 29. Ramkali Fort, 30. Kotsabzal Fort, 31. Garhi Ikhtian Khan Fort, 32. Kandra Fort, 33. Fazilpur Fort, 34. Khanpur Fort, 35. Islamgarh Fort, 36. Bhagla Fort, 37. Liyara Fort, 38. Sahibgarh Fort, 39. Muridwala Fort, 40. Mochki Fort, 41. Jajja Fort, 42. Kot Samaba Fort, 43. Nowshera Fort etc.

Most of the defences built in the Cholistan region are perched on high, natural or cultural, mounds and command a fine overview of the whole area around each of them. The height of the fortresses at Marot, Bhutta Wahan and Derawar are of special note.

Most of these Forts are built in baked bricks, more often than not, using the sun-dried bricks in the core of the fortification walls. Many of them are in a critical stage of decay mainly because of neglect and lack of any conservation, restoration or even maintenance operations. It is very ironical that none of these forts have been protected by the Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, in the terms of Antiquities Act of 1975 thus leaving them at their fate to brave the vagaries of nature and vandalism of man.

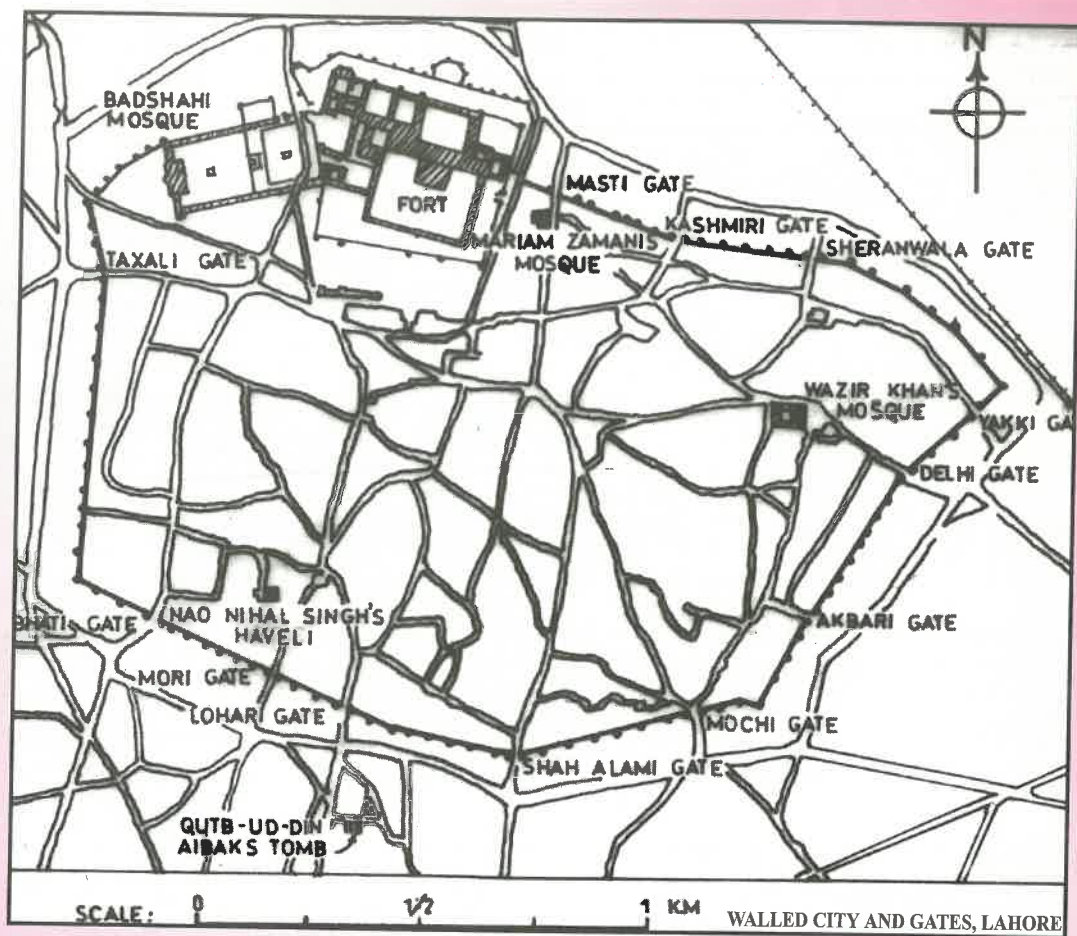


A Gateway, the only remnant of Mirgarh Fort



VII Epilogue

In addition to the forts and fortresses lying scattered over the whole of Pakistan there is additionally a large number of the towns and cities which were provided with fortification walls to ward off any danger of sudden collapse before an invading force. Such settlements, to name only a few, could be seen at Lahore Old City, Shujabad in Multan district, Tulamba in Khanewal district, Bhera Town, Bannu City etc. etc. Some defences also came up in the shape of fortresses, like that at Mangla, to keep under surveillance the vast areas lying around, against the enemy. Even the houses of tribal chiefs or affluent persons, especially in the Tribal belts along the North West Frontier Province are seen having the enclosure walls built in the shape and to serve the purpose of the fortifications. As said elsewhere, caravanserais especially those built at remote and dangerous areas, or else in the plains, were enclosed with fortification walls to ward off any danger to the campers. The Akbari Serai attached to the Jahangir's Tomb in Shahdara, Lahore, and Begam ki Serai said to have been built by Empress Nur Jahan at the left bank of the Indus at Attock may be only two of the numerous examples of this type. The Gor Khattree at Peshawar, which had been used for multipurpose ends during its long history also has fortification wall built around it as also is the city of Old Peshawar. All these and such other places had controlled access to their interior by means of strong and limited entrances in the shape of Gates. Some temples in ruined fortifications in the Salt Range, like those at Amb or Kusukh, the latter even repaired and restored at the orders of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, still stand out to show the past glory in fort building.



Cells and machicolations, Begam Ki Serai, Attock



A General view of Tulamba



Lahore city wall



Eastern Gate of Gor Khattree, Peshawar



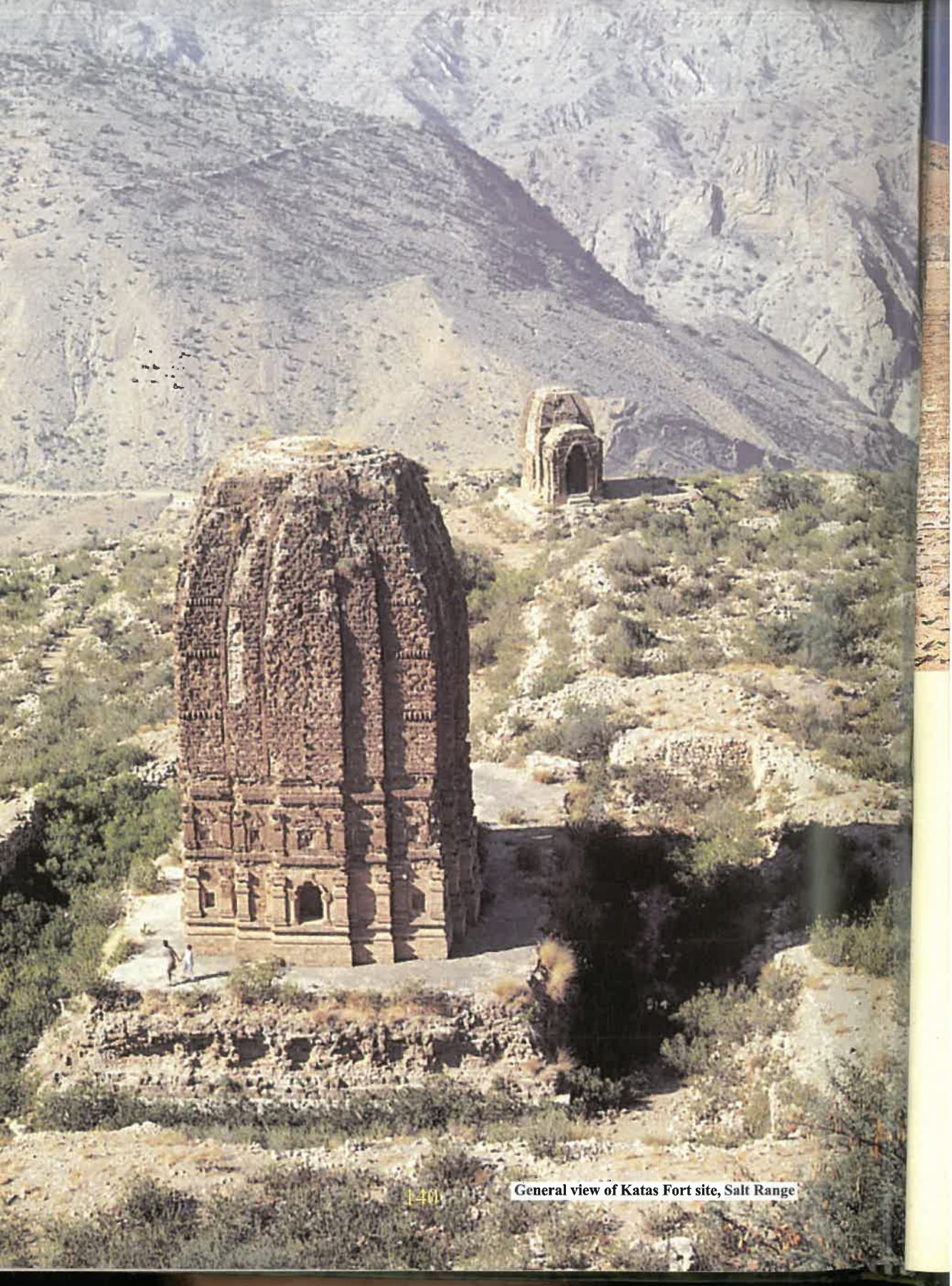
Kusukh Fort



General view of Shuja Abad Fort Gateway



Mosque in Akbari Serai, Shahdara





A general view of Amb Fort Gate

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Born at Sahiwal, Ihsan H. Nadiem got his higher education at the Government College, Lahore, and did his Master's in Geography from the Punjab University. He was trained as archaeologist on scholarship by the Government of Pakistan. He studied at CAVILAM, Vichy (France) for certificate in French language. He also did specialised studies in Museology on French government scholarship. In architecture, he benefited from the scholarship of Dr. Bernard M. Feilden, Director Emeritus, ICCROM, Italy. He joined the Department of Archaeology, Pakistan and excavated at Banbhore, Swat, Moenjodaro and Tulamba. As a curator he held the charge of museums at Harappa, Umerkot, Moenjodaro, Lahore Fort and Taxila. He commanded the Regional Archaeological Offices at Peshawar and Quetta, and the Departmental Publications Branch, which he successfully reactivated after it had remained dormant for over 13 years. He is credited with raising the Pakistan Institute of Archaeological Training and Research (PIATR), where he served as its head to run a number of courses in archaeology, museology and conservation. He has also served as Director in both Northern and Southern Circles of Archaeology, covering the whole of Pakistan. As a Professor in the University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, he structured courses and taught Conservation of Architectural Heritage as full-fledged subject for Master's degree. In addition to nine books on cultural heritage of Pakistan he has published over twenty five Research Papers in different journals of international repute, more than 250 popular articles appearing in various national dailies and periodicals, and a two-volume Report on archaeological excavations at Panr (Swat) from Rome. He also edited Pakistan Archaeology, volumes 10-22.



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