Bhadresvar: The Oldest Islamic Monuments in India by Mehrdad Shokoohy; Manijeh Bayani-Wolpert; Natalie H. Shokoohy; Hisar-i Furuza: Sultanate and Early Mughal Architecture in the District of Hisar, India by Mehrdad Shokoohy; Natalie H. Shokoohy
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were the descriptions and drawings of Coste, Dieulafoy, Reuther, and others. Indeed, Bier's careful analysis suggests how much in need we are of close examination and systematic recording of other early Iranian monuments if we are to assess with assurance the supposed character of a Sassanian architecture.

As Sarvistan is devoid of epigraphy and without an excavated archaeological context, Bier proceeds to date it by analyzing formal and technical qualities within the context of ancient and medieval architecture of Iran and adjacent areas. By considering such features as the foundation, floors, wall masonry, arches, vaults, domes, squinches, moldings, and columns, and comparing them to their analogues at sites such as Bishapur, Firuzabad, Qasr-i Shirin, Ukhaydir, and Qasr Kharana, Bier is able to demonstrate persuasively that Sarvistan is not in fact a Sassanian building at all. Indeed, the presence of architectural features such as the *pish taq* over the central entrance *iwan,* and the domed chamber fronted by a semidomed *iwan* at the entrance to the western tract, and the variety and form of the vaults all suggest a later, Islamic date. This conclusion is supported by details of construction and design similar to those in such Islamic monuments as the late 8th-century palace of Ukhaydir in southern Iraq and the earliest portion of the Masjid-i 'Atiq in Shiraz.

Having dissociated the ruins of Sarvistan from the Sassanians, Bier goes on to reconsider the question of function. Although the building, set in what appears to have been a walled enclosure, recalls in a general way later Persian garden pavilions, Sarvistan's overall asymmetry and the dissimilarity of its rooms, one to another, both in plan and elevation, run counter to the typical Persian pavilion plan as known from written sources and standing monuments. Moreover, the plan's openness, its multiplicity of external and interior doorways, and absence of private spaces, further argue against the interpretation of Sarvistan as a pavilion or hunting lodge.

The identification of Sarvistan as a princely residence was initially questioned some years ago in a thoughtful article by Oleg Grabar, who speculated that its open and diversified plan seemed better suited to religious ceremonies than to domestic and courtly needs, and ventured the hypothesis that the Sarvistan ruins may be those of a Zoroastrian fire sanctuary, that is, of a cult building of the old Iranian national religion, centered on a sacred fire, symbol of the creator Ahura Mazda (Ohrmazd), principle of good, wisdom, truth, and justice. Bier now provides comparative evidence for this hypothesis, noting that the layout of the German-excavated late Sassanian fire sanctuary at Takht-i Suleyman in Azerbaijan, the seat of the Adur Gushnasp, one of the three great fires of the Sassanian empire, is characterized by similarities sufficiently striking to postulate a common function. Although at first glance the early Islamic date of the Sarvistan ruins seems difficult to reconcile with such an explanation, it is now generally recognized that the Zoroastrian church not only survived the loss of state patronage after the fall of the Sassanian dynasty, but in regions such as Fars, it even enjoyed a modest prosperity. It would be tempting, therefore, to see Sarvistan as a manifestation of the same pious energy that produced the *Denkart,* the *Bundahishn,* and other literary and religious works of the so-called Zoroastrian Renaissance of the 9th century, a period in which the Zoroastrian clergy marshaled its dwindling resources in a last frantic effort to stem the decline of the faith.

The reinterpretation of the Sarvistan ruins from Sassanian palace to Zoroastrian fire sanctuary of the early Islamic period is one that has important implications for our understanding of Iranian architecture in both periods. Methodologically, Bier's work indicates the way that will have to be followed in examining that scattering of other monuments—the Iwan-i Kherka in Khuzistan, and the 'Imaret-i Khusrau and Char Qapu at Qasr-i Shirin in Persian Kurdistan, for example—assumed today to constitute the corpus of Sassanian and early Islamic building in Iran. Careful comparative study of these structures will be essential if we are to arrive at any firm conclusions regarding the assumed existence of a coherent entity called Sassanian architecture.

Yet paradoxically, as this process proceeds, the very tangibility of a Sassanian building tradition on the Iranian plateau becomes increasingly elusive. Certainly, the present study opens a large gap in our chronology of middle Sassanian architecture. Nonetheless, by clearing away some long-held assumptions which have pervaded scholarship in this field many decades, Bier's monograph fulfills an important need. One can say with assurance that it is among the most significant contributions to this complex subject in a number of years.

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MEHRDAD SHOKOOHY, with contributions by Manijeh Bayani-Wolpert and Natalie H. Shokoohy, *Bhadresvar: The Oldest Islamic Monuments in India* (Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture, Supplements to *Mugarnas,* II), Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988, 65 pp., 58 pls., 72 Glds or $36.00.

MEHRDAD SHOKOOHY and **NATALIE H. SHOKOOHY,** *Hisar-i Furuza: Sultanate and Early Mughal Architecture in the District of Hisar, India* (Monographs on Art Archaeology and Architecture: South Asian Series), London: Monographs on Art Archaeology and Architecture, 1988, 138 pp., 47 figs., 28 pls., £27 or $48 (cloth), £19 or $32.00 (paper).

Most Westerners know the Taj Mahal, one of the finest examples of Mughal architecture in India, but they probably know less about the long tradition of Islamic building in India that led up to it, a tradition documented in these two monographs. The first, *Bhadresvar: The Oldest Islamic Monuments in India,* is a study of the monuments from a small village in the northwest corner of India on the Gulf of Kachh. The buildings include the shrine of Ibrahim, a square chamber with a conical dome supported on 12 columns, dated by inscription to Dhu'l-Hijja 554 A.H./C.E. December 1159–January 1160, and two undated mosques, the larger Solahkhambi Mosque with a portico preceding a typical Arab-style plan of a courtyard surrounded by a colonnade, and the smaller Chhoti Mosque with a double colonnade preceding the sanctuary chamber. All three share techniques of construction (such as large blocks of stonemasonry assembled without mortar, and monolithic columns with square, octagonal and circular registers) and forms of stone carving and decoration and must have been built by local craftsmen around the same time in the mid 12th century.

The second monograph, *Hisar-i Furuza: Sultanate and Early Mughal Architecture in the District of Hisar, India,* reports on the

authors' survey in 1981 and 1984 of sultanate monuments in the Hisar district on the eastern side of the state of Haryana northwest of Delhi. The buildings are concentrated in Hansi, the old capital of the region, and in Hisar, which replaced Hansi as capital in 1356. Hansi is notable for two shrine complexes, one for the mystic Shah Ni'mat'ullah, located inside the fort and rebuilt using dated stones from the 12th century, and another to the west of town for a 13th-century Christi shaykh Jamal al-Din Hansawi. Hisar gives a good idea of a 14th-century city, with a palace complex including a mosque and gardens, a religious school or *madrasa,* numerous tombs, and other mosques.

The two monographs are most valuable for documenting buildings that are poorly known and in danger of deteriorating, as most Muslims left the area during the partition of India and Pakistan. In each study, a brief history of the site is followed by an extensive tour of the buildings. The descriptions are precise, clear, and logically arranged, and the walking tours are well illustrated, especially with plans and sections that are labeled with scale and orientation. Few of the buildings are dated, so the careful analysis of building techniques and features of construction, such as brick size and arch profile, provides firm evidence for dating. Shokoohy has a comprehensive knowledge of Indian architecture, and his comparisons to other buildings in India are relevant and convincing.

The works are less informative in interpreting the buildings. The reader gets no sense of whether the town of Hisar was unique or typical. Several of the unusual features from Hisar and Hansi that might interest historians of Islamic architecture are the corner room in the Lat-ki mosque in Hisar that served as a separate *magsura* or room for the sovereign, the nine-domed pleasure pavilion known as the Gujari Mahal, and the quincunx building in Tosham that might have served as a fire temple. The author does draw some conclusions about the buildings at Bhadresvar (pp. 38–41), but he is led astray by Bayani-Wolpert's erratic reading of the inscriptions. She unjustifiably changes Desai's reading of the inscription on the shrine of Ibrahim from "This is the tomb of Ibrahim" to "This is what Ibrahim ordered" and connects Ibrahim to a Fatimid propagandist headquartered in the Yemen. Rather, the missing word at the end of Ibrahim's name in the inscription should be read as al-Sirafi, an epithet connecting him with the town of Siraf on the Persian Gulf, and the same one found on the headstone dated 569 A.H./C.E. 1174 (No. 2). The association of the original settlers of Bhadresvar with Siraf explains many non-Indian features of the site, such as the crested grave covers (erroneously called sarcophagi), the elaborate plaited and floriated Kufic script, the wording of the funerary texts, and the projecting mihrabs, all of which are known from Siraf. It was an active port whose role in Gulf trade had already begun to be usurped by the island of Kish in the last decades of the 11th century. By the year 500 A.H./C.E. 1106–1107 some of the best craftsmen had migrated to Zanzibar where they carved the superb inscriptions in the Kisimzaki Mosque, and it makes sense that other merchants moved to India in the latter part of the 12th century.

These two monographs ably document the developing synthesis of indigenous Indian forms and the religious and political needs of a new Muslim society. They expand our knowledge of pre-Mughal architecture and allow the historian to place the buildings in a broader context of architecture in the eastern Islamic world.

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THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE

PHILIBERT DE L'ORME, *Traités d'architecture: Nouvelles inventions pour bien bastir et à petits fraiz (1561); Premier tome de l'architecture (1567),* edited by Jean-Marie Pérouse de Montclos, Paris: Léonce Laget, 1988, FF 480.

FRANÇOISE BOUDON and **JEAN BLÉCON,** *Philibert Delorme et le château royal de Saint-Léger-en-Yvelines* (Collection De Architectura), Paris: Picard, 1985, 189 pp., 104 illus. FF 225.

MONIQUE CHATENET, *Le château de Madrid au bois de Boulogne: sa place dans les rapports franco-italiens autour de 1530* (Collection De Architectura), Paris: Picard, 1987, 264 pp., 150 illus. FF 350.

These books signal a new phase in the literature on the French Renaissance. Earlier work, best exemplified by the writings of Anthony Blunt, was guided by a limited model of cultural change. Normative standards were defined by the Renaissance architecture of Florence and Rome, so that when French architects altered the pure forms of Italy, the results were faulted for distorting and misunderstanding the models. It was not recognized that the changes may have accomplished culturally specific ends and that the resultant forms, however different, were equally valid. The books under review have moved to new ground where French building traditions are not diminished and two equally valued cultural systems interact.

Philibert Delorme was arguably the first French mason to merit the title of architect. Originally trained in the stoneyard, he spent several years in Rome studying and measuring the buildings of antiquity; he read the classics, wrote treatises on architecture, and not merely executed but invented designs. It will astonish all but specialists to learn how little is known about Delorme, the most important architect of 16th-century France. (No consensus has yet been reached on the modern spelling of his name, as the titles of the books under review indicate.) His birthdate was only recently ascertained by Jean-Marie Pérouse de Montclos, who deciphered the date of June 1514 in an astrological image in the *Premier tome* ("Horoscope de Philibert de l'Orme," *Revue de l'Art* 72, 1986, 16–18). Most of his build-