

Identification

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| <u>Nomination</u> | Humayun's Tomb |
| <u>Location</u> | Delhi |
| <u>State Party</u> | India |
| <u>Date</u> | 26 October 1992 |

Justification by State Party

Exemplifying the formative stage of the Mughal structural style, Humayun's Tomb stands as a landmark in the development of Mughal architecture, and also represents the earliest extant specimen of the Mughal scheme of the garden tomb, with causeways and channels. It is a well developed specimen of the double-domed elevation with kiosks on a grand scale. This building tradition culminated in the Taj Mahal, constructed a century later. Despite being the first standardized example of this style, Humayun's Tomb is an architectural achievement of the highest order.

History and DescriptionHistory

The tomb of Humayun, second Mughal Emperor of India, was built by his widow, Biga Begum (Hajji Begum), in 1569-70, fourteen years after his death, at a cost of 1.5 million rupees. The architect was Mirak Mirza Ghiyath.

It was later used for the burial of various members of the ruling family and contains some 150 graves. It has aptly been described as the necropolis of the Mughal dynasty.

Description

The tomb itself is in the centre of a large garden, laid out in char bagh (four-fold) style, with pools joined by channels. The main entrance is on the south side, and there is another entrance on the west side. A pavilion and a bath are located in the centre of the eastern and northern walls respectively.

The mausoleum itself is on a high, wide terraced platform with small arched cells along the sides. In plan it is an irregular octagon with four long and four short sides. It is surmounted by a 42.5 m high double dome clad with marble flanked by decorative pillared kiosks (chhatris). The middle of each side is deeply recessed by large arched vaults with a series of smaller ones set into the face.

The interior is a large octagonal chamber with vaulted roof compartments interconnected by galleries or corridors. This octagonal plan is repeated on the second storey. The structure is of dressed stone clad in red sandstone with white and black inlaid marble borders.

Within the enceinte to the south-east of Humayun's Tomb there is a fine square tomb of 1590-1, known as the Barber's Tomb.

Management and Protection

Legal status

Humayun's Tomb is owned by the Government of India and protected under the Ancient Sites and Remains Act 1958.

Management

The Tomb is managed by the Archaeological Survey of India, using the Consolidated Funds, and is open to the public.

Conservation and Authenticity

Conservation history

During the British period the Tomb was maintained by the Public Works Department, the Archaeological Survey of India taking over responsibility in 1945. Conservation works carried out since that time include the following:

- Restoration and stabilization of the masonry of the southern and eastern walls;
- Filling of cavities in the inner core of the dome and its drum and general stabilization;
- Waterproofing of the terrace;
- Replastering of the tank and connecting channels;
- Stabilization of the ashlar facing of the main gate;
- Laying out the lawns and gardens around the tomb.

As with all monuments in the care of the Archaeological Survey of India, there is a regular annual monitoring and maintenance programme, combined with a rolling programme of special restoration projects.

Authenticity

The tomb and its surrounding structures are substantially in their original state, and interventions in the present century have been minimal and of high quality.

Evaluation

Qualities

The importance of Humayun's Tomb in the evolution of Mughal architecture is great. It is the first of a long series of dynastic tombs and innovative in a number of ways, notably by virtue of the fact that it introduced the garden tomb to the sub-continent. Humayun had travelled widely in the Islamic world, notably in Persia and central Asia, and brought back with him ideas that were applied by the architect of his tomb, under the direction of his widow, in this tomb.

The tomb has been respected throughout its history and so has retained its original form and purpose intact. Subsequent interventions have been aimed at preserving this character.

A distinguished expert in Mughal architecture consulted by ICOMOS about the significance of the property reported that "the brilliant and innovative design introduced many new features which were to become intrinsic to the repertoire of Mughal funerary architecture and its apotheosis in the Taj Mahal. First, its sheer scale, the massive masonry set on a high plinth and crowned by a huge elliptical dome on a tall drum... The materials were also a distinctive departure from previous architectural practice. The Timurid tradition of constructing around a brick core was followed... The cladding was uniquely Indian, however, being finely dressed red and yellow sandstone, with the dome and articulated elements in white marble... The garden setting was also an innovation in terms of funerary architecture... It is also the first example of the Mughal four-fold chahar-bagh used for a tomb, and ... was to become the model setting for imperial Mughal tombs".

Comparative analysis

Humayun's Tomb is the first and most innovative in the series of Mughal funerary monuments that culminated in the Taj Mahal. It therefore has a special unchallenged place in the history and development of Mughal architecture and art.

Additional comments

The report of the ICOMOS expert who visited the property in January 1993 was critical of the present state of the gardens around the tomb, which need attention. Improvements are also needed in the forecourt area and intrusive stalls selling drinks, which are recognized to be important in hot weather, should be resited outside the enceinte. Better supervision is needed, to prevent the appearance of graffiti on the tomb itself, which are now at an unacceptable level. These observations were confirmed by the ICOMOS mission that visited the property in July 1993.

The nomination dossier gives no indication of a buffer zone around the monument. However, all protected monuments in India are surrounded by a 100 m zone in which all development is strictly controlled by the Archaeological Survey of India, and

by a further 300 m zone within which all proposed development has to be submitted to the Survey for comment.

The dossier refers only to Humayun's Tomb, but the accompanying plan extends to the group of adjacent buildings outside the enceinte, such as the earlier Nila Gumbad (Blue Dome) to the east and the tombs of Isa Khan and Buhalima with their accompanying mosques and gardens to the west. It was agreed in discussions during the July 1993 mission visit that the nomination should cover only the main Tomb, the other structures being included within the buffer zone.

Recommendation

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria ii and iv:






- Criterion ii Humayun's Tomb is of outstanding cultural significance as the first example of a garden tomb on the India sub-continent and one which introduced important architectural innovations, and as such it led to the unrivalled series of similar monuments that culminated in the construction of the Taj Mahal.
- Criterion iv The garden tomb, of which Humayun's Tomb is the first important example in India, is above all else the symbol of the powerful Mughal dynasty which unified most of the sub-continent.

ICOMOS, October 1993

HUMAYÜN AND ADJACENT BUILDINGS AT DELHI



REFERENCES

-  14TH CENTURY
-  1556-1569
-  FIRST HALF & MID 16TH CENTURY
-  LATE 16TH & 17TH CENTURY
-  MODERN

Delhi : Plan du Tombeau de Humayun et des monuments adjacents / map of the Humayun's Tomb and adjacent buildings

