

Flerat

to Jorminal
and U.S.S.R.

TAKHT-I-SAFAR

to Islam Qala
and Iran

Petrol

IASI'S TOMB

CITY MAP OF

Herat

to Gazargah

Windmills

MINARETS

MAUSOLEUM OF GAWHAR-SHAD

MUSALLA

ZIARAT-I-ABULQASIM

Ariana Office

Governor's Office

to Obah
and Maumana

CITADEL

MASJID-I-JAMI

NEW CITY

OLD CITY

Parc Hotel

COVERED
BAZAR

HADZ-I-CHAHAR-SUD

OLD CITY WALLS

ZIARAT-I-MIR-I-SHAHID

Petrol

NORTH

to Pul-i-Malon

to Airport
and Kandahar

Drawn by Peter Edmonds



Herat

A PICTORIAL GUIDE

TEXT

Nancy Hatch Wolfe

PHOTOGRAPHY

Inger Hansen

DRAWINGS

Brigitte McCulloch

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Kabul : 1966

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INTRODUCTION

GUESTS to the opening of Monuments Week at the Kabul Museum in September 1964 found an exciting new exhibit of large photographs displaying the full range of Afghanistan's historical monuments. The excellence and clarity of the photography allowed for serious study of detail but it was the sensitivity of the compositions which was most striking. These pictures imparted the full romance of the monuments and their individual settings. Inquiring about the photographer, I was introduced to a diminutive blond, Inger Hansen.

Later, on considering a fitting form for a Guide to Herat, I felt that here the monuments deserved to have their story told in more than words. These monuments still speak of the days when Herat was the cultural centre of a powerful empire ruled by the Timurids, devoted patrons of art and poetry. The story would best be told through pictures. Art, poetry, photography—Inger Hansen immediately came to mind. With her characteristic generosity she agreed to donate her talents. The results will bring lasting pleasure to all readers.

The Hansens left Afghanistan before research revealed the need for additional pictures. It was my good fortune then to find Hubbard Goodrich of the Columbia Team in Herat and my further fortune to find him ready to add his efforts to this project. Negatives flooded into Kabul but as the manuscript went to press the pages facing text on the covered reservoir and the Takht-i-Safar remained alarmingly empty. It was at this point that H.E. Klappert whose earlier attempts to photograph Herat had been thwarted by bad weather, introduced me to Mr. and Mrs. Willard Mason of the U.N. in India. To their kindness in devoting time from a one day visit to take these two pictures, I am most deeply indebted. It is with such varied cooperation that the photographs were finally assembled and it is a great pleasure to acknowledge the help of all these contributors.

As the pictures show, there is a rich profusion of decorative motif in Herat. Again I felt that word descriptions of designs would make tedious reading; drawings would be clearer and an attractive addition. For this I turned to Brigitte McCulloch who had already given impressive proof of her talents on an earlier project. The difficult chore of isolating designs and the still more painstaking task of transferring them from photograph to paper, called for a great deal of effort and time for which I am most grateful. Adding immeasurably to the appearance of the Guide, the drawings also enhance the visitor's

appreciation of Herati artistry, both past and present.

Again it is a pleasure to acknowledge the assistance of Peter Edmonds in his important role as cartographer. The fact that no acceptable map of the city of Herat existed posed a real and perplexing problem until the Cartographic Institute kindly offered copies of their aerial photographs. This response was most gratifying and is much appreciated. The name of Robert MacMakin of Franklin Book Programs, Inc., will also be familiar to readers of these guide books. His contribution to the publication of this Guide is particularly significant since my husband and I left Kabul as the manuscript went to press on the completion of my husband's assignment with the American Embassy. To know that it is left in competent hands is most reassuring.

To pose a question on Herat's history is to elicit mention of Mr. Fikri Seljuki, a distinguished member of a famous Herati family known for their leadership as diplomats, artists, historians, authors, and calligraphers. Mr. Seljuki, author of several Farsi works on Herat, was most generous in spending many afternoons going over the text to which he contributed many facts and numerous anecdotes not included in available western research material. To have had the benefit of his scholarship was of great value; to have made a new friend, is of even greater meaning.

These afternoons were shared by Mr. Abdul Wahab Tarzi, an old friend, whose continued support this time included the task of interpreting. Being an interested student of history himself, he added considerably to the stimulation and enjoyment of these meetings. I hope the Guide evidences the spirit in which it was created.

Nancy Hatch Wolfe

New York
September 1965

CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

(Numbers in bold face refer to text pages)

c.2000 Oases of Herat probably B.C. settled.

- 800s Assyrian Empire pushes Iranian tribes eastward; those called Hairava settle in oasis of Herat which is called Hairava in the Avesta and Artacoana by Greek writers..
- 500s Achaeminid armies of Cyrus I and Darius I pass through Herat; Khorasan treated as a frontier province.
- 330 Alexander of Macedon captures Herat; builds new city (8).
- c.150 Parthians under Mithridates I annex Herat.
- 129 Scythian hordes from Chinese Turkestan move into Herat.
- 123 Parthians under Mithridates II reoccupy Herat; Khorasan prospers.

A. D.

- c.60 The Kushans under Vima Kadphises capture Herat from the Parthians; Kushan Empire ruled from Kabul and Peshawar.
- 226 Sassanian Empire under Ardashir extended to Herat but political influence tenuous; Herat reverts to frontier status.
- c.425 Ephthalites establish themselves north of the Hindu Kush with their capital a little to the north of modern Herat at Badghhis, "the windy region"; frequent intervals of armed conflict alternating with short periods of peace with Persians.
- 565 Ephthalites overthrown by coalition of Sassanians and Western Turks; Ephthalite prince continues to govern Herat under eye of Turks.
- 630 Minor Turkish chiefs ruling petty principalities throughout the north; after 630 anarchy; brunt of resistance to Arab invasions born by Ephthalite prince of Herat.

- 652 Final destruction of Sassanian power by Arabs; Ephthalites of Herat submit; early Arab conquests little more than plundering raids.
- 667 Arab power more firmly established; 50,000 Arab families garrisoned in Khorasan; *forays into Ghor* (20).
- 673 Khorasan firmly secured by Arabs; *used as base to conquer Central Asia* (26).
- 700s Frequent revolts against harshness of Arab governors show inalterable hostility toward Arabs; provincial unrest coupled with waning power of Caliphate permitted rise of local dynasties.
- 800s 820 Tahirds of Khorassan establish practical independence from Caliphate; 867 Saffarids from Kandahar take Herat; 872 Samanids of Transoxiana replace Saffarids in Khorasan; under Samanids renaissance of national heritage, return of intellectual vitality.
- c.900 *Reputed building of Pul-i-Malan by Bibi Nur* (58).

Ghaznavids

- 994 Sebuktigin, founder of the Ghaznavid Dynasty, receives Khorasan from the Samanids.
- 1000 Mahmud of Ghazni becomes master of Khorasan, d.1030.
- 1006 *Birth of Khwaja' Abdullah-i-Ansari in Herat; d. Herat 1088* (48).
- 1011 *Mahmud campaigns against Ghor* (20).
- 1020 *Masud, son of Mahmud of Ghazni, campaigns against Ghor* (20).
- 1036 *Masud strengthens Herat citadel against Seljuks* (8).

Seljuks

- 1040 *Seljuks defeat Ghaznavids in Khorasan; Herat fortress destroyed* (8). Seljuk power centered in Persia, Herat ruled by lesser members of the Seljuk family.
- 1100 *Consolidation of petty chieftains in Ghor* (20).
- 1140 Aladdin Husain Jahan-soz of Ghor burns Ghazni.
- 1150 *Birth of Fakhruddin-i-Razi, theologian for whom Masjid-i-Jami was rebuilt in Herat; d. 1210 in Herat* (12,38).
- 1153 Sultan Ghiyasuddin-i-Ghori begins reign in Ghor.
- 1157 *Death of last strong Seljuk king* (8).

Ghorids

- 1175 *Sultan Ghiyasuddin-i-Ghori captures Herat* (8,20).

- 1200 *Sultan Ghiyasuddin-i-Ghori rebuilds Masjid-i-Jami' (12,22).*
 1202 *Local Kart family of Herat gains prominence as high government officials under Sultan Ghiyasuddin-i-Ghori (18).*
 1203 *Death of Sultan Ghiyasuddin-i-Ghori (20).*
 1206 *Shah Muhammad of Khwarizm enters Herat in December (8,20); Herat becomes part of Khwarizm Empire ruled from Merv.*
 1207 *Shah Muhammad returns to Merv in January; Herat left to petty potentates and adventurers (20).*

Mongols

- 1221 *Herat destroyed by Genghis Khan (8,20).*

Karts

- 1245 *Mangu Khan, grandson of Genghis Khan, places Kart Maliks in charge of Herat and its adjoining territories (8); sporadic resistance to Mongols throughout Khorasan.*
 1256 *Hulagu, brother of Mangu Khan, establishes Il-khans in Persia; Karts rule Herat as their vassals (18).*
 1305 *Citadel rebuilt by Malik Fakhruddin-i-Kart (8).*
 1332 *Kart Maliks establish independence from Mongol Il-khans (18).*
 1375 *Date on bronze cauldron in Masjid-i-Jami' (18).*
 1379 *Tamerlane summons last Kart king to appear before him as a vassal; summons ignored (18).*
 1381 *Tamerlane takes Herat, destroys city walls (10); takes treasure (62); takes city doors (10).*
 1383 *Tamerlane destroys Herat after city revolts (10).*

Timurids

- 1391 *Shah Rukh, son of Tamerlane, becomes Governor of Herat; rebuilds city (10).*
 1404 *Shah Rukh succeeds Tamerlane, establishes capital at Herat; cultural renaissance (30).*
 1414 *Birth of the poet Jami, d. 1492 at Herat (42).*
 1417 *Initiation of work on Queen Gawhar-Shad's musalla-madrassa (28).*
 1428 *Restoration of Gazargah by Shah Rukh (50).*
 1440 *Birth of miniaturist Bihzad in Herat (30); died in Tabriz in 1529.*
 1447 *Death of Shah Rukh (10,30).*
 1457 *Death of Queen Gawhar-Shad; murdered by Sultan Abu Sa'id who*

- takes possession of Herat (16,30).
 1468 Husain-i-Baiqara installed as Sultan at Herat (16,40);
 Golden Age of Timurids (20,42,46).
 1498 Mir Ali Sher Nawai directs restoration of Masjid-i-Jami' (16).
 1506 Death of Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara (40); Emperor Babur visits Herat;
 writes of it in his Memoires (40,46,58).
 1507 Herat captured by the Uzbek Shaibani Khan; end of the House of
 Timur (10).

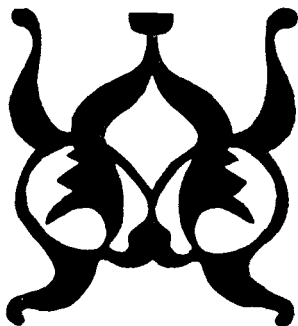
Safavids

- 1510 Shaibani Khan killed by Shah Ismail, founder of the Safavid Dyna-
 sty of Persia; Herat occupied by Safavids (10); constant struggles by
 Safavids with the Uzbeks who periodically sack and plunder
 Herat; Safavid power concentrated in Persia.
 1634 Hasan Khan Shamlu, Governor of Herat under the Safavids, builds
 the Hauz-i-Chahar Suq; after his reign Herat declines under avari-
 cious governors (64).

Afghans

- 1718 Afghan clan known as the Abdalis of Herat assert their independence
 from the Safavids; beginning of struggle between Persia and the
 Afghans for Herat (10).
 1729 Herat retaken for Safavids by Nadir Afshar; Herat revolts 1730;
 retaken 1731, Abdalis left to rule Herat as governors.
 1736 Nadir Afshar becomes Shah of Persia; assassinated 1747.
 1747 Afghanistan founded by Ahmad Shah Durrani (64).
 1749 Ahmad Shah Durrani takes Herat from Persians; Herat united
 with Kandahar and Kabul.
 1834 Amir Dost Muhammad Khan ousts Ahmad Shah Durrani's fami-
 ly, known as the Sadozais, from Kabul; Sadozais hold Herat in
 opposition to Kabul (64); Persian desire to regain Herat encouraged
 by the Amir in his political attempts to seize Herat; these negotia-
 tions keynote in affairs leading up to the First Anglo-Afghan War.
 1838 Herat sorely beset by Persians from November 1837-September
 1838 (64); Britain and Russia jockey for influence in Persian camp
 outside Herat; Lt. Pottinger assists Afghans within the city; Persians
 retire after Britain threatens war.
 1856 Persians again besiege Herat, November; Britain declares war,
 Persian withdrawal from Herat a condition for peace.

- 1857** *Treaty of Paris (10) signed in March; Persian troops withdraw leaving Herat in hands of pro-Persian, anti-Dost Muhammad puppet.*
- 1863** *Amir Dost Muhammad Khan takes Herat; dies soon after, buried at Gazargah (56); internal dissensions and fratricidal wars continue; Herat remains semi-autonomous in opposition to Kabul.*
- 1880** *Amir Abdur Rahman begins strong rule; Herat becomes important city of united Afghanistan (10,64).*
- 1929** *Flag of independence raised by adherent of Bacha Saqao (10).*
- 1930** *Herat tenders allegiance to King Nadir Shah (10).*

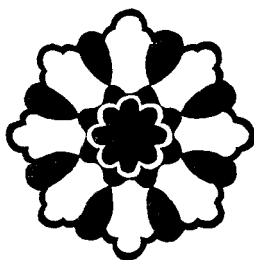


Herat - A Pictorial Guide

QALA-I-IKHTIYARUDDIN, THE CITADEL OF HERAT

Alexander of Macedon was headed toward Bactria in pursuit of his enemy Bessus when news reached him that the satrap of Aria was preparing for battle at his capital at Hairava, the ancient Persian name for Herat. Turning, Alexander captured the city and ordered the building of a new fortress. This was in the 4th century B.C. Its possessors thereafter kept it strong; accounts throughout the centuries invariably speak of the citadel standing on a height of its own near the northern ramparts dominating the scene. It does so today.

Early in the 11th century the Ghaznavid Sultan Masud stationed his entire Arab and Kurdish contingents in this citadel in an attempt to stem the advance of Turkoman nomads who were plundering and denuding Khorasan under the leadership of the Seljuks. But the Seljuks swept through and demolished Herat's citadel in the belief that the destruction of this famous symbol of strength would dishearten the people of Khorasan.



The Seljuks, ruling from Iran, found the need to rebuild the citadel for they in turn were harassed by rival tribes from the north. The death of their last strong ruler in 1157 ushered in the rule of the Ghorids who took possession of the citadel in 1175. They were followed by the short rule of the Khwarizm Shah, a prelude to the onslaught of Genghis Khan who sent his son Tuli to subdue Khorasan in 1221. In February Merv fell and all but 400 of its leading artisans were massacred; in April the same fate befell Nishapur and the site of that great city was ploughed under; in May the Mongols entered Herat where only the 12,000 defenders of the citadel were put to the sword.

Later Tuli had reason to rue his clemency at Herat for the city's citizens, having heard of the defeat of the Mongols outside of Kabul, rose in revolt and killed the Mongol garrison. Soundly reprimanding Tuli, Genghis Khan with a host of 80,000 horse thundered upon Herat. The siege of six months left only 40 living. Early writers say it was fifteen years before there was any increase in the population, so complete was the destruction.

The Mongol Empire was spread too far for the Khans to keep direct control of their entire domain. Parcelling out various districts to local dynasties, they placed the Kart family in charge of Herat and its adjoining territories. The third ruler of the dynasty, Malik Fakhruddin (d.1307), is generally given credit for building the fortress in its present form. The citadel is, however, called Qala-i- Ikhtiyaruddin after a famous Kart Governor of Herat.





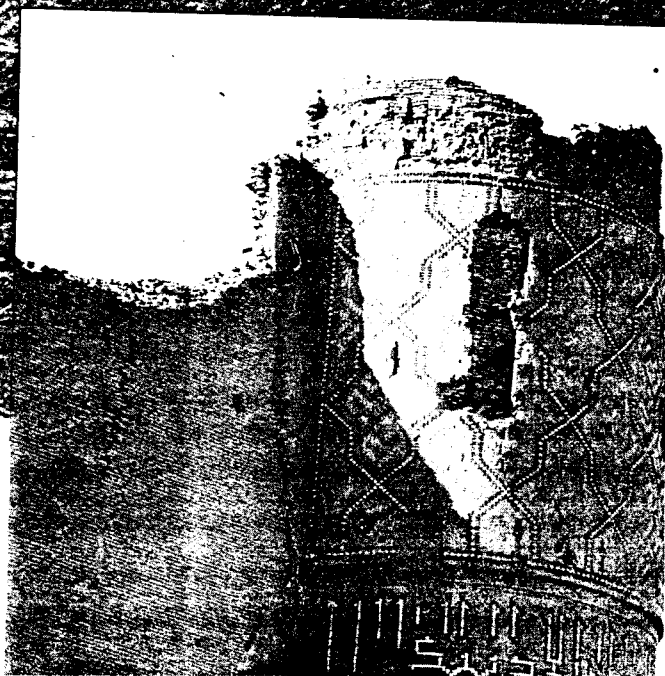
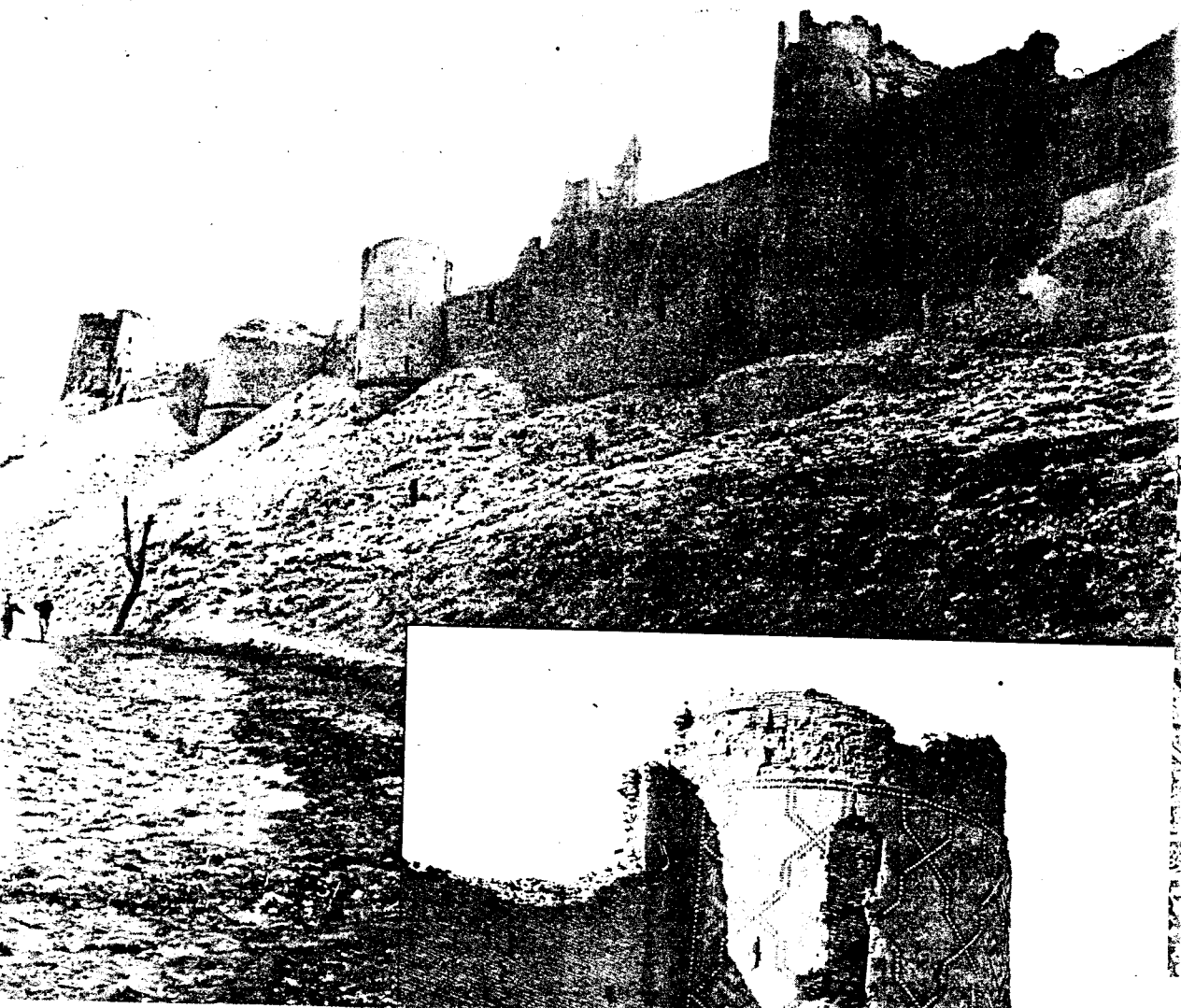
THE WALLS OF THE CITADEL

The Karts were set upon the throne of Herat by the Mongols. They were unseated by Tamerlane. In 1381 he tore down only the city walls, taking the beautiful doors to Samarkand, but a revolt two years later brought down his terrible vengeance. The city was destroyed without mercy and a tall tower of severed heads was raised to further deter its citizens.

From the time he was made governor of Herat in 1391 until his death in 1447, Tamerlane's son Shah Rukh lavished loving attention upon this city, his capital. Busying himself with the repair of the devastation wrought by his father, he employed 7000 men to raise the walls, building of stone and brick where the Karts had built in mud. A panegyric to the Sultan composed by his court historian Hafiz Abru encircled the fortress walls. Only one tower retains any of the original decoration. It was a simple monumental band of lozenges outlined in dark and light blue tile and filled with an imitation of architectural (*mo'agqali*) script in persian-blue. The Hafiz Abru inscription, now completely disappeared, ran above this band. The frieze below is called *kufi gung*, dumb kufic, for like the script above it is only an artistic design in imitation of kufic script.

The notorious Uzbek Shaibani Khan ended Timurid rule in 1507 for, as the Emperor Babur writes: "The Mirzas, though very accomplished at the social board, or in the arrangements for a party of pleasure, yet possessed no knowledge whatever for the conduct of a campaign. At dawn they abandoned the place, without having thought of putting the fort in a state of defense." Shaibani Khan was captured in 1510 by the Persian Safavids who proudly set his skull into a gold drinking cup. Here begins the long struggle between Persian, Uzbek and Afghan for the city. The Treaty of Paris, 1857, decreed it Afghan but the citadel flew the flag of independence, bowing only occasionally to Kabul until after 1881 when Amir Abdur Rahman reunited Afghanistan. A brief bid was made in 1929 when an adherent of Kabul's usurper Bacha Saqao raised the flag of independence but allegiance to King Nadir Shah was tendered in 1930.

Photographs taken in 1917 show the citadel's huge bastions in good repair. These are gone and the mass of ruin in the interior (not open to tourists) evokes no more than the memory of the clatter of horses' hoofs galloping up covered ramps through stout gates protected by guard rooms. Covered passages and stairways lead one secretly from level to level and in corners everywhere piles of rusting cannon balls lie next to guns still on wooden carriages.



THE MASJID-I-JAMI' OR FRIDAY MOSQUE

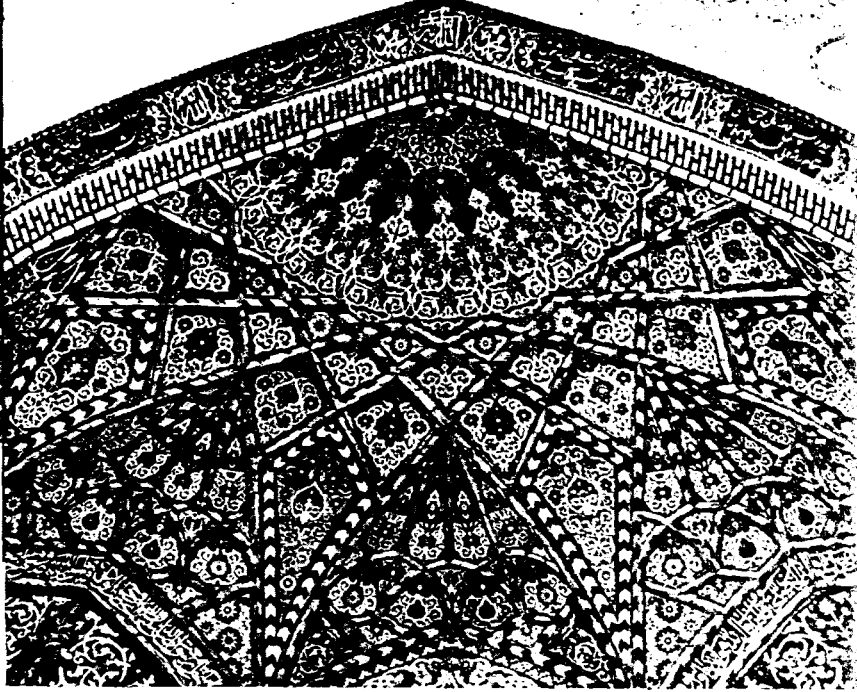
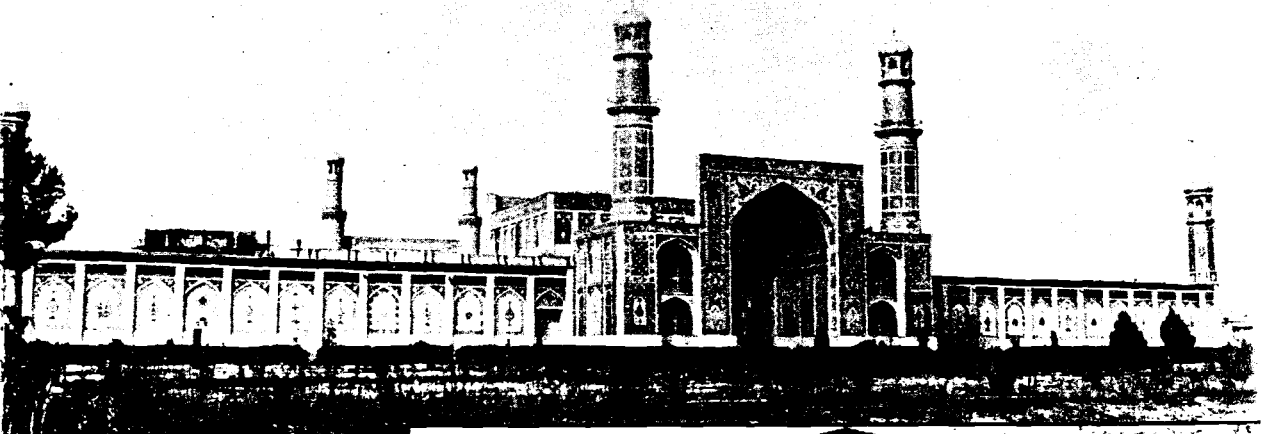
In the 10th century Herat's great mosque was already an important centre of Islamic thought, attracting intellectuals and learned scholars from throughout the Muslim world who came here to teach and study. One young student was to acquire special fame. Abandoned by his father, he was adopted by a group of savants at the mosque who in time gave him an honoured seat in their assemblies. He was then fourteen; the year was 1019. In the same year one of the most venerated religious leaders publicly announced from the pulpit of this mosque that the boy had the air of an imam. His reputation grew and he became the city's most beloved saint. This was Khwaja Abdullah Ansari.

Fire destroyed the mosque frequented by Ansari which occasioned its reconstruction on a magnificent scale by Sultan Ghiyasuddin-i-Ghori in the year 1200. It is this form which remains today though only faint traces and the Sultan's own tomb survive. It is said that the Sultan built this mosque for the noted theologian Fakhruddin Razi (1150-1210) whose teachings continued to attract the literati. It was a time of bitter rivalry between various schools of Islamic thought, however, and many heated arguments took place within these walls. So much so that the noted teacher asked that he be buried quietly in his home rather than publicly in the mosque fearing that his enemies might still take revenge. You may visit his shrine today. It is situated on the left hand side of the road just beyond the minarets.

Mongol raids destroyed much of the Ghorid mosque which was again repaired and extended by the Kart kings whose devoted attention was continued by the Timurids. The period of greatest munificence came during the reign of the Timurid Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara in the 15th century. Mir Ali Sher Nawai, premier, statesman, poet and patron personally directed its redecoration in 1498 urging masons and tile workers to decorate as lavishly as they knew how. When it was finished a year later great feasts were held to honour its beauty.

Badly damaged during the 16th century it was later repaired by successive rulers. Whitewash replaced tile, however, and not until restoration was initiated in 1943 did it begin to shine with its former lustre. A madrasa or religious school was also opened where today 155 students study as they studied in Ansari's day. Thus the people of Herat continue to lavish attention on this site to which the faithful have come to study and to worship for 1000 years — and more.





THE COURTYARD OF THE MASJID-I-JAMI'

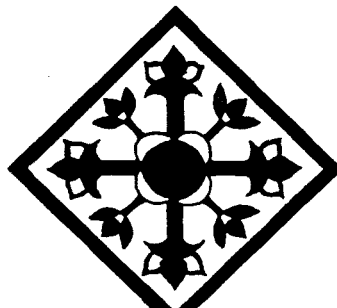
From the mosque garden one enters the mosque via a corridor to the right of the main portal. The corridor is built of beige brick, the ceiling a series of groined vaults outlined with chips of blue tile. This corridor and the imposing front portal are part of the new reconstruction begun in 1943.

The corridor leads to the main courtyard which is paved with brick and measures 100 by 65 yards. Directly ahead, on the west, is the *iwan-i-maqsurā* or principal iwan of the mosque, its arched entrance flanked by minarets reaching to the pavement which are poetically called *Guldasta*, Bouquets. On either side of this hall there are smaller iwans, their walled entrances pierced with doors and windows. The eastern face has a central iwan with three arches on either side. The north and south iwans stand in the centre of arcades behind which there are intersecting corridors, seven deep in places, formed by pillars rising to pointed arches.

The inner face of the courtyard is covered with a profusion of delicate floral motifs above bold patterns of stylized flowers on bases framed by corkscrew pillars. Blues, greens, yellows and orange set off by black and white sparkle in contrast to the starkly whitewashed interiors decorated only with arched recesses. The northern arcade with its central iwan has been enclosed for use during the winter and in inclement weather. The interior is thickly carpeted with Herati rugs.

Arabic and Persian calligraphy gracefully interrupts this mass of floral design. The calligraphic frieze in Arabic from the Koran, which encircles the uppermost portion of the wall, recounts the Prophet Muhammad's journey to Paradise. The verses in Persian on the columns of the arcades were taken from famous poets such as Ansari, Jami, Sa'adi, Sanai and Farid-uddin-i-Attar. These selections were made by the noted historian of Herat, Fikri Seljuki Herawi, to whom we are indebted for the artistry of the present restoration. The calligraphy is the work of another prominent Herati, Muhammad Ali Herawi.

There is a decorated platform to the east covering a cistern formerly used for ablutions which has been replaced by an open well. A mihrab and a stepped pulpit, both new constructions of pink and white marble, stand in the northwest corner beyond a fountain. These are depicted in the centre of the emblem on the Afghan flag. In the southeast corner there is a large bronze cauldron.





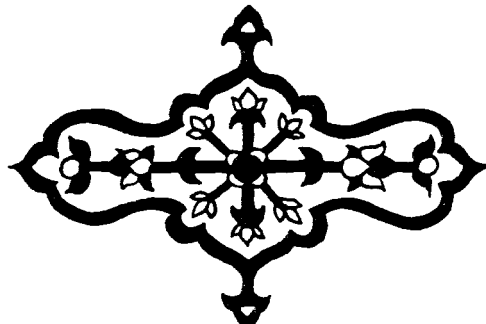
TIMURID DECORATION AT THE MASJID-I-JAMI'

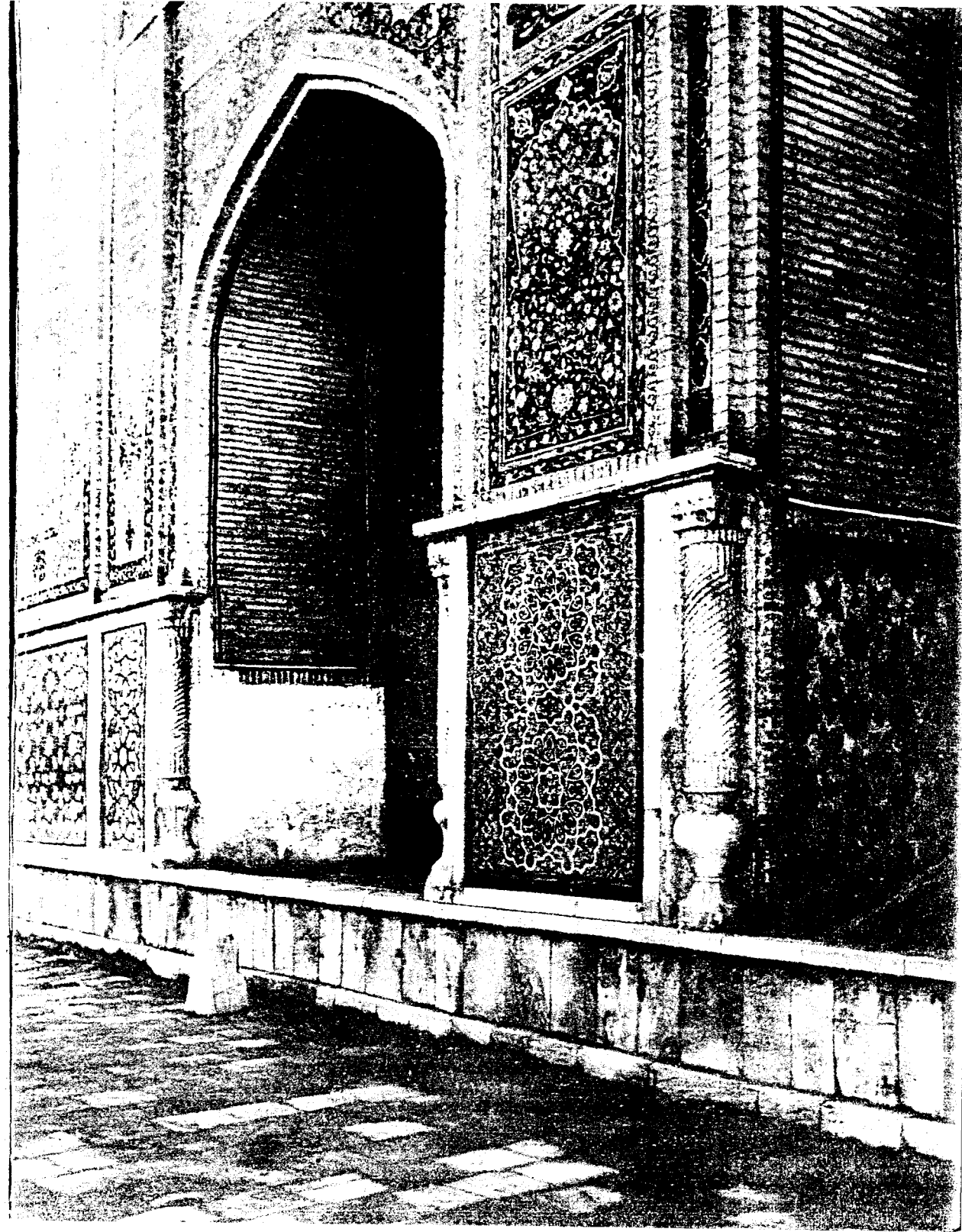
Scattered here and there throughout the mosque you may see fragments of tilework from the 15th century. The most completely preserved section remains on the inside of the arcade in the south-west corner of the courtyard. It is all that is left of the splendid restoration undertaken by Mir Sher Ali Nawai in 1498.

The interior of these five arches is decorated with thin narrow strips of persian-blue tile alternating with broader strips of beige brick, each panel bordered in black and white tile. The bases are embellished with a bold design of stylized flowers in the form of hexagons and octagons in blue tile sprinkled with tiny golden flowers. Plain beige tile-plaques slightly in relief fill the space between. The use of the relief and the tiny flowers on the blue tile produces an illusion of depth and a mobility of pattern which is most effective.

Proceeding straight ahead into the hall, adjoining the main iwan on the left, you may see yet another token of Timurid history. This is a large, finely inscribed marble slab set into the western wall. The inscription is an edict issued by Sultan Abu Said in 1462 announcing the abolition of some oppressive taxes. Abu Said was the grandson of Miranshah, the deranged son of Tamerlane, who destroyed beautiful monuments saying, "I am the son of the greatest man on earth, what can I do that after my days I too may be remembered?". At Herat Abu Said is best remembered for his part in ending the rule of the Shah Rukh branch of the House of Timur. After capturing Herat in 1457 he put Queen Gawhar-Shad to death blaming her for the citadel's stubborn resistance. Eleven years later while attacking the "White Sheep" Turkomen he was captured and handed over to a 16 year old great-grandson of the Queen. Her death was swiftly avenged. At Herat Husain-i-Baiqara killed the boy and became Sultan.

From this hall one may pass into the main iwan, through an arched passageway on the walls of which there is a curious brambly kufic inscription. Facing the mihrab you will see an inscription carved from pink stone high on the wall to the left. This dates from the time of Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara and concerns funds and donations for the upkeep of the mosque. Across from this there is another inscribed plaque placed here during the reign of Amir Habibullah in the early 20th century to commemorate the ceremony attending the presentation of certain relics by a Turkish Pasha. The relics are embedded in the wall behind the plaque. On it there is a poem by Jami.





THE BRONZE CAULDRON IN THE MASJID-I-JAMI'

A bronze cauldron sixteen feet around and five feet in depth stands in the southeast corner of the courtyard of the Masjid-i-Jami'. It was originally used as a receptacle for a sugary syrup called *sharbat* which was served to worshippers on feast days. You may deposit a donation toward the upkeep of the mosque in the cauldron if you wish.

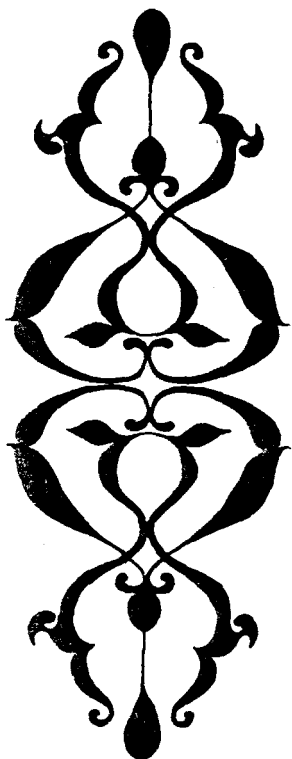
Cast in two sections, its decoration consists of two bands of script in Arabic and Persian over large arabesques. Tamerlane was much taken with its proportions and its decoration. He ordered a replica for a mosque in Turk-estan. Chinese ambassadors to Shah Rukh's court also mention this cauldron in reports to their Emperor.

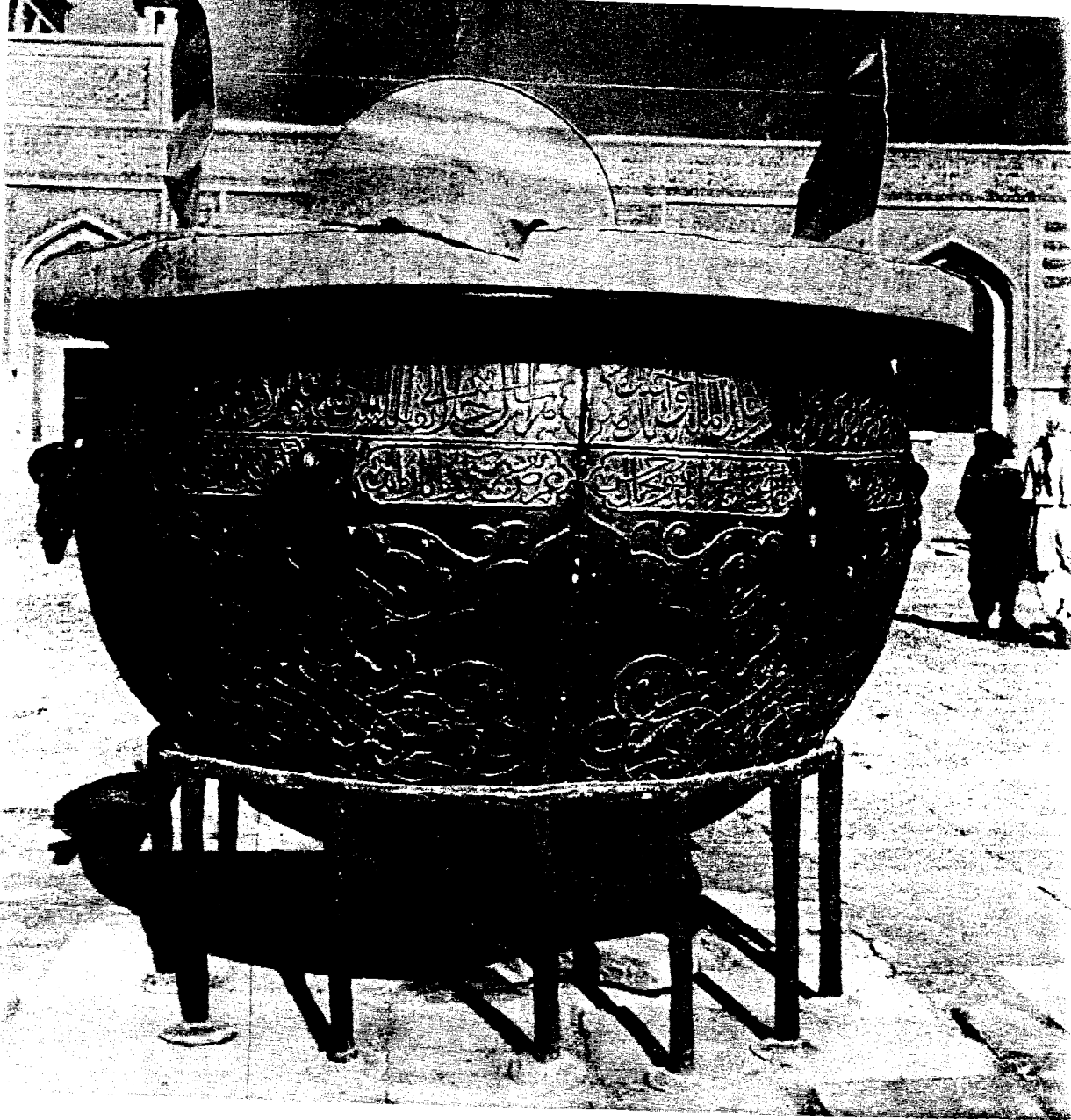
The first band is a verse from the Koran. The second tells us that the cauldron was presented to the mosque by a king "Muhammad, son of Muhammad, son of Muhammad the Kart" and gives the date of its creation as 1375, which was during the reign of the last Kart king, Malik Ghiyasuddin Pir Ali. The second line of the inscription includes a verse from Sa'adi, the 13th century's most eminent Persian poet. It is an oft-quoted couplet of Sa'adi's, in which he exhorts the passer-by to look upon an object and pray for its creator.

The local Tajik dynasty of the Karts first gained prominence as high government officials in 1202 during the reign of Sultan Ghiyasuddin-i-Ghori. When Genghis Khan's grandson, Hulagu, established a dynasty in Persia known as the Il-khans they chose the Kart Maliks of Herat to rule for them as vassals. With their capital at Herat the Karts ruled prosperously and did much to strengthen and beautify the city, expending much of their effort on this mosque.

By 1332 the Karts had declared their independence from their Mongol masters. When, therefore, Tamerlane summoned Malik Ghiyasuddin to appear before him as a vassal in 1379, the summons went unheeded. "The hosts of Timur poured into Korasan. The steppe was covered with tents, banners, foot-soldiers, arms and baggage. The hubbub of the drums, the sound of the great seven-foot trumpets at dawn, the noise of wagons and camel bells resounded throughout the land, and the people were filled with apprehension.

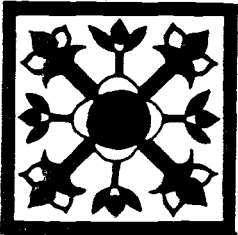
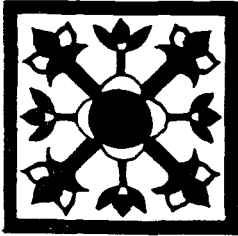
The city doors were opened and Tamerlane destroyed Herat's fortifications and with them the rule of the Karts. The year was 1381.





THE SHRINE OF GHIYASUDDIN-I-GHORI

The tomb of the Ghorid king accredited with the building of the Masjid-i-Jami' lies under a dome situated behind the north iwan. Take the corridor from the northeast corner of the courtyard noting the series of domes and the pavement of ancient cobblestones. Midway there are two exits. That to the right leads into the courtyard of the madrassa. That to the left leads to the shrine of Ghiyasuddin -i- Ghorī who was buried here in 1203.



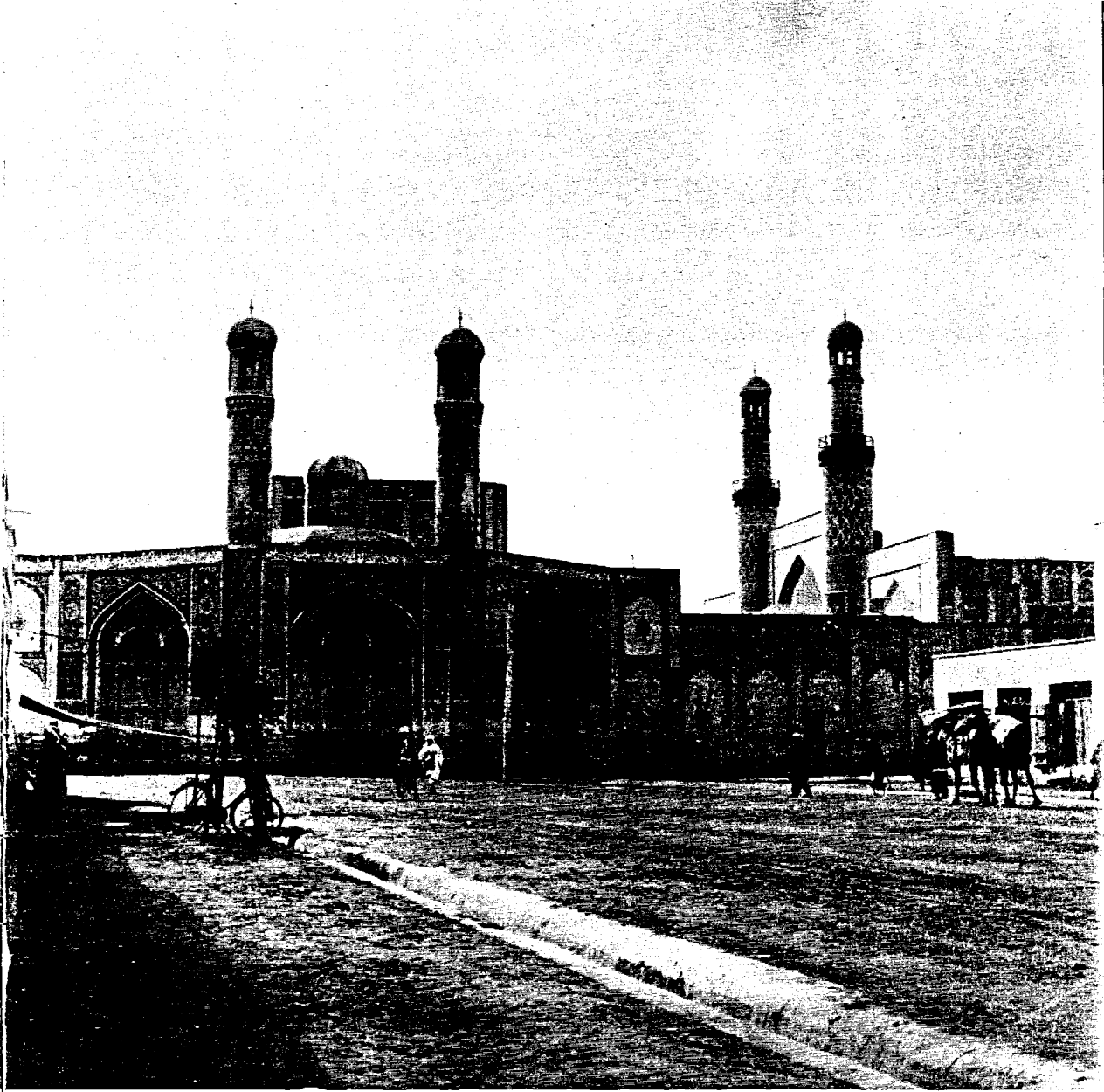
The unadorned tomb lies in an octagonal room undecorated except by a series of arched recesses. The south wall with its strange etched design is all that remains of the original construction. The Kart kings held this shrine in great respect and a number of them were buried here though no inscriptions survive.

Ghor is the name of an ancient mountainous area to the east of Herat. Because of the ruggedness of the terrain early travellers and caravans shunned it and made their way to the east, either via Balkh or via Kandahar as they do today. As a result it remained an isolated area without big cities, its many valleys held by individual petty chieftains living in fortified villages and strongholds.

Expeditions against these pagan peoples by the Arabs are recorded as early as 667. Their submission was neither politically nor ideologically permanent, however, and campaigns against them were repeatedly launched down through the reigns of the Ghaznavid Sultans Mahmud and Masud in the early years of the 11th century. A rich reservoir for slaves, Ghor was long well known for its superior arms and armour.

Preoccupied with their campaigns into India, the Ghaznavids lost Khorasan to the Turkoman Seljuks in 1040. At the same time the power of the petty Ghorid chieftains was united under one family which prospered as those around them declined. Having already overthrown the Ghaznavids in the south, they took Herat from the Seljuks in 1175 and Ghiyasuddin ruled there until his death. His successors who, "because of the cheerful sound of the harp could not reconcile themselves to the hardships of war", lost Herat to the Khwarizm Shah in 1206. "The inhabitants adorned the thoroughfares with all kinds of gold-embroidered garments, the Shah entered the town with such equipage and majesty as no eye had ever seen." He left a month later, leaving the city prey to ambitious adventurers until the disastrous arrival of Genghis Khan in 1221.





THE GHORID PORTAL AT THE MASJID-I-JAMI'

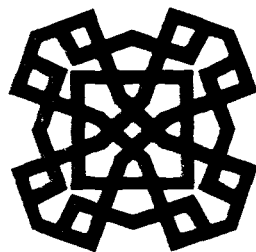
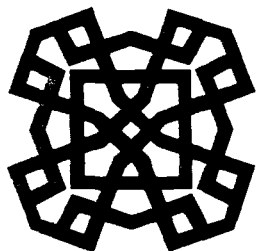
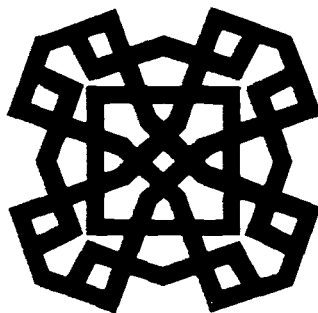
Though Sultan Ghiyasuddin-i-Ghori is credited with building this mosque in the year 1200, there is only one portal bearing any of the original decoration. This is situated to the left, or south, of the main entrance to the mosque. It is indubitably one of the most stunning monuments to be seen in Afghanistan. The only other outstanding Ghorid monument in Afghanistan is the minaret at Jam which is thought to be the site of the ancient Ghorid capital. Jam is a hard three-day journey from Herat.

Because the early decoration differed so markedly from their tastes, the Timurids completely covered the gateway with their own style of mosaic work, lowering the arch in the process. It is only since the winter of 1964 when the Kabul Museum removed most of the Timurid restoration that the 13th century artistry may be appreciated.

On the outer face of the archway there is a bold kufic inscription giving the titles of Sultan Ghiyasuddin -i- Ghori and confirming the date of its construction as 1200. This inscription in persian-blue glazed tile stands in high relief above a floral background of considerable intricacy executed by means of specially prepared pink-beige tile elements. The leaves of the floral decoration were tipped with blue-green, while the edges of the tile-elements are painted orange-red. A small part of this facade has been restored with the original colouring. The combination of the bright, bold straight-lined script with the graceful soft-hued background is extremely effective.

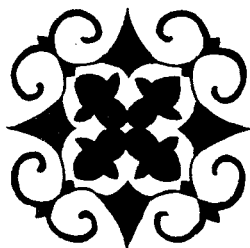
Inside the archway on the right wall especially prepared tile elements have been used to form a most intricate geometrical design of intersecting squares, circles, and triangles. Scattered throughout, flush with the brick, small circles of persian-blue glazed tile repeat the square and circle design. Raised above this background there are three rows of large persian-blue spheres, another most pleasing example of the use of bold-coloured relief against a complex, mellow background. There are traces of orange-red and blue-green painted on the side of the brick-elements in the border running around this decoration.

The Timurid decor still remains in part for comparison and is much the same as other examples to be seen throughout Herat. Royal-blue lozenges decorated with gold flowers and interspersed with beige tile cover the inside of the half dome. The axial niches are of brick, with alternating narrow green and blue strips of glazed tile between, a motif carried on to the side walls, as may be seen to the left.





THE MOSAIC WORKSHOP AT THE MASJID-I-JAMI'



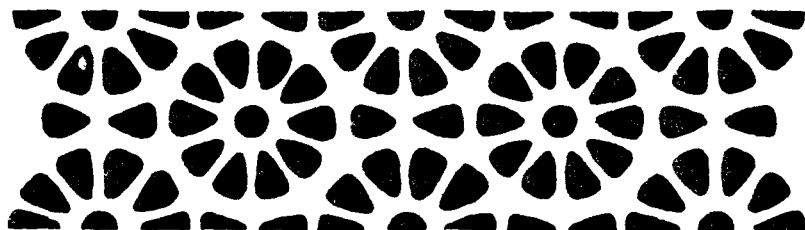
A visit to the workshop at the Masjid-i-Jami' gives the visitor a deeper appreciation of the very fine artistry and expert craftsmanship represented in the mosque's decoration. The workshop is situated to the left of the corridor leading from the garden in front of the mosque. Here you will find the chief artists most willing to explain the complicated process step by step. They were apprenticed when restoration work began and the small boys working here now are following in their footsteps. They continue a tradition begun in the 15th century.

The major portion of the designs were conceived by Mr. Fikri Seljuki who has recreated many of the Timurid designs from remaining fragments. To these he has added from his own inspiration. Mr. Muhammad Sa'id Mashal-i-Ghori, another distinguished Herati, also contributed a considerable portion of the inner courtyard designs. In addition, a few panels have been presented by individual donors.

Once the design has been decided upon, the work of creating a panel begins with the making and glazing of tiles 16 centimeters square. The clay is found locally, but most of the glazes are imported, except for the yellow which is made from discarded car batteries. The colours include: persian-blue, grape-blue, light-blue, orange, yellow, red, green, olive, lilac, white and black. Details of the design for each colour are then cut from paper and pasted on the tiles. This design is cut out, first with an awl, then with a simple pick and finally filed smooth. The small pieces for inlay are then cut and filed to fit.

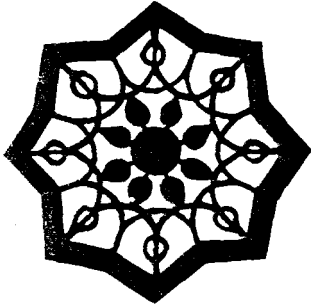
Once all the pieces for a panel have been assembled, the entire design is pricked out in tiny holes on large sheets of plain paper. This is then laid on a specially prepared platform and spread with a fine powder which sifts through transferring the design onto the platform. The individual pieces of the mosaic are then fitted into place in the design, glazed side down. When completely assembled, the panel is covered with a thick three-inch layer of coarse cement and fitted into place on the mosque wall or minaret after it is dried.

It takes three men one week to make a panel five feet by two. Their work is financed by private donations and by a special customs tax on sugar collected by the municipal government. The interior of the mosque is now complete and each section carries a date noting the year of its restoration. Work on the western minarets and the exterior walls still remains and will take an estimated two years to complete.





ZIYARAT-I-SHAHZADA ABULQASIM



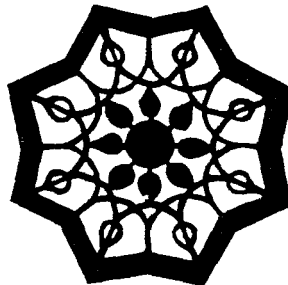
Herat is a city of holy ziyarats; some simple unmarked graves flying penants in memory of prayers asked or granted, others elaborately constructed mausoleums, some new, some old. Many enshrine early Arab bearers of Islam who came to Herat in large numbers after the middle of the 7th century for this was the springboard from which the new religion was launched into Central Asia and into Afghanistan.

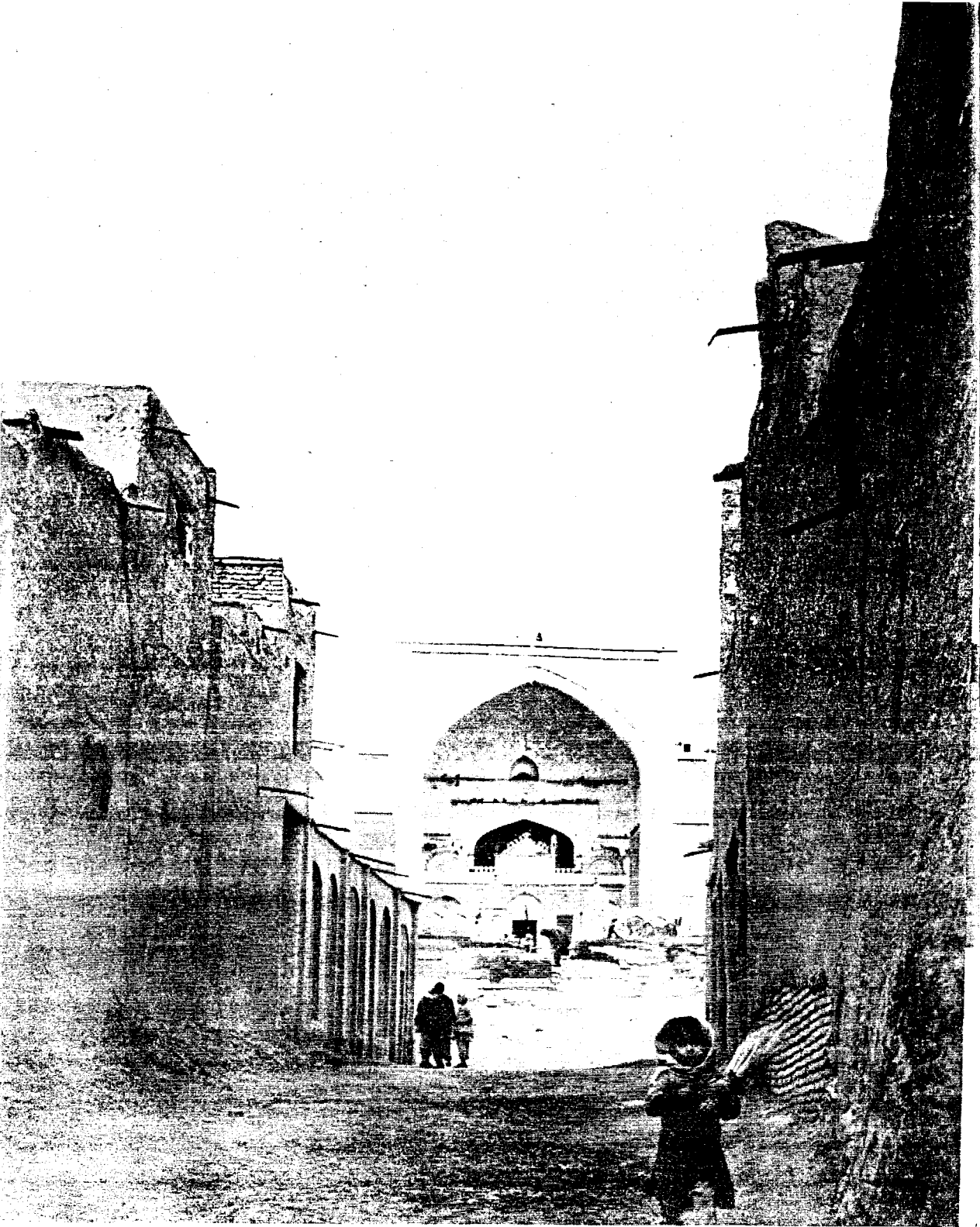
One such was Shahzada Abulqasim whose shrine stands on a hill off to the right of the road about halfway between the city and minarets. He was sent into political exile during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph Mamun in the 9th century. It was an honorable exile and he lived in Herat in splendor and attracted a considerable following. The shrine was decorated during the reign of Shah Rukh as sections of tile work representative of that period attest.

Passing behind this shrine through flocks of pigeons, a familiar sight at many holy shrines, one reaches the shrine dedicated to 'Abdullah-i-Jafar Tayar, the great-grandson of the brother of Hazrat Ali, the Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law. He was a pretender to the Caliphate and raised a large army in Khorasan in opposition to the Abbasids. He was killed by Abu Muslim in 751. In the garden to the right of this shrine there is a platform which marks the site of Khwaja 'Abdullah-i-Ansari's house. It stood near the city ramparts in the 11th century and was buried under rubble when Tamerlane destroyed the walls in the 14th century. Cleared by the Khwaja's followers it has since been revered as a shrine.

The Ziyarat-i-Muhaddis in the village of Azadan is dedicated to Khwaja Abu Walid, a venerated teacher and compiler of commentaries on the Koran who flourished in Herat during the 9th century (d.847). This shrine was built by order of Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara in the 15th century. Much of the splendid mosaic noted by the Emperor Babur has disappeared but the large portico has been elaborately painted in modern times. To reach it take the dirt road to the left immediately on passing the bridge over the stream called Injil between the Park-i-Bihzad and the minarets.

The Ziyarat-i-Sultan Mir-i-Shahid on the heights southwest of the city is a large building within a walled courtyard erected by Sultan Husain in 1485 over the tomb of 'Abdullah al-Wahid, a great-grandson of Hazrat Ali's (d.707). Interesting views of the city's ramparts may be had from here.





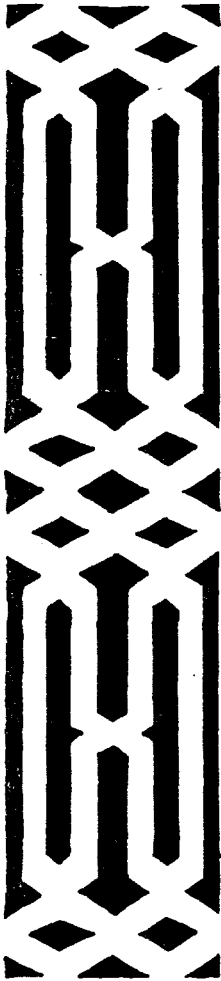
THE MUSALLA COMPLEX

In 1845 a French traveller, M. Ferrier, described the buildings lying to the northwest of Herat as the most imposing and elegant structures to be seen in all Asia. Forty years later concern over Russia's expected push toward India led to the razing of these buildings for it was said that they interfered with the defense of the city. The people of Herat petitioned Amir Abdur Rahman at Kabul to spare the shrines but he replied that the defense of the living was of greater consequence than the preservation of the resting places of the dead. When the demolition, carried out by the British Army, was completed in November 1885 only nine tall minarets and one mausoleum stood above the wreckage it took countless donkeys many days to clear. Today only the mausoleum and six minarets stand; two fell victim to an earthquake in 1931, one in 1951. They are proud vestiges of a glorious past.

The building project was initiated by Queen Gawhar-Shad in 1417. She commissioned foremost architects of her day, such as Imaduddin of Herat, to build for her a madrassa or place of learning and a musalla or place of worship. That this was done at her own expense we learn from a marble inscription once attached to one of the fallen minarets. One entered the madrassa through a lofty portal flanked by graceful two-balconied minarets into a square courtyard on the right of which a domed chamber for her mausoleum was built. It was completed in 1432. The 80-foot portal leading into the musalla which was just south of the madrassa gave entrance to a courtyard surrounded by a series of arcades, corridors, small courtyards and a maze of rooms dominated by a massive building crowned with a 70-foot dome. Imposing minarets rose from the four corners. The musalla was completed by Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara.

These buildings did not differ significantly from other religious buildings of their time or from those of to day. Herat's Masjid-i-Jami' is an example. What made them so extraordinary was the fact that their entire exterior was solidly embellished with mosaic of glazed tile, the interiors painted and gilded so that the whole bespoke of a perfection of taste and of a deftness of craftsmanship never excelled.

Later Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara built a madrassa to the east, on the other side of the canal, called Injil, Evangel. Here there were lofty gateways, arcades, domes and four majestic minarets. Only the minarets remain. Of the other mosques and schools built in this area by distinguished Heratis, such as Mir Ali Sher Nawai, there is no trace.



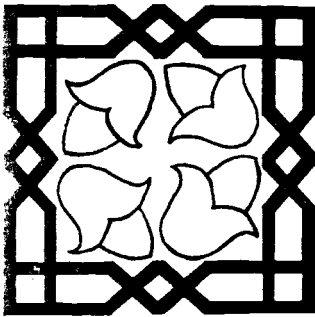


THE MAUSOLEUM OF QUEEN GAWHAR-SHAD

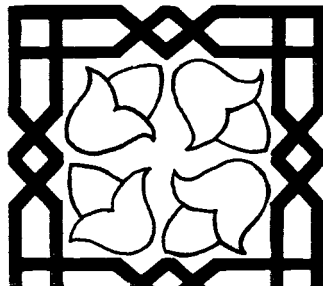
The mausoleum of one of history's most remarkable women stands in the corner of a pine grove, called Park-i-Bihzad, named after that incomparable minaturist, one of the great lights of the court of Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara, who so profoundly influenced the art of Persia during the 15th and 16th centuries. He was born in Herat in 1440. The mausoleum was built for Queen Gawhar-Shad, wife of Shah Rukh, youngest son of Tamerlane.

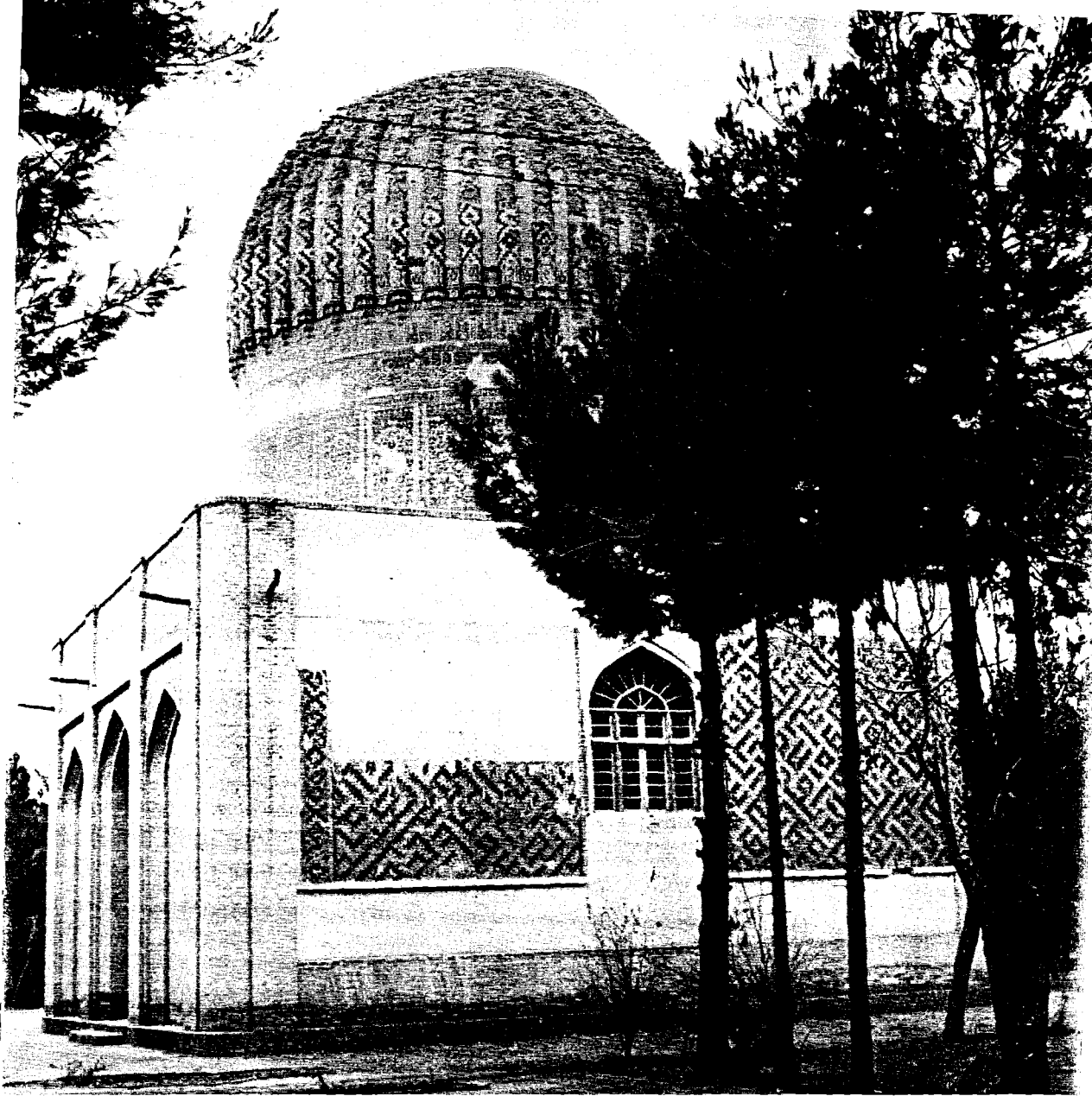
Shah Rukh was a disappointment to his father who distrusted his devout son's preference for scholarly projects over military action. When he was about sixteen the prince married a Chagatay princess. The Mongols accepted the equality of women. Mongol women ruled, issued edicts, gave banquets, received ambassadors, campaigned, founded colleges and commissioned buildings. In all this the Princess Gawhar-Shad, Happy Pearl, was true to her heritage. Beginning their rule when Shah Rukh was only 28, the couple maintained Tamerlane's empire almost in its entirety, from the Tigris to China's borders, but they substituted peace for conquest, ravaged countries regained prosperity; men turned from battle to the pursuit of art, science, literature and philosophy.

Shah Rukh and his Queen led in this cultural renaissance and raised two sons as distinguished participators. Prince Baisunghur, a talented poet and calligrapher in his own right, is best remembered as one of the world's greatest bibliophiles. Forty artists worked at his court in Herat in creating a new style of book in which the paper, the calligraphy, the miniatures, and the illuminations were exquisite. The sumptuous bindings have yet to be surpassed. At Samarkand Prince Ulugh Beg built a celebrated observatory.



Rare refinement of culture was coupled with court intrigue practiced with like refinement. In this Queen Gawhar-Shad also excelled, although at times even she was trapped in the web of her own machinations. Caught unawares when Shah Rukh died in Tehran in 1447 she was stripped of her belongings and forced to walk behind her husband's body as it made its arduous way toward Herat "with only a linen handkerchief over her head, a staff in her hand." She was then over 70. Rescued from this ignominious state, she returned to dominate palace affairs until at last her opponents determined on her death. She was then over 80. At the time she was murdered in 1457 she had been a vigorous and enlightened leader of this singular era for over 50 years. After her death the House of Timur slid rapidly toward oblivion.





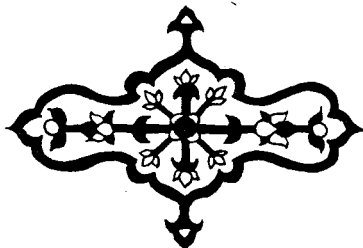
THE EXTERIOR DECORATION OF THE MAUSOLEUM

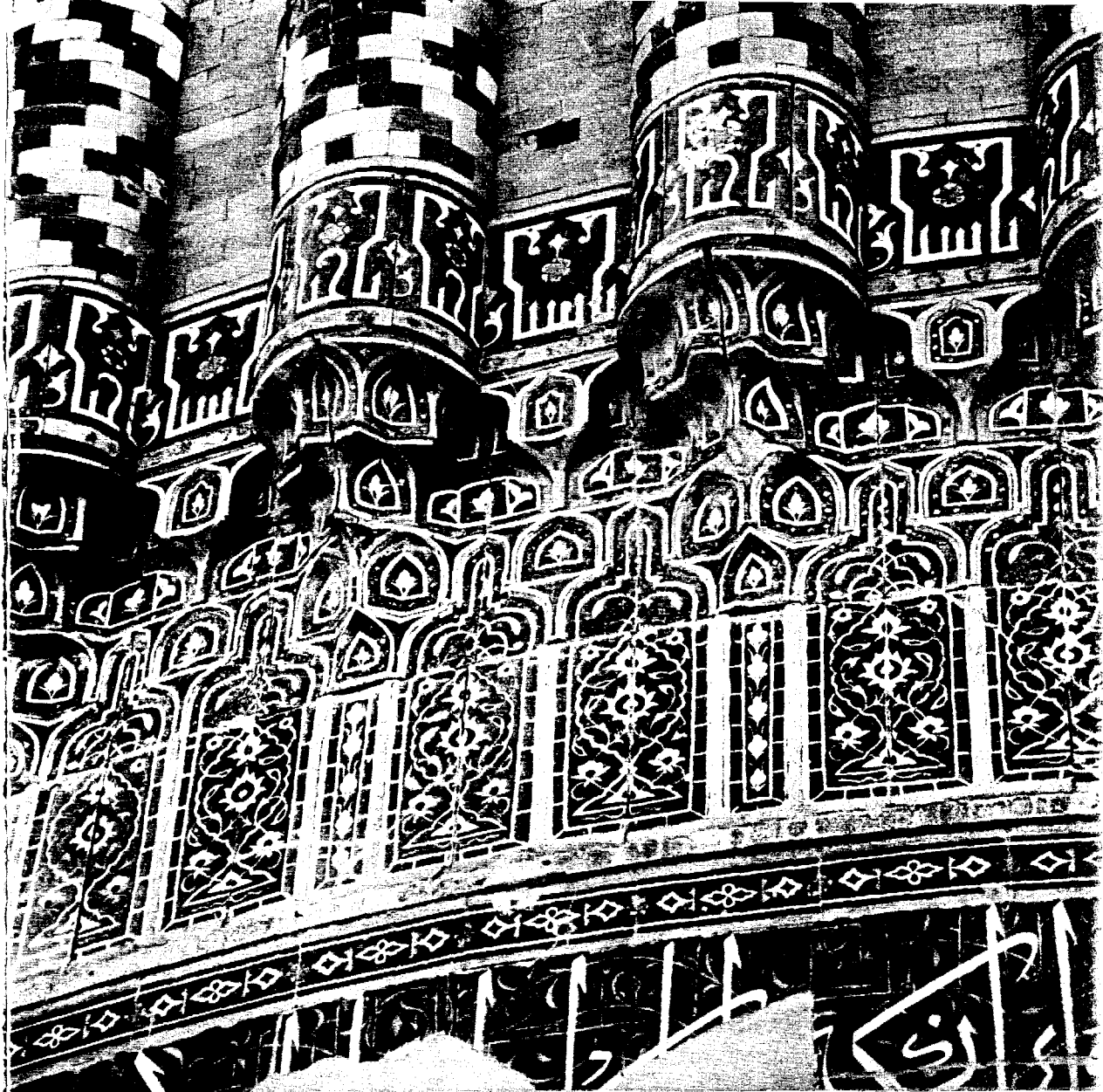
The flamboyant quality of the bright, ribbed dome atop the solid, sparsely decorated base of this mausoleum fits well with what we know of the character of the woman for whom it was built. The ribbed dome was popular with the Timurids and this one is very similar to the Gur-Emir Mausoleum Tamerlane built for his grandson in Samarkand. He himself was later buried in the same mausoleum.

A monumental script known as (*mo'azzali*) or *khat-i-memari*, architectural script, of persian-blue and royal blue tile set diagonally into beige brick, formed the only decoration on the base. Only the northwest face retains any of the original decoration. The square form of this base is the result of recent restoration. Originally the southwest facade had a curious bay with three windows and the other sides, similarly decorated with script, had arch doorways leading into the madrassa buildings to which it was attached.

Above this base a tall drum ending in a bulbous, fluted dome rises 80 feet above the ground. The dome is of persian-blue, the flutes patterned with royal-blue diamonds centered with rust-red, yellow or white. These are supported by stalactite corbels encircling the drum, which is ornately decorated with pointed panels of royal-blue covered with white stylized flowering trees with flower buds liberally sprinkled above and between. The wide calligraphic frieze with its large flowing script in dazzling white against a royal-blue background is from the Koran. Below this, reaching to the base of the drum, there are tall panels with dark blue hexagons bejeweled with golden flowers set off by beige tile-plaques in relief, a form of decoration which remained popular for a long time. It was used in redecorating the arcades of the Masjid-i-Jami' some 80 years later.

By climbing to the top of the square base by means of the original narrow winding staircase in the outer wall on the southeast you may examine the interior of the drum through an opening in its eastern face. There are in reality three domes; that of the lower ceiling, an intermediate supporting dome, and the upper fluted dome. From this vantage point one may better appreciate the height of the six minarets towering over the tree tops. These in the Park-i-Bihzad were planted a scant 15 years ago, when restoration on the mausoleum began. Earlier photographs show the mausoleum and its minaret alone on utterly barren ground. The long avenue of trees leading toward the city are over a hundred years old. Known as Khiaban, Promenade, this avenue has been famous for centuries.

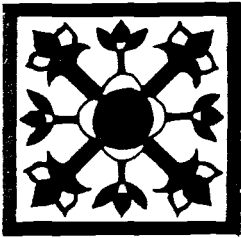




THE INTERIOR DECORATION OF THE MAUSOLEUM

The interior of the mausoleum has four recesses roofed by four great arches inside of which interlacing arches form kite-shaped elongated squinches resting on a dado ornamented with small niches in flattened relief. The points of the interlacing arches are banded with delicate calligraphy which sets them off from the four fan-shaped squinches placed around an octagon, in which there are sixteen stalactite niches surrounding the central dome. The latter is painted with a design reminiscent of an old-fashioned nose-gay.

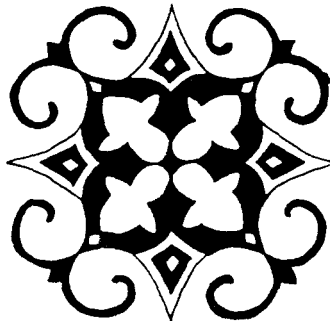
These elements are further enriched with stalactites, fan-vaulting, full and flattened relief, and varying sizes of domes on which delicate painting in lapis-lazuli and rust-red lighted with gilt adds to the profusion of architectural and ornamental detail. The blue pigment used in this painting was made from the lapis-lazuli of Badakhshan. There is a particularly fine example of this painting in a small dome on the soffit of the arch in the south-west recess opposite the entrance.

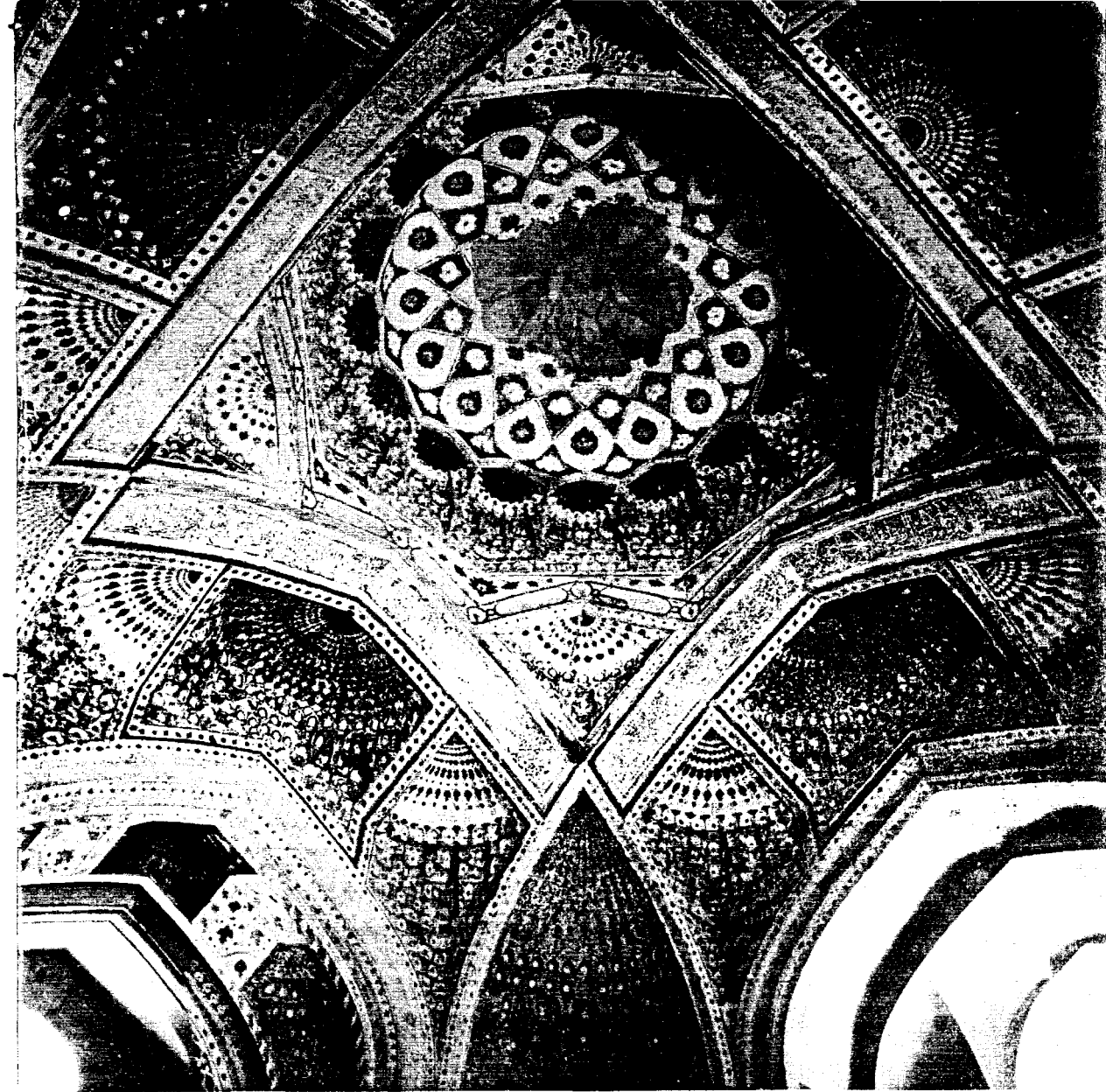


There are now six tombstones in the centre of the chamber though earlier accounts report as many as twenty and as few as three. These were rescued from a chaotic jumble of overturned stones and fallen debris by Mr. Seljuki who identified them through the inscriptions, a difficult task as many were badly broken and severely weathered.

Starting from the innermost, a fragment from the foot of the Queen's own stone, the others are as follows: Prince Baisunghur (d.1433), her favourite son who died of an excess of wine at the age of 37; Alauddawla (d.1459), son of Baisunghur, her favourite grandson who rescued her outside Tehran after Shah Rukh's death; Mirza Ibrahim (d.1459), son of Alauddawla, whose stubborn defense of the citadel was laid to her influence and led to her death; Mirza Ahmad (d.1445), son of the grandson who treated her so ignominiously on the death of Shah Rukh; Mirza Shah Rukh (d.1493), son of her murderer, Sultan Abu Sa'id. Her husband was once buried here but their son, Ulugh Beg, removed the body of Shah Rukh to Samarkand where he lies beside his father, Tamerlane.

Ulugh Beg made a bid for the empire following Shah Rukh's death but was forced to abandon his attempts to take Herat in 1447 because of Uzbek raids on his capital at Samarkand. He did, nevertheless, take away with him many of Herat's art treasures, including a pair of handsome bronze doors from this madrasa.





THE MINARET AT QUEEN GAWHAR-SHAD'S MADRASSA

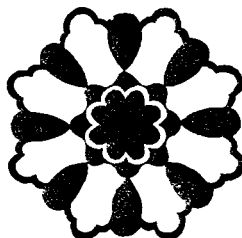
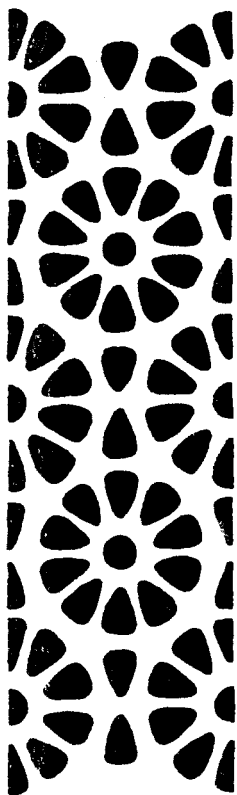
The minaret which stands to the east of the mausoleum was one of a pair which stood on either side of the portal to the Queen's madrassa. These portals were a feature added to mosque architecture after the beginning of the 14th century when a demand for more showy, ostentatious buildings came into vogue. The flanking minarets reaching to the ground added to the sense of towering grandeur.

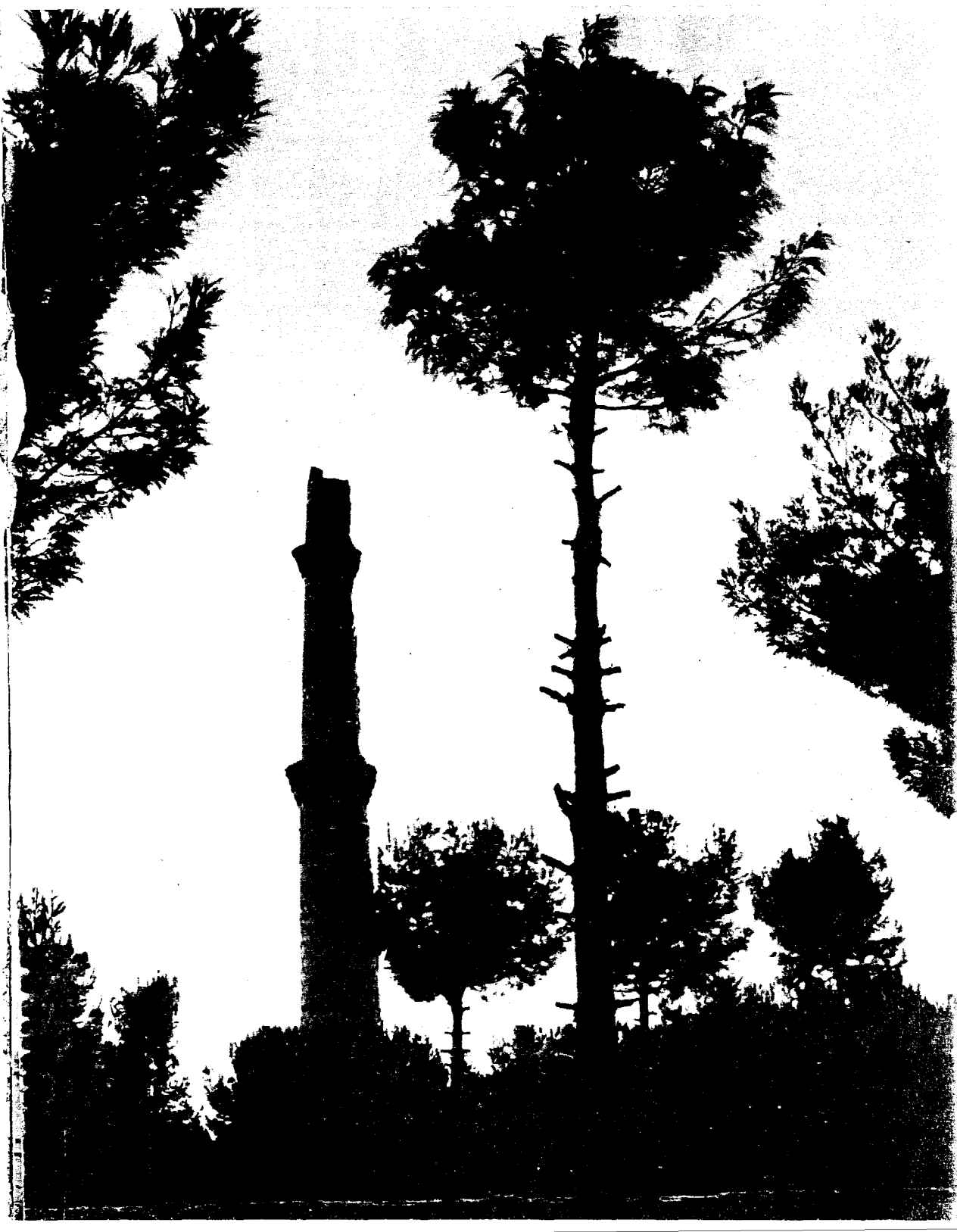
The shaft of the minaret is of brick, set horizontally, into which rows of large mosaic diamonds have been placed at some distance from one another. These are of royal-blue centered with flowers or with Arabic script. This style of ornamentation is akin to that used in the decoration of the Gawhar-Shad mosque in Meshed which was just nearing completion when work on this madrassa was begun in 1417.

Two balconies, the muezzin's platforms, ring the shaft and each one is heavily ornamented with deep stalactite brackets similar to, but more ornate than, the corbel already noted on the mausoleum dome. The staircase inside the minaret formerly used by the muezzin is still climbable although the ladder over the base is missing which makes it practical for only the more daring to ascend. For the avid photographer the climb is, however, most rewarding.

The Queen was so deeply interested in her building project that she was wont to visit it secretly at night to personally check on details. An incident which happened on one of these visits gave rise to a saying which continues popular in Herat today. One night it seems she came upon a lone Hafiz, a blind mulla who has learned to recite the Koran by heart. You may see any number of Hafiz at Gazargah today for they are given places of honour at many holy shrines throughout the country. The Hafiz the Queen encountered, however, instead of reciting Koranic verses was heard to be praying for a visitation from a houri. This piqued her sense of humour and she instructed one of her slave girls to go to the Hafiz the next night, telling him that his prayers had been answered. Delighted at first, the Hafiz became quite distraught when the visits continued uninterrupted night after night. Finally he exclaimed in desperation, "Oh, God, isn't there another Hafiz in the madrassa!"

Today when a Herati feels put upon at being called upon to perform many errands at home or at a party he may be heard to say in jest: "Oh, God, isn't there another Hafiz in the house!"





THE MINARET AT QUEEN GAWHAR-SHAD'S MUSALLA

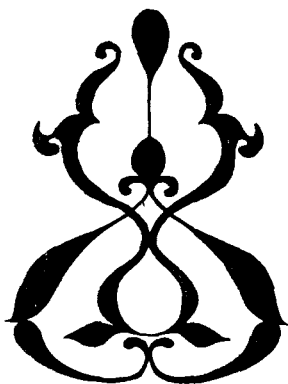
Robert Byron, a well-known authority on Islamic architecture, has described Gawhar-Shad's mosque in Meshed as "the most beautiful example in colour in architecture ever devised by man to the glory of his God and himself." And yet he goes on to say, "The minarets of Queen Gawhar-Shad's musalla in Herat are more splendid than anything in Meshed."

The minarets to which he refers stood at the four corners of a court measuring 350 by 210 feet. Only the western minaret remains standing. It is built into the Fakhr-ul Madaris, a religious school with 350 students founded thirty years ago and named after Fakhruddin Razi. The detail of the workmanship on this minaret may be seen to good advantage from the Park-i-Bihzad and visitors are urged to walk to the back of the garden to study it closely. Even in its half ruined state this is mosaic faience at the height of perfection.

The tradition of enlivening the exterior of buildings with colour began toward the end of the 12th century when the Seljuks covered large surfaces with broad geometrical patterns of coloured brick set into plaster. As it developed every innovation led towards a constant elaboration of design and intensification of colour. These two goals led ultimately to the development of the mosaic technique which permits intricate patterns and many colours to be used. But most important, by firing each glaze separately, it is possible to achieve the quintessence in purity and brilliance for each colour.

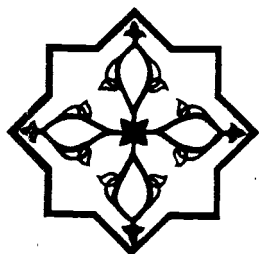
The decoration of this musalla is the glorious fruition of this development. The shaft is solidly covered with grape-blue lozenges outlined with strips of raised white faience, their centres of emerald green finely decorated with flowers or Arabic script in gold and white. No plain brick is visible anywhere. Bands of varying width show a vast multiplication of design including the familiar broad calligraphic freize which here repeats the call to prayer. The most exquisite designs appear in the square and rectangular panels near the base where the workmanship is extremely delicate. Below these, encircling the polygonal base, there were large panels of pure white marble ornately carved in a baroque kufic script similar to those around the base of Khwaja Ansari's tomb.

If, as is supposed, the entire enclosure was embellished in a similar fashion, Queen Gawhar-Shad's musalla at Herat must indeed have been one of the most spectacular monuments to sheer beauty ever conceived.



THE MINARETS OF SULTAN HUSAIN-I-BAIQARA

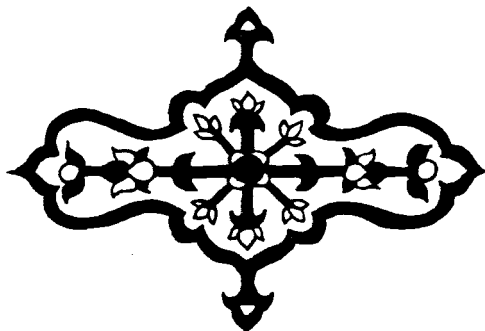
By 1468 when Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara, great grandson of Tamerlane's son Omar Shaikh, was crowned, the House of Timur was rapidly declining and much of their empire had been wrested from them. Culturally the dynasty reached its Golden Age. A contemporary Who's Who lists a total of 188 poets and writers in addition to miniaturists, such as Bihzad, architects, musicians, scholars, and theologians. The art forms they established set the standards for the Moghul Dynasty of India and the Safavid Dynasty of Persia and so continued as a vital source of inspiration long after the disappearance of Timurid power at Herat.



These four minarets stood at the corners of a square madrassa measuring 300 feet on a side. Here the lighter persian-blue predominates, filling lozenges of floral mosaic outlined in glittering white faience. Placed at an angle on the shaft so as to form large scalloped squares, they produce an airy, lyrical effect mirroring the softness engendered by the intricate pleasures the court so meticulously pursued. Below this lacy network there is a wide calligraphic frieze and a floral band where the absence of outlining and the predominance of dark blue creates an effect of greater solidity. The lower sections were part of the main building and so were undecorated. The eminent philosopher-poet, Jami, was headmaster at this school.

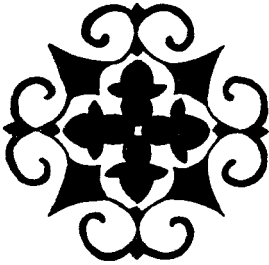
The Sultan's Prime Minister, a friend and patron of Jami's, was the illustrious Mir Ali Sher Nawai. Renowned as a statesman, he was also a noted poet in the Turki language which he always championed over Persian. In addition to his munificent patronage of the literati, Mir Ali was an avid builder-restorer and is credited with 370 mosques, colleges, hospitals, libraries, bridges, and rest-houses. The restoration of the Masjid-i-Jami' and the musalla-madrassa he built near here were among his more famous accomplishments. He died in 1501 at the age of 62 and was buried between Gawhar-Shad's mausoleum and these minarets where a domed building has recently been built. There is no decoration of any kind on the new building.

Sultan Husain was buried in the madrassa in 1506. He was 68. All that remains of his elegant mausoleum described by the Emperor Babur is a large pit, where a cracked white marble slab marks his resting place. The black stone is inscribed with the name and titles of his father but it stands over an empty grave. There is a stone inscribed with the same name and titles at Gazargah. He had intended perhaps to transfer his father here after constructing this mausoleum.





THE TOMB OF THE POET JAMI



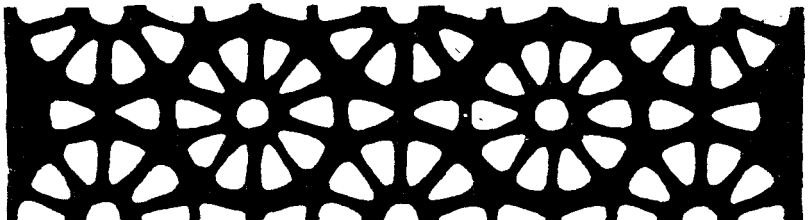
A 16th century critic wrote of Mulla Nuruddin Abdurrahman-i-Jami that "by reason of the extreme elevation of his genius... there is no need to describe or set forth any account of him since the rays of his virtues have reached from the east to the uttermost west, while the bountiful table of his excellencies is spread from shore to shore." A titan during a period characterized by supreme literary brilliance, Jami was unquestionably the greatest of the 15th century poets.

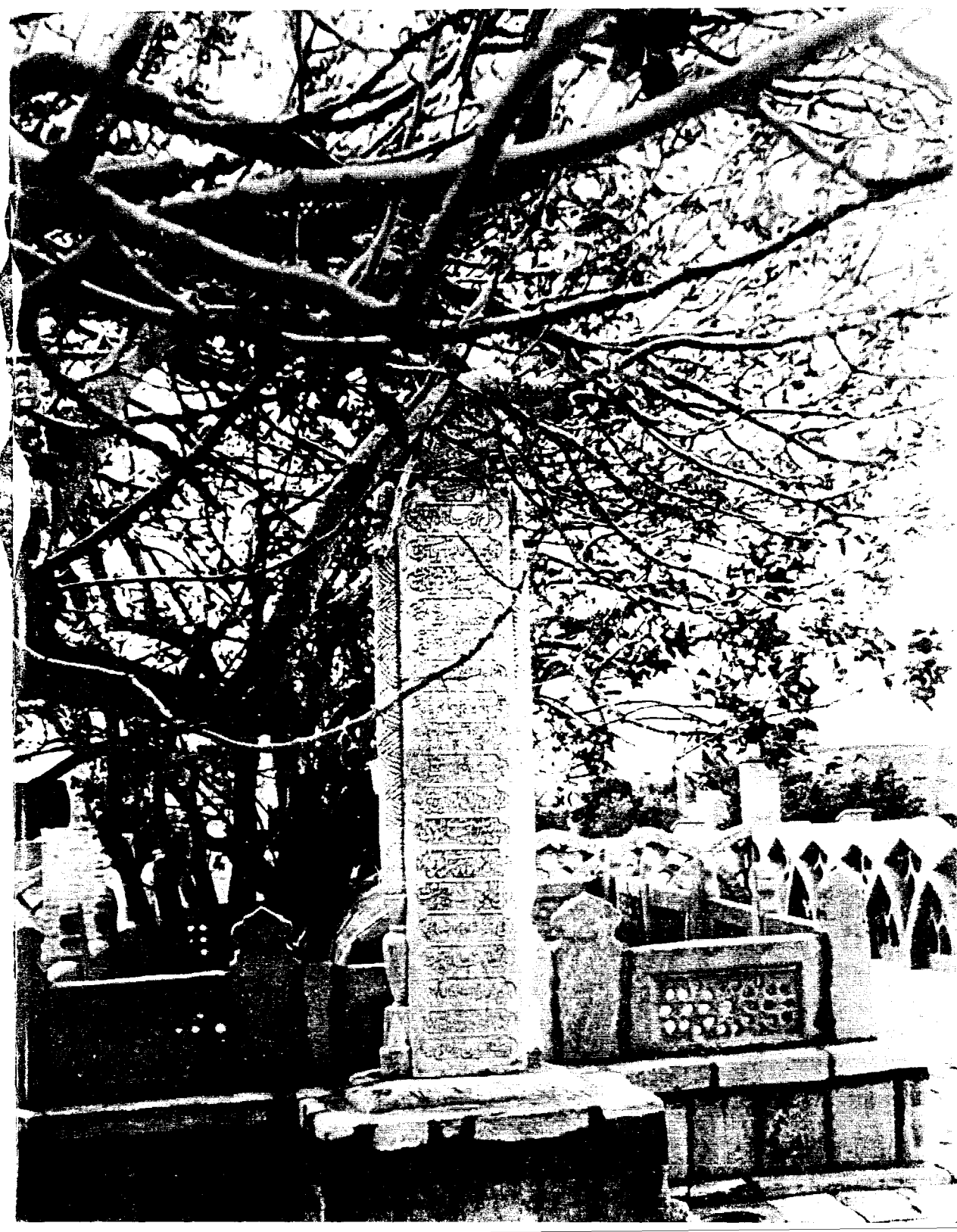
Born in Khorasan in 1414, he came to the city of Herat where his many-sided talents as a scholar and as a mystic philosopher won the esteem of his contemporaries though he was a man of considerable conceit who wrote, "I have found no master superior to myself." In addition to his haughty manner he was possessed of a ready and devastating wit. On one occasion Jami was reciting a new verse: "So constantly are thou in my stricken soul and sleepless eye, that whosoever should appear from afar, I should think that it was thou." When an irreverent listener asked, "Suppose it was an ass?", "I should think that it was thou," he replied.

Despite these idiosyncracies his fame spread far and many a ruler, including the Ottoman Sultan Bayazid II, tried hard with flowery compliments and generous gifts to entice him to their courts. He bowed to none thus obviating the need to stoop to unwarranted flattery. This independence enhanced the respect accorded him by all.

He was a most prolific writer; his works, written mostly during the last fifteen years of his life, number well over 90. His accounts of eminent Muslim mystics coupled with his erudite commentaries established him as a man of great piety. Other commentaries on poets and public figures of his and earlier ages are of immense importance to history. It is his poetry, however, that has given him enduring fame. Written in a lyrical and romantic style, his poems epitomize the ideals and grace of this lustrous era.

1575-1696
Jami died in Herat in 1499 and his funeral, attended by the royal family, by the literati and by vast scores of the common people, was celebrated with magnificent pageantry. But he was buried in an unadorned grave where today only a lush, spreading pistachio tree, springing from the tomb itself, gives it shelter. To the east lies his father-in-law and benefactor, Sa' aduddin-i-Kashgari, to the south his disciple and biographer, Mulla Abdulghafur-i-Lari. His nephew, Hatifi, another noted poet, lies to the east of the latter.





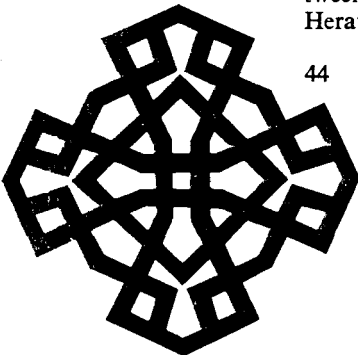
WINDMILLS OF HERAT

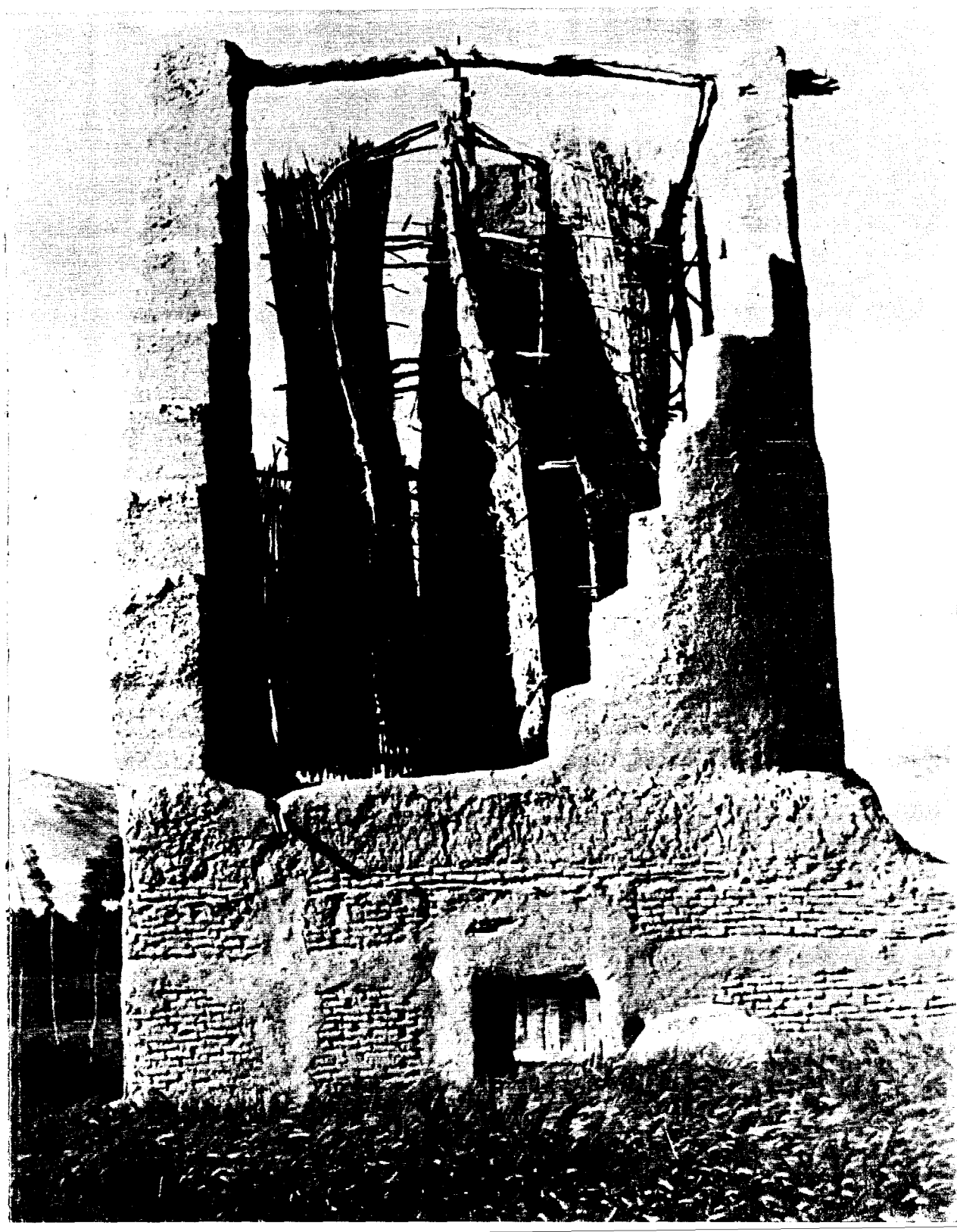
Windmills have been a part of Herat's landscape since the 7th century when they were first described by Arab geographers. Judging from these sources we know that the entire area around Herat and along the eastern borders of Iran, the area that is of ancient Khorasan, was liberally dotted with windmills. Furthermore, early 20th century travellers also describe ruined windmills around Kabul and Ghazni and as far east as the Indus River but they were even then relics of the past. Though these first windmills antedate the appearance of the windmill in Europe and China, the question as to whether the latter were inspired by those of Khorasan, or whether they were independently invented has not been settled with absolute certainty. Many, however, are firmly convinced that the windmills of ancient Khorasan were indeed the source of inspiration.

If you wish to study a windmill closely you will find several easily accessible behind Jami's tomb. Take the first track to the left off the Islam Qalah road. They operate only during the period locally referred to as "the time of the 120-days' wind" which normally blows from June to September. This is also the time of the wheat harvest. During this period the mills work day and night.

Outside Herat the mills are built singly or in pairs, but in other parts of the province, as for instance at Ghorian, it is not uncommon to find a line of ten to twelve mills adjoining each other. Early 20th century reports record as many as 50 and 75 mills built together in single long rows. These mills are at first not readily recognizable to the western eye for they do not have the huge wheeled arms with which Don Quixote fenced. The lower half consists of a square mud-walled room. Here one finds the millstones which are fed by means of a wooden feeder from a large hopper built into the side wall. Resting against the upper millstone and the feeder there is a small rod known as the vibrator-stick. The movement of the turning stone vibrates this rod which in turn shakes the grain from the feeder. Against the other wall there is a long trough for the collection of the milled flour after it is thrown out from between the two millstones.

The mill-shaft is made from white poplar and rises from the centre of the millstones through the arched roof of the mill house. To this shaft are attached six sails to each of which two reed mats are affixed. These sails spin between walls on two sides forming a well which aids in funneling the wind. At Herat the outer edges of this well are attractively stepped.



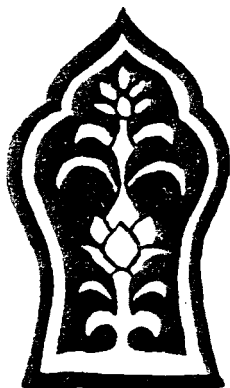


TAKHT-I-SAFAR

Half-way between Herat and Gazargah there is a garden of tall trees and grassy terraces called Takht-i-Safar, the Traveller's Throne. The terrace in front of the tea-house offers a particularly fine panoramic view of the city and its environs.

The first royal palace of Takht-i-Safar was built by Sultan Husain, that prince who, in dazzling robes of green and red, his turban adorned with a jaunty plume, presided over a court dedicated to splendor, opulence and luxury. Immoderation was the order of the day, and this was as true for the consumption of wine as it was for other more meritorious pursuits. The Emperor Babur commends the Sultan for never drinking in the morning but remarks that the instant mid-day prayers were over the Sultan drank without measure from the day he ascended the throne. Still, at one point he must have paused to consider the ill effects of wine on his subjects, perhaps because his sons were dying of it, for he posted the following notice throughout the city: "By the Mirza's command, all found guilty of trespassing in the pleasure of wine and beauty are ordered to add one stone to the Palace of Takht-i-Safar." This palace it would appear was erected by scores of inebriated Herati citizens.

Herat abounded with palaces and their names reflect the spirit of the times: House of Comfort, Abode of Pleasure, Crystal Palace, Mansion of Enjoyment, Palace of Ease, House of Delights. In the latter, "a modest but delightful little house", the upper halls were covered with paintings glorifying Sultan Abu Sa'id. There is an earlier reference to palace murals at Herat. Prince Masud, son of Mahmud of Ghazni, built a siesta cottage near the Iraq Gate. Here the ceilings were painted with nudes cavorting convivially.



Babur describes an unending succession of festivities during which the guests moved from palace to palace feasting on rich foods and varied wines served from finely chased gold and silver vessels. Nobles vied with one another in their finery and amongst them Mir Ali Sher Nawai was an acknowledged arbitrator of high fashion. Several styles bore his name. Poets recited works on terrestrial love thinly disguised as celestial love, and noted singers and musicians added to the entertainment. Babur admits to having had a good time in Herat but he didn't really approve. "The consequences of vice and debauchery manifested their baleful consequences. In seven years, of himself, his fourteen sons of whom only three were legitimate, his tribes and his hordes, not a trace remained, except only Muhammad Mirza who is in my service."





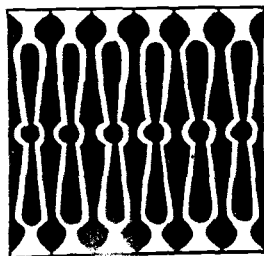
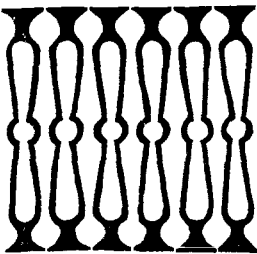
GAZARGAH

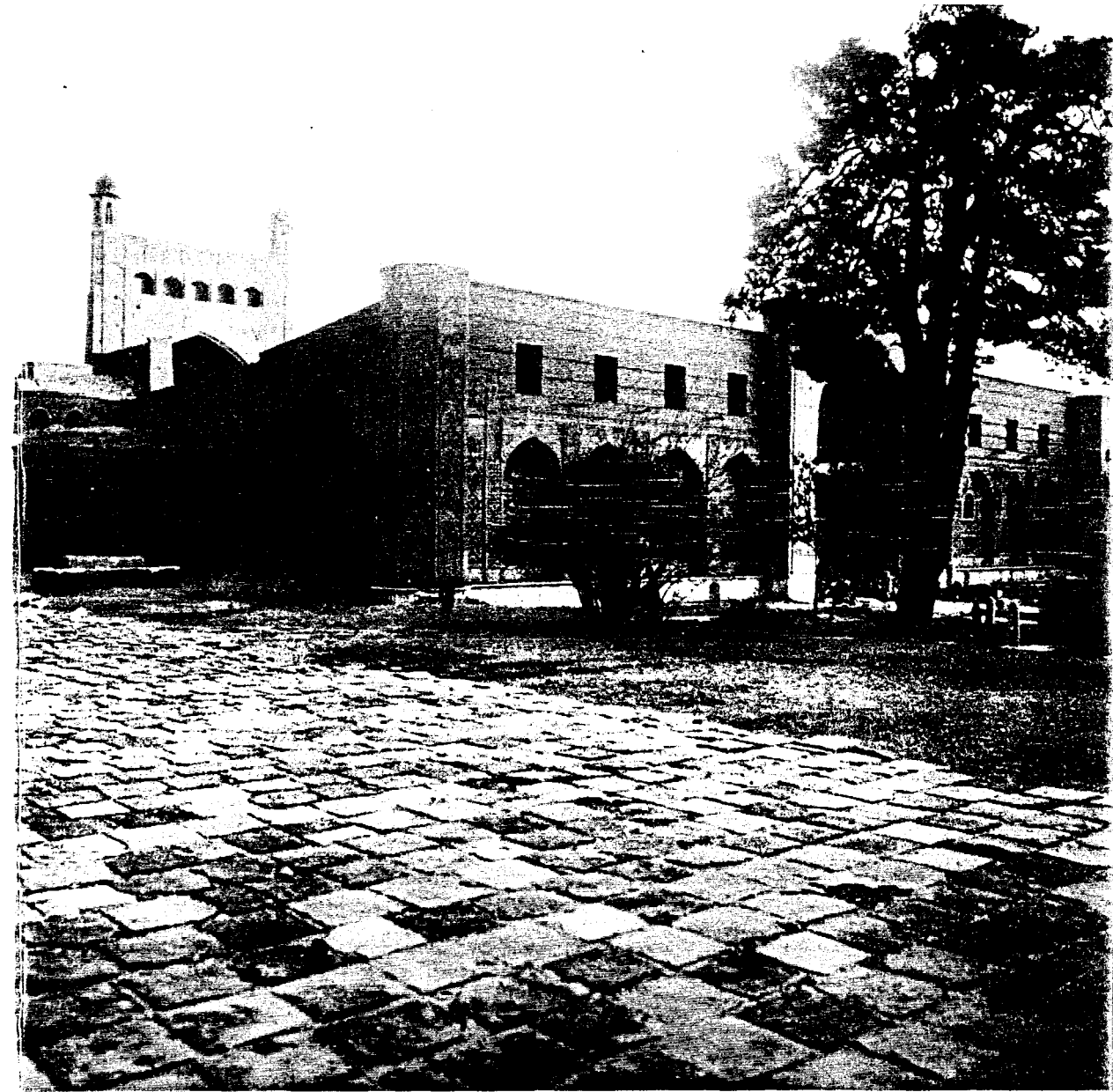
The most celebrated shrine in Herat is situated some three miles to the east of the city and is known as Gazargah, Laundry Place or Bleaching Ground. The shrine is built around the tomb of the famous 11th century, Sufi poet and philosopher, Khwaja 'Abdullah-i-Ansari, who was born in Herat in 1006 and died there in 1088.

The shrine and its environs cover a large area, for in addition to being a place of pilgrimage it is also the home of a brotherhood composed of the saint's descendants who live here, devoting their lives to meditation and to perpetuating the teachings of Ansari. Gazargah is also a place of refuge similar to Ahmad Shah Durrani's tomb in Kandahar. Once within the safety of its grounds, the government is unable to arrest those who have asked for asylum.

The visitor enters first into a square garden in the centre of which there stands a tall decagonal building with arched balconies. This is called the Namakdan or Saltcellar because of its shape and is now used by the leader of the Brotherhood as a guest house. It was originally built as a summer pavilion by Mir Ali Sher Nawai. Following the path toward the left one comes to a covered reservoir known as the Hauz-i-Zamzam. The long inscription over the stairs explains that the well was built by Shah Rukh in 1428. As a special tribute to Khwaja Ansari, he brought several goat skins of water from Zamzam, the sacred well of Mecca, which he added to the waters of this well to increase its sanctity. Having fallen into disrepair, the well was repaired by a pious lady, a descendant of Genghis Khan, at the end of the 17th century. It is to her we owe the inscription.

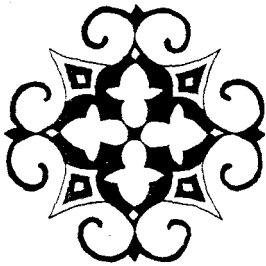
Passing next into the main outer courtyard, one sees a domed building straight ahead. This is the Zarnigar or Adorned with Gold Pavilion originally built by Shah Rukh. The very beautiful gold painting on the interior ceiling, however, dates from a period of restoration during the time of the Safavid Shah Abbas (1587-1629). In 1845 when M. Ferrier visited Herat it was the principal audience room of the royal residence at Gazargah and he reports having seen inscribed in an angle of the wall the name of the Italian painter, Geraldj, to whom we are indebted for its decoration. This signature and much of the painting has disappeared but what remains is in excellent condition. The background of lapis lazuli blue is profusely decorated with delicate gilt arabesques which glitter in the sunlight. This room is now used as a school. If it is locked, ask for the school-master.





THE ENTRANCE TO THE SHRINE AT GAZARGAH

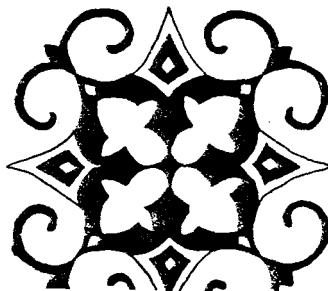
The restoration of this shrine was carried out by order of Shah Rukh in 1428. Much of the decoration survives from that restoration though easily identifiable parts have been again restored during later periods. An arched gateway stands in the centre of a long brick wall adorned with eight walled arches inscribed with *mo'aqqali* script in royal-blue and persian-blue tile in the manner of the decoration on the base of Queen Gawhar-Shad's mausoleum. Squat decorated bastions stand at either end of this wall.

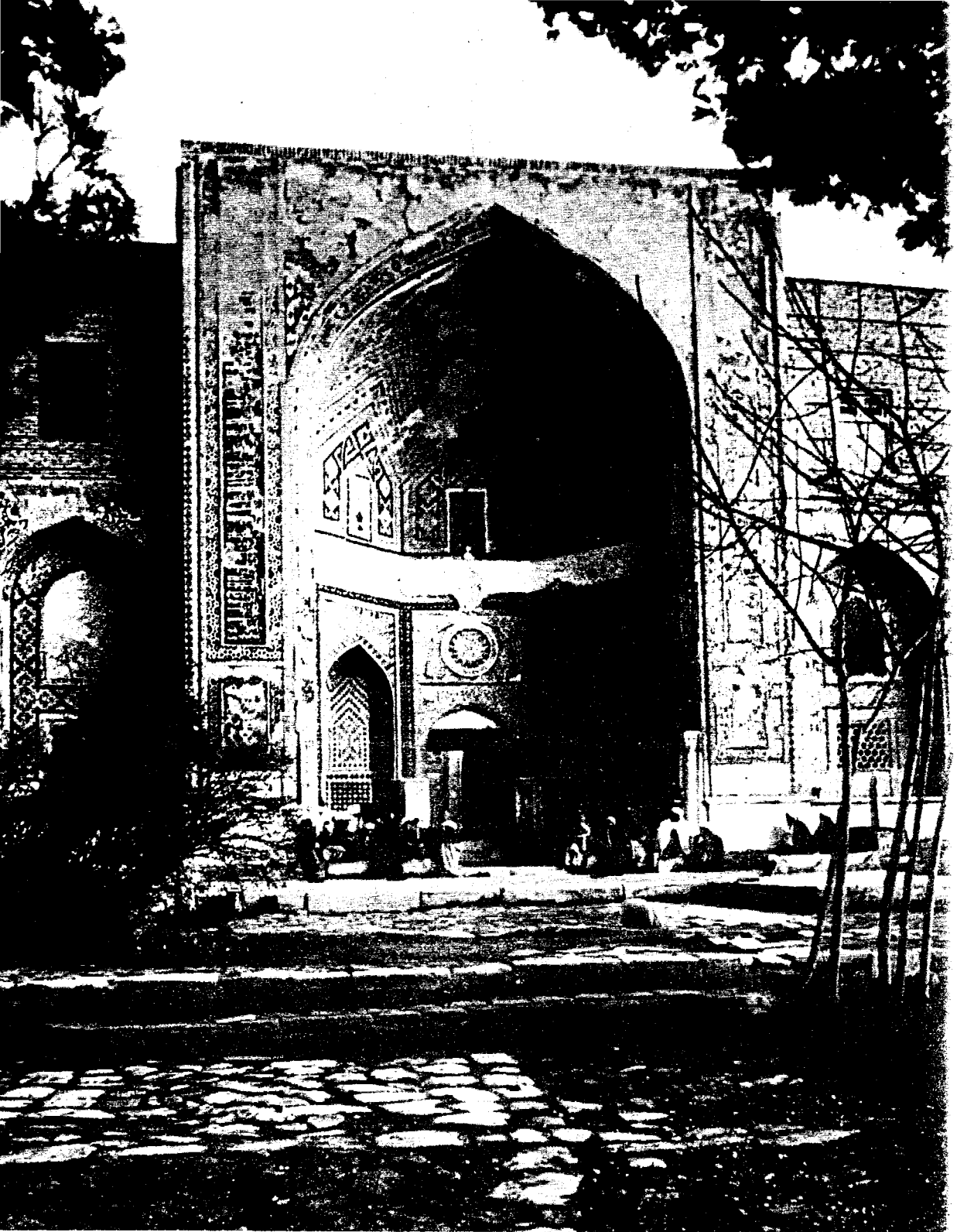


Crouching in front of the portal, its nose on its paws, there is a white marble statue of an animal. It marks the grave of Zainuddin, the architect who directed the restoration of this shrine for Shah Rukh. He held Khwaja Ansari in such reverence that it is said he requested that his tombstone be made in the form of a dog posed humbly in obeisance before this shrine. The watchful prone figure of a lion has long been popular in Islamic iconography as a symbol of protection. Such statues may be seen at other shrines throughout the city though they are usually inferior in marble and in workmanship to this example. There is one in the courtyard at the Ziyarat-i-Sultan Mir-i-Shahid.

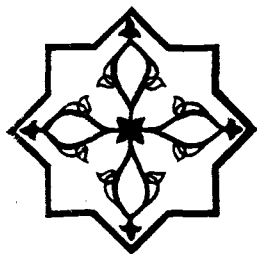
The interior of the five-sided half-domed portal is a favourite gathering place for members of the Brotherhood. The inscription on the outer facade of this portal dates from the time of Shah Abbas, but the elaborate medallion over the door is a very recent addition. Behind this the vestibule walls are covered with primitive art depicting gardens, mosques, and shrines painted within the last eighty years. Below the painting there is a verse from Jami in which he uses a play on words to describe Gazargah as the place where "the rain of the Divine Clemency there washes and makes spotless the souls of men." The calligraphy is by Khalifa Muhammad Husain Seljuki.

On either side of the vestibule there are small winter mosques. In the one to the left the entire lower half of the wall is decorated with flowered hexagons interspersed with beige tile-plaques in relief in the manner of the Timurid decoration at the Masjid-i-Jami'. Tacked to the door leading into the courtyard there is a metal plaque shaped in the form of an open hand, a symbol which may be noted on many graves and shrines. One novel Herati theory as to the meaning of this symbol which is only vaguely explained in Afghanistan traces it back to Alexander of Macedon and says it is intended to signify that the deceased left this world empty handed. It is most generally accepted, however, as a symbol of protection.

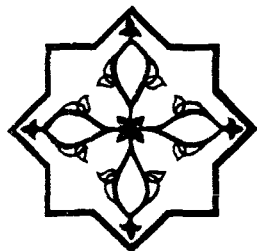




THE INNER COURTYARD AT GAZARGAH



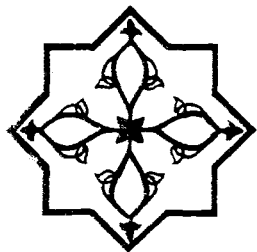
An overwhelming profusion of colour and detail greets the eye upon entering the courtyard. To the right of the door there is a massive white marble bowl which, like the bronze cauldron at the Masjid-i-Jami', was formerly used for serving *sharbat*. Ahead there is a tall arched iwan in an 80-foot wall crowned with an arcade of five arches topped by two cupolas. Tall iwans in high walls, which emphasized their towering effect over their surroundings, were extremely popular with the Timurids. The employment of walls, arcades and cupolas on the iwan was later used with stunning effect by the Moghuls in the majestic architecture of their period in India.



The two small side iwans are connected by an unbroken single-story arcade, each arch filled with a screen wall simply decorated in *mo'azzali* script in blue tile spelling out the words "Allah-o-akbar", God is Great. Behind this arcade there are tomb chambers, some of which are decorated with paintings. In effective contrast to the geometrically austere decoration of the arches, the outer facades are embellished with floral and calligraphic designs in dazzling coloured tile.

Khwaja 'Abdullah-i-Ansari was an important leader of Sufi mysticism at a time, the 11th century, when the Sufi system of thought acquired great popularity. "I have met three hundred Sufi Shaykhs in Khorasan alone who had such mystical endowments that a single man of them would have been enough for the whole world", writes a contemporary.

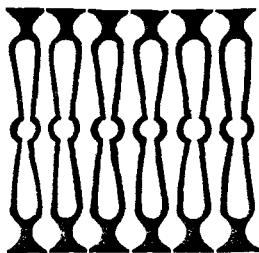
The Sufi's ultimate goal is to enter, no matter how momentarily, into a personal union with God. To attain this, inner purification is sought from understanding achieved through study, meditation, and devoted association with those who have reached the supreme state. Beyond this it is necessary to induce an atmosphere of ecstatic excitement in order to be carried to the moment of Oneness. A most important means of accomplishing this was through the recitation of special mystical literature and in this Khwaja 'Abdullah-i-Ansari excelled.



The Muslim mystics came into conflict with the traditional theologians who accused them of neglecting the observances of the prescribed law in favour of their personalized relationship with God. This gave rise to burning controversies, acrid trials, and learned discourses all of which added to the development of Islamic thought. In this Herat was a vital arena, Khwaja Ansari, an august participant.



THE IWAN AT GAZARGAH



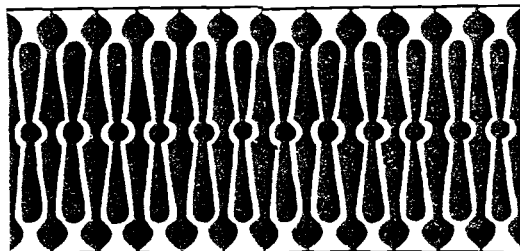
The iwan at Gazargah offers the most varied example of Timurid decoration in Herat. An impressive design covering the inner side walls is composed of a series of squares and rectangles arranged in a manner often to be found in Chinese art. One eminent scholar of Islamic architecture traces this bold pattern directly to the influence of the Chinese diplomatic missions which visited the court of Shah Rukh. The entire surface of this design is covered with fine *mo'azzali* script repeating tributes to the greatness of God. This square is bordered by a line from the Koran.

Over this large panel, separated by another Koranic freize, the familiar squares, diamonds and hexagons in floral mosaic appear in dramatic style. The remaining space is covered with designs too numerous to describe but fascinating to study. Weathering on the outer facade allows one to see that there have been numerous restorations but the plaster covering applied during the reign of Amir Habibullah leaves little detail to be seen.

The open-worked wooden structure directly in front of the iwan shelters the tombstone of Khwaja 'Abdullah-i-Ansari. It is of recent construction, a replacement for an earlier structure of the same type. The actual tombstone of inscribed marble is covered with a beige cloth and cannot be viewed. Outside this wooden structure, on the north, there is a fifteen-foot pillar erected by Shah Rukh. The proportions, the calligraphy, the decoration, and the quality of the marble are exquisite and make it one of the more beautiful monuments to be seen in Herat. Other finely carved marble panels encircle the base of the enclosure. Written in baroque kufic script they repeat the theme that God is Supreme.

The man for whom this shrine was built is as venerated today as he was during his lifetime. Fact and legend repeat the tales of his piousness and his prodigious intellectual capacities: he was his father's secretary at the age of five; he was admitted to Herat's council of savants at fourteen; he committed over 100,000 religious verses to memory; over 1,000 learned men sat at his feet for instruction; he was received as a peer among peers.

His works, written at times in rhymed prose and at times in prose interspersed with verse, include biographies of the saints and several didactic works on the mysteries of the divine experience. He is said to have composed 6,000 Arabic verses on the mysteries of the Sufi experience.



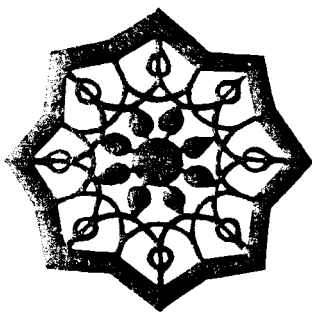


TOMBSTONES AT GAZARGAH

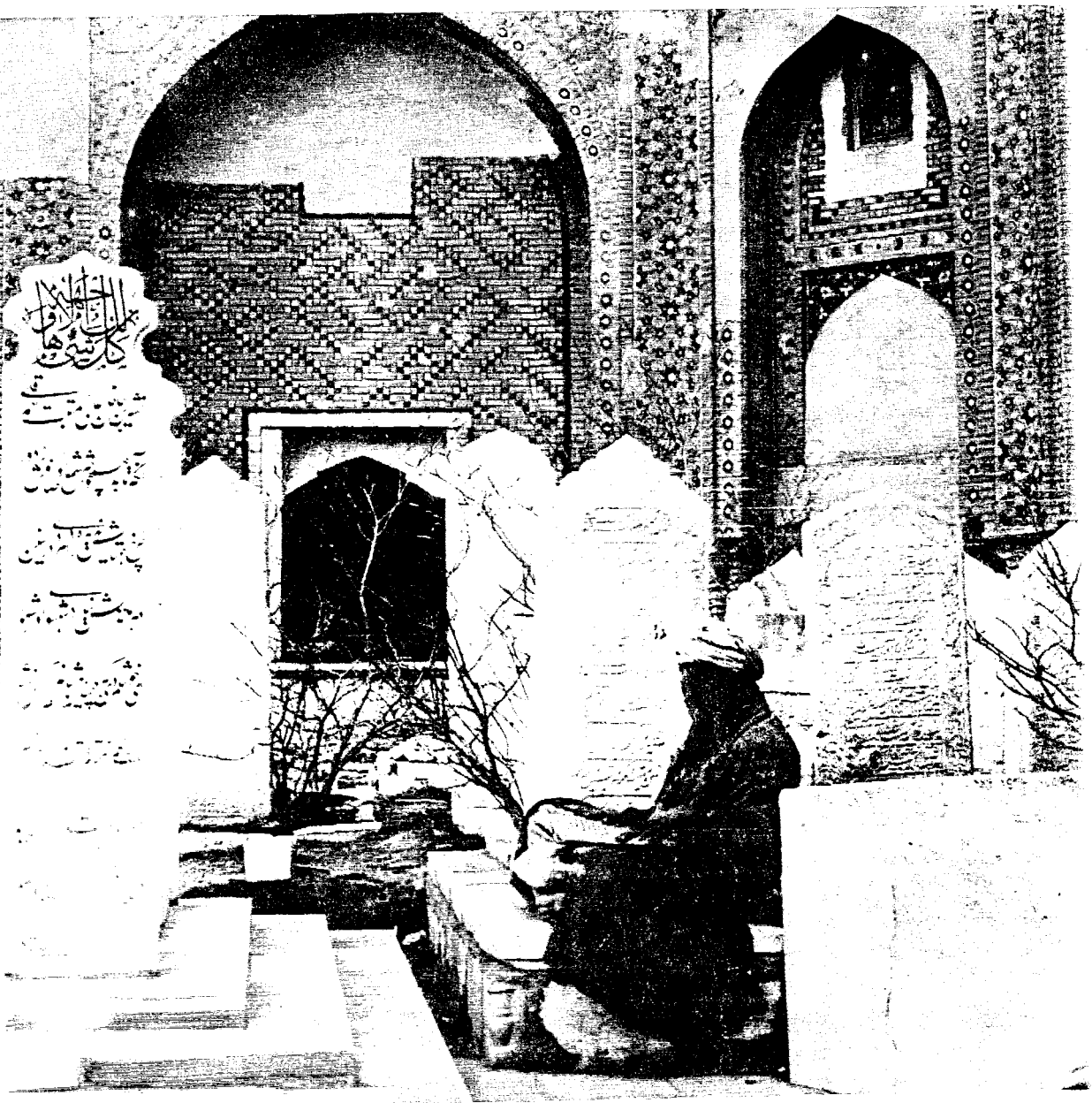
For centuries the holy and illustrious of Herat have been buried in the courtyard at Gazargah and there are many beautiful examples of the stone-cutters' art to be seen there. Next to Khwaja Ansari the most illustrious is Amir Dost Muhammad Khan who lies to the north of the saint's tomb. The Amir, exiled to India by the British in 1841, returned to the throne of the Kingdom of Kabul after the disastrous events of 1842. Ruling astutely he extended his power over Afghanistan but Herat continued obstinate. Personally leading an expedition of 16,000 men, thirty-two guns and a multitude of camels and horses, the Amir captured the city in 1863 but died there soon after his triumph. A charming sketch of this battle by a contemporary observer hangs in the Herat Museum. His tombstone of white marble is finely carved and lies behind a balustrade.

The most exquisite example of the stone-cutters' art is the black marble tombstone called the Haft Kalam, Seven Pens, which is now in a small room behind Amir Dost Muhammad's tomb. Any member of the Brotherhood will be happy to get the key. The stone is intricately carved on three different planes in a series of complex, undulating floral designs topped by graceful arabesques.

The Haft Kalam was especially made for Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara for his own tombstone. However, just when it had been completed, a favourite son of his died and the Sultan ordered that the stone be placed on his son's grave and that a new one be made for him. Much distressed, the stone-cutter reminded his master that it had taken seven years to complete the stone and that it would certainly take equally as long if not longer for him to make a replacement. "I'm in no hurry," the Sultan replied. But it would seem that perhaps he was too optimistic for no such stone marks his grave at the mad-rassa. A small donation left on the Haft Kalam is appropriate.,



There are several tombstones of a similar style on a large platform in the courtyard which belong to the Sultan's family: his father on the east; his brother at the back; a son on the west. The tombstones inside the iwan, and many of those in the side rooms, date from the 17th century when Herat was ruled for the Safavids of Persia by a family taking great pride in the fact that they were descended from Genghis Khan. This family quite frequently appropriated earlier stones of fine workmanship which took their fancy, simply recarving the inscriptions. The Haft Kalam itself was brought to Gazargah from the madrasa by them.



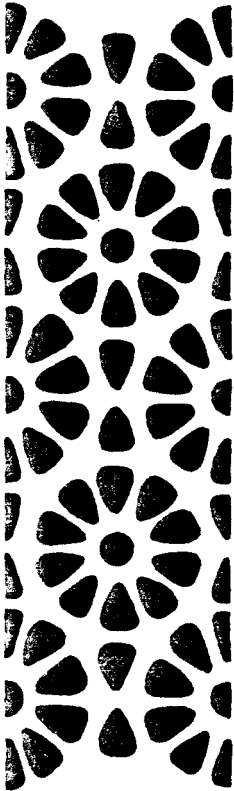
THE BRIDGE CALLED PUL-I-MALAN

Down through the ages caravans and armies have moved incessantly from Iran and Central Asia to India. On their way they encountered the mighty mountains of the Hindu Kush, a most formidable barrier. To avoid the rigors of its passage many wound their way around its western end and followed the skirts of the Hazarajat to their southern limit at Kandahar. To do this they passed through the oasis of Herat and there crossed the Herirud, the river of Herat.

The bridge called Pul-i-Malan which afforded passage of the Herirud at Herat was therefore of considerable strategic and economic importance. But it is its picturesque beauty which has attracted the admiration of all and assured its mention in literature for centuries. The Emperor Babur made a special point of including it on his sight-seeing tour in 1506; almost every 19th century traveller describes it with appreciation. Though its place has been usurped by the modern bridge called Pul-i-Pushtun, it is still passable; caravans cross over it frequently, and it has lost none of its picturesqueness. A particularly fine view of the bridge may be had from the roof of the new Zahir Shahi Cafe next to the Pul-i-Pushtun. As the sun sets behind it one need not wonder at the attention it has excited for so long.

Faces brighten at the mention of the name of Bibi Nur who is reputed to have built Pul-i-Malan. No one knows just when this took place but it was a long time ago; at least 1000 years. She has held a special place in the hearts of the people of Herat ever since. A famous historian living in the 15th century during the reign of Sultan Abu Sa'id wrote a book describing Herat's famous shrines. He says, "In the Candlemakers' Quarter near the Iraq Gate, in the vicinity of the house of Mulla Ibrahim the Bookbinder, there is a mosque near which lies the tomb of the saintly Bibi Nur who it is said was the builder of Pul-i-Malan. She possesses a warm spirit and you may realize all your desires if you visit her tomb on Wednesday night. This is a proven fact."

Today, almost exactly 500 years later, the faithful still make their way to her shrine on Wednesday nights. The tomb where her sister, Bibi Hur, lies beside her, lies under a dome built by Shah Rukh. A popular legend about these sisters says they devoted much time, effort, and money to collecting eggs so that the shells might be mixed with clay to make the bridge as strong as steel. Heratis delight in telling you that modern bridges are often carried away by floods but the bridge called Pul-i-Malan stands inviolate.





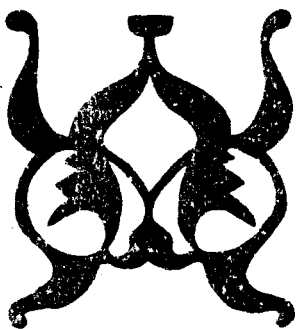
THE MASJID-I-CHIHILSUTUN AT ZIYARATGAH

The village of Ziyaratgah, the Place of the Ziyarat, lies twelve kilometers west of the Herat airport. The road begins just opposite the turn off to the airport and is difficult for cars other than jeeps or Volkswagens. It is also suggested that you take a guide as side trails are numerous. Though not recommended for the casual tourist, those interested in a more thorough appreciation of the area will find it a very picturesque village surrounded by fertile vineyards each with tall handsomely-constructed brick pigeon towers.

The charming Masjid-i-Chihil-Sutun, Mosque of the Forty Pillars, dates from pre-Mongol days. Built before the large central courtyard with side iwans became popular in mosque architecture, it has instead a pillared and vaulted veranda in the centre of which there is a mihrab, which still preserves some attractive mosaic work from the time of Shah Rukh. Behind this veranda there is a large hall for worship which now has no decoration of exceptional interest. A subterranean room under this hall is used as a chihilakhana or Room for Forty Days, where the pious may retire in complete seclusion for forty days of meditation.

The Masjid-i-Jami' is situated in the centre of the village. There is a fairly well preserved inscription in Arabic over the entrance which includes the name of Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara. Traces of the original mosaic work on the outer wall attest to the fact that it was once embellished during his time in a style similar to the Timurid section of Herat's Masjid-i-Jami'. This mosque is built in the familiar style with a large open courtyard and iwans in the centre of three walls. The main iwan on the west is framed by two towering minarets reaching to the pavement which are called *Guldasta*, Bouquets, as they are at Herat. On the east the vestibule is flanked by two rooms; an indoor mosque on the south, a former madrassa on the north. A stairway from the vestibule leads to the roof of the madrassa which affords interesting views of the courtyard and of the domed houses in the village.

Outside the village there are many ruined mosques, ziyarats and countless graves, many of which date back to Timurid and early Muslim times. The Khaniqah-i-Mulla Kalan lies to the south of the village and was once a most elaborate construction. There is an inscription by Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara over the entrance and the interior decoration suggests that of Gawhar-Shad's mausoleum. The unsheltered grave of the revered mulla lies closeby, simply covered with loose stone. Its extreme length is characteristic of graves of men of special piety.





THE COVERED BAZAARS OF HERAT



Near the Chahar Suq there are several covered bazaars, once common to all large cities in Afghanistan but now only rarely to be seen. Light filters down from windows below the barrel vaulting of the ceilings onto shops filled with rugs, silks and sundries. Here one may recapture the sights and sounds of the days when Herat was an important depot on the caravan route from China to Europe.

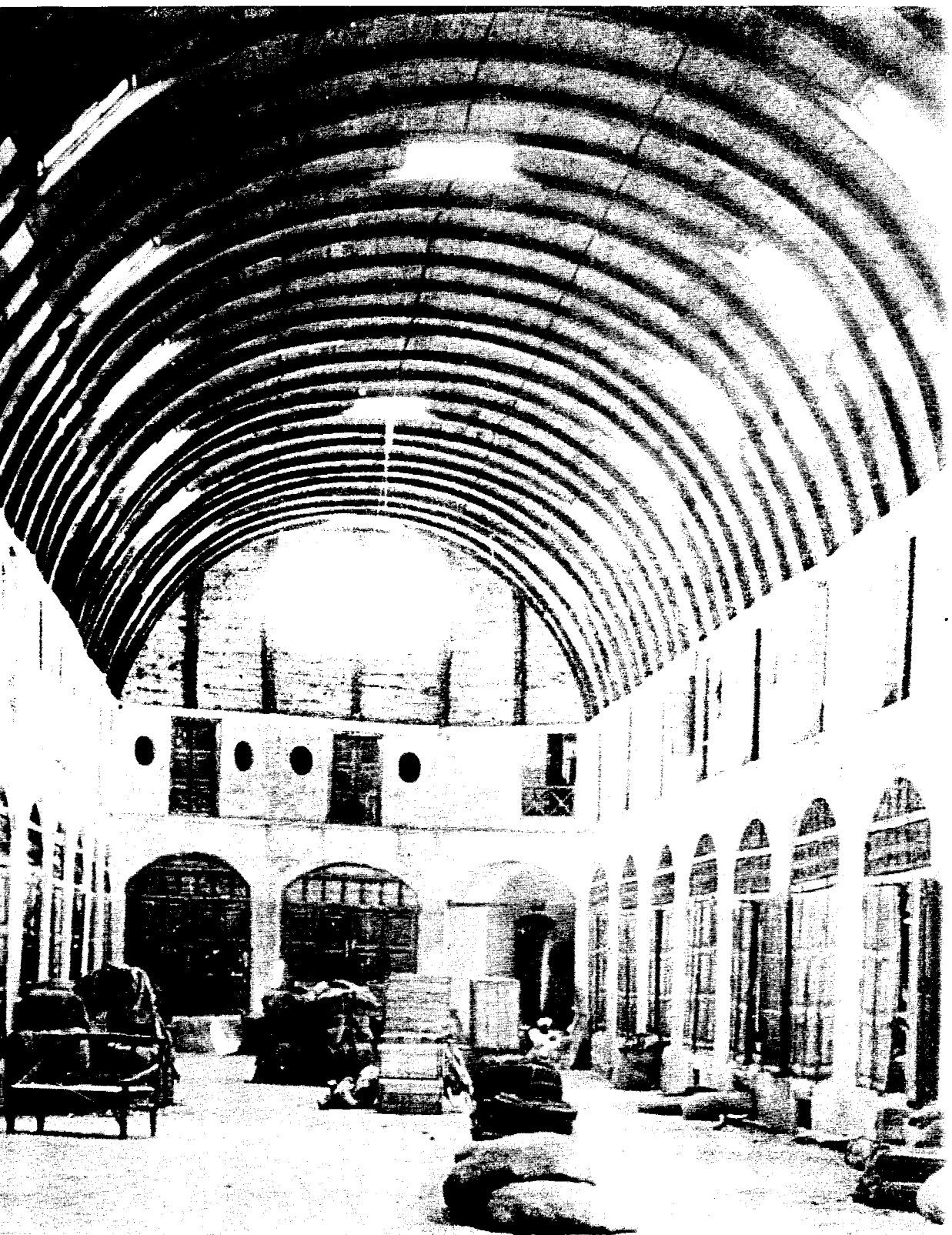
Following Genghis Khan's cataclysmic descent on the area and the hazards which the chaotic state of these countries presented for long after, traders passed via the north until Tamerlane reestablished the old route through Samarkand, Balkh and Herat. This he set out to do with purpose and succeeded magnificently. Not that the bazaars were completely destitute when he first came to Herat. He took from its bazaars and caravanserais a treasure of "silver, uncut gems, brocades and gold thrones", all imported items.

This was naught compared to the exotic items listed by contemporaries of Shah Rukh and Sultan Husain-i-Baiqara: damascened swords, bows inset with jade and tourmaline, drinking cups of Arabian coral, illuminated books and silks from the city itself, Bokhara rugs valued at ten diamonds each, unbored pearls and golden images from India. Fruit stalls offered such delicacies as Kabul's famed wild rhubarb, bananas from Isphahan and oranges from far off Damascus.

Then there were the slave markets. Ghor had long been a principal source for slaves prized by Arab and Ghaznavid alike, whose early forays into Ghor were inspired by the desire for this lucrative commodity. Later Turkish slaves became the most prized and their sale became a large commercial enterprise. "Among all the slaves in the world, the Turks are incomparable and none approach them in value and beauty", writes a contemporary historian. For both sources Herat was a convenient central market.



After such luxury there were evil days to follow for Herat. Eyewitness reports are numerous and repetitive. In 1845: "Nothing can be imagined more desolate than the appearance of the city; the greater number of the bazaars are in a dilapidated state; a portion of those of the Chahar Suq are the only ones in good repair." In May 1934: "The old bazaar is being pulled down. A good thing for the old tunnel is a fearsome place." Today the tree-lined streets of the old bazaar are full of colour and fascination. The covered bazaars are among their most picturesque attractions.



THE HAUZ-I-CHAHAR SUQ OR COVERED RESERVOIR

Beyond the Chahar Suq on the left hand side of the Kandahar Bazaar there is a reservoir covered with a high pleasantly proportioned dome. Sixty feet square, it has a number of arched recesses where, in the old days, oil lamps flickered prettily to make it the pride of the city. It was built in 1634 by Hasan Khan Shamlu, an Herati governor ruling for the Safavids. Well-beloved he took a great interest in the city's well-being; he was the last to do so for a long time.

During the 200 years to follow, Herat was a part of the borderland between Safavid Persia and the great Moghul Empire of India. Though sporadic attempts by the Moghuls to take Herat were ineffective they continued to covet it, and as late as 1700 Aurangzeb wrote with impotent petulance to his son, Viceroy of Kabul, saying: "When you were here I had insisted you take the ancient possessions of our ancestors; but you have not conquered them. Evidently you have not done the work entrusted to you by me." The Safavids on their part set up governors in Herat who ruled for personal gain, appropriating treasure without thought of repayment. The city was left to crumble. The ten month siege by the Persians in 1838 was but the horrible climax to a long period of disintegration.

Herat had become part of Afghanistan founded by Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1747, but during the fratricidal wars following his death the city was held semi-autonomously by opponents to, usually also aspirants to, the throne of Kabul. Unrest rekindled Persia's aspirations toward Herat, and in this they were encouraged by Russia and discouraged by Britain who distrusted Russia's intentions toward India.

All were surprised at the city's strong resistance which, coupled with Britain's final threat of war and the demoralization of the troops, eventually forced the Persian Shah to retreat. He left Herat utterly desolate. Shells had rained down on the city destroying its bazaars and gardens; houses had been torn down to mend the breeches in the walls, the people were left starving and destitute midst the ruin. Outside, luxurious gardens so long the famed ornaments of the city stood withered and dying, villages and fields lay ravished and denuded, and the splendid fir trees of Khiaban, "4000 all of an equal size", were gone. Not until 1880 when Amir Abdur Rahman reestablished a united Afghanistan was there hope for a return to prosperity. Today bazaars flourish, buildings rise, gardens blossom, and the people smile.



HERAT TODAY

Herat is the capital city of a province by the same name covering an area of 50,000 square kilometers. The city with a population of 86,000 extends for 40 square kilometers. It is connected by paved roads with Kandahar, 647 kilometers, and with Torghodi on the Afghan-Russian border, a distance of 121 kilometers. Paving of the road to Islam Qala on the Iranian border, 120 kilometers, is due to begin shortly. The distance to Kabul via Kandahar is 1162 kilometers.

Air service connects Herat with Kandahar and Kabul. Local buses carry passengers to Kandahar and Islam Qala. In the city there are no taxis but you may travel by gadi, horse drawn carriage. Many gadi horses are ornately decorated with collars of scarlet cotton balls, mirrors, plumes, beads and bells. A ride through the old city down the tree-lined Khiaban to the minarets accompanied by the sound of the horses' hoofs and the jingle of their bells is highly recommended.

There are three main hotels in Herat, the Parc Hotel, the Bihzad Hotel, a local hotel in the center of the city, and the Hotel Herat, just completed but not yet opened. The latter has a swimming pool; it is situated midway between the city and the airport. Meals are offered at the hotels and at innumerable chaikhana's, tea-houses, throughout the city. You may enjoy a cup of tea at the new cafe in the Bagh-i-Zahir Shahi beside the Pul-i-Pushtun on the airport road and also on the terrace in front of the tea-house at Takht-i-Safar. Both offer impressive views.

The city's industries include rug-weaving, silk-weaving and metal furniture making. There is a silk weaving shop opposite the outer door to the Ghyasuddin Shrine at the Masjid-i-Jami'. The Parc Hotel will provide a guide to a Turkoman home or to the Maristoon Orphanage to see the rug weaving. Glass blowing, though not a major industry, is interesting to watch. You may find a shop opposite the front door to the Maristoon. Proceeding from the Ghyiasuddin Shrine toward the old bazaar, take the first street to the right. The glass blowers make water cups for bird cages and donkey beads, both of a heavenly blue.

In the fertile fields around the city the villagers grow cotton, rice, wheat, pistachios, melons and grapes, a product for which the valley has long been famous. Pigeon manure makes excellent fertilizer for the vine-yards. To attract them the villagers erect tall brick pigeon towers which they decorate very artistically. You may see several of these from the airport road.

