



Foreword

Bernard O'Kane

The previous volumes in this magnificent series have concentrated on the city of Herat. In this volume the scope is widened to include the surrounding districts in the whole province.

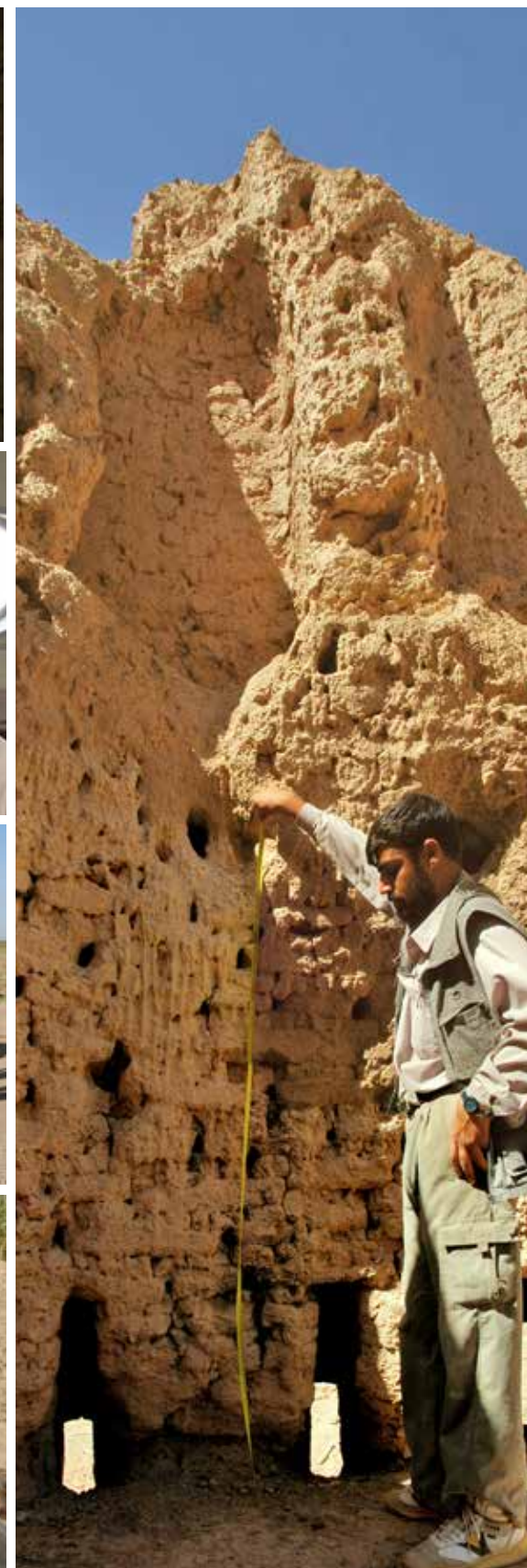
Having covered some of this ground while researching for my thesis, and later book, on *Timurid Architecture in Khurasan*, revisiting them through this work is a melancholy pleasure. The decades since the 1970s when this fieldwork was undertaken have seen this area undergo a series of trials, from the Soviet-Afghan War of the 1980s to the civil wars of the 1990s and the continuing unrest even after the defeat of the Taliban in 2001. The fieldwork for this project was done in the comparative lull of 2004-2012; even visiting Herat the year after, in 2013, I was advised that travel outside of the city of Herat was unsafe, and it does not seem that in the meantime the situation has improved. This makes the findings of the present work all the more valuable.

Not surprisingly, many of the monuments I recorded have been badly damaged (the Masjid-i Ghalvar Mosque at Hauz-i Karbas, the Chihil Sutun Mosque at Ziyaratgah, the Madrasa of Tuman Agha at Kohsan) or even completely destroyed (the Mazar-i Khwaja Abu'l-Walid at Azadan). But the picture is not all bleak. Some, like the Madrasa of Tuman Agha, have been repaired as best as possible, and the Shrine at Gazurgah has been beautifully restored. Some rare Timurid underglaze-painted Blue-and-White tiles have been uncovered in the prayer hall of the Ziyaratgah Masjid-i Jami'.

The authors had the chance to roam over the territory at greater length and depth than anyone before, and their labours have been rewarded by a trove of new information, particularly on fortifications of the 11th-13th centuries. A remarkable number of these are found in nearly every sub-district. The assemblage of surface sherds that accompany the descriptions of the sites are valuable not just for dating purposes but in showing the range of pottery types throughout the province.

The chapters also highlight a remarkable range of buildings from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries whose existence has not been signalled before. Additionally, tombstones and their inscriptions from these periods, many of them expertly read by Claus-Peter Haase, are mentioned whenever possible.

The authors also note one of the scourges of antiquities in Afghanistan, particularly prevalent with the conflicts from the 1980s onwards: the illegal excavations at many sites. We are indeed fortunate for the thoroughness with which the team pursued their endeavours, enabling a record which is likely ever remain unsurpassed.



Preface

Ute Franke

This publication is the last in a series of three volumes presenting the results of projects carried out in the city and province of Herat from 2004 to 2012 by the German-Afghan Archaeological Mission. The 'Ancient Herat Project' was developed and implemented within the general framework of an archaeological cooperation that started in 2002 with the Bagh-e Babur Project in Kabul under the auspices of the Eurasia Department of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) in Berlin. In 2004, when the Bagh-e Babur Excavation and Training Programme was nearing completion (2005), the cooperation partners, the Ministry for Information and Culture and the Institute of Archaeology, invited us to continue work at another site and proposed Herat, which had not previously been the focus of archaeological interest. Despite an initially different perspective, we agreed to this proposal, a decision which we never regretted since the Ancient Herat Projects turned out to be a stroke of luck. Having started with an archaeological survey and the documentation of monuments and sites in Herat Province in the summer of 2004, the project quickly expanded and was, thanks to the support of the German Foreign Office, supplemented by archaeological excavations and explorations in Herat city (2005–2009) and the re-installation of the Herat Museum, with the documentation and conservation of the object collections (2008–2012).

These three large and closely linked projects were complementary in an almost ideal way and their publications are hence thematically entangled as well. Plans for a comprehensive monographic publication of the three components began to take shape as the importance of these data to the knowledge of Herat's cultural heritage became clear and when we began to suspect that similar research might not be possible anymore in the future. Originally planned in order of their chronological sequence as Volumes 1 to 3, the last project (Herat Museum) had to be published first for practical and administrative reasons. It appeared as Volume 3 in 2016, followed in 2017 by Volume 2 (Excavations and Explorations in Herat city). The present book, Volume 1, dealing with the archaeological sites and historical monuments in the *hinterland* of Herat, is, therefore, the last one of the Ancient Herat series.

Despite the reversed numbering of the volumes, which could not be changed anymore later on, this sequence of publication made sense in terms of contents. Due to the wide chronological range of the museum collection, the first volume presents information on the history of research, the material culture and the historical context from the Bronze Age to the Pre-Modern era. The second volume deals in more detail with historical and contextual information on Herat city and presents the results of the first-ever systematic excavations, which pushed back the tangible history to the mid-first millennium BC.

The present Volume 1 contains the documentation of those sites and monuments that we were able to record in three campaigns between 2004 and 2006; afterwards even trips to the neighbouring districts of the city were no longer possible due to security concerns. A comprehensive catalogue prepared at the end of the first season in 2004 served as a blueprint for the application of funds, submitted to the Foreign Office, to prepare the data for evaluation, interpretation and publication. Work on the texts, images and maps for publication started in 2013. The evaluation of the data benefitted from the contextual and tangible evidence obtained in the other projects, especially concerning contexts and dating, as well as from the enormous typological range of the pottery found during the excavations. Likewise, the genesis of the project, the general historical development of the city and the region, and the history of archaeological research are dealt with in the first two volumes in greater detail; these aspects are only briefly referred to here (see Introduction chapter).

As visual information is crucial we decided to present in this volume, as in the previous ones, the maximum amount of available data, including colour images of the finds, mostly pottery, whenever possible, although due to the technical constraints of digital photography in those years the quality of the images is not always as good as one would wish. The delay of its completion, due to the higher priority of other volumes and projects, gave us a welcomed chance to revise and update the manuscript, especially the typology, site and find descriptions, datings, references and graphics; only the paper of D. Knitter remained almost as submitted in 2012 since no directly related papers have been published later-on for the Herat region.