

Chapter 4

Studies and Documentation on Tourism, Mapping of Historical Hot Spot in Multan Walled City

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Abstract Tourism represents a major economic generator and a labor-intensifying industry for the development and for the economic growth of a country. In accordance with this principle, the Government of Pakistan has officially declared tourism as an industry, formulating new tourism policies. Due to the unique richness of its composite landscape, consolidated over the centuries by the passage of innumerable civilizations and cultures, Pakistan is a country with a very high potential for tourist attraction from all over the world. The first part of the study is focused on the analysis of some significant data and aspects related to the tourism evolution during the last years and up to the present. One of them consists in the existence, in Pakistan, of a unique network of specialized visitors, wanting to visit the country for niche reasons: every city and every place then deserves a particular vocation and identity, becoming the main reference for different kinds of tourists. The investigation of the very unique role that Multan merits within the national touristic framework led to identifying, as its main vocations, the religious and sacred dimension of the place, as well as the significant presence and specialized workforce of local handicrafts. Regarding these particular kinds of tourism vocations, the case of Multan has been compared with other examples of tourism development, also in relationship to international examples: even in their differences, these comparisons have been used as strategic tools for the case of Multan, highlighting the weaknesses, as obstacles to any kind of development of tourism in the country, as well as its points of force, to be increased and reinforced. The second part of this work is focused on the identification of urban development strategies and new scenarios, aimed at revitalizing the historic core of Multan and strengthening the main tourist vocation of the place, highlighting the unique structural characteristics of this city and of its landscape.

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4.1 Tourism Development in Pakistan: Today's Trends of Evolution

Pakistan, with its diverse cultures, people, and landscapes, is a country richly endowed with tourist potential and attractions; it is a well-suited destination that could become the choice for all types of tourists, offering far greater diversity than is generally assumed, especially historically and culturally: today an Islamic country, the local culture is enriched with the influences and resources of over half a dozen ancient civilizations, which flourished here since the fourth millennium BC (Multan: history and architecture 1983). As it will be demonstrated, the trend of tourism evolution during the past years reveals the existence of some critical aspects that still hamper tourist development in Pakistan. In particular, while it is possible to read a growth in the tourist evolution during the last decades up to 2005, the following years until the present date have not actually undergone changes of extreme relevance (World Economic Forum 2007). Pakistan's tourism industry was very active during the 1970s, when the country received important numbers of foreign tourists; even later, the following trends show a constant increase, from 368,700 tourists in 1996 to 798,300 in 2005 (T&T, World Economic Forum 2007). Nevertheless, a comparison with other South Asian countries¹ showed a touristic dimension far lower than its potential and far exceeded by that of India² and Iran. The investigation made by the World Economic Forum³ highlighted a deficit in policy rules and regulations (with a very low position for the presence of foreign ownership and for foreign ownership restrictions) and in safety and security as well as the lack of any prioritization of travel and tourism and of marketing and branding. Among the main reasons for traveling in Pakistan in this period, social tourism (visiting friends and relatives) accounted for more than half of all foreign arrivals (56 %), followed by business visits (21 %); holiday and vacation visits were only 14.7 %. Trekking and mountaineering represent high-profile activities, followed by religious tourism, especially related to Sikh and Buddhism; nevertheless only 8,800 tourists arrived in Pakistan for religion purposes in 2005 (*Managing Tourism in Pakistan. A Case Study of Chitral Valley* 2007). The data of 2009 does not show significant changes in the trend of tourist arrivals.⁴ The Government of Pakistan launched a series of public and private initiatives in order to encourage and revitalize the tourist attraction, improving the state of affairs in tourism sectors. 2007 was declared the "Year of Tourism" considering it as an effective industry. Despite this innovative campaign, the numbers continued to decrease during 2008 (World Economic Forum 2011), ranking Pakistan 103 out of 124 countries to visit: the main reasons were related to the low level of security,

¹ Ministry of Tourism Pakistan, 2006.

² In 2005 the international tourist arrivals in Pakistan are 798,000 while India shows an amount of almost 4,000,000.

³ (WEF) Report "Analysis Tourism Management in Pakistan."

⁴ United Nations World Tourism Organization.

low priority for travel and tourism industry (including travel infrastructure), as well as the low level of tourism infrastructures and facilities (such as hotel accommodation) compared with other international standards. After 2009⁵ the situation worsened, leading in 2011 to a downfall of the Pakistan ranking to 125 over 139 countries (World Economic Forum 2011). In addition to external reasons, related to the world economic crisis, there were also dramatic local events: the floods in July 2010 made millions of people homeless in Pakistan and took serious toll on hotels, motels, bridges, roads, and houses, further contributing to the collapse of the tourism industry in the country. Apart from these exceptional events, the main disadvantages are more or less the same over the years.⁶ Despite the difficult scenario, this country deserves unique forceful methods to help strengthen its tourist industry. For example, one should mention the competitiveness of the price with regard to the travel and tourism industry (ranking Pakistan 35 over 139 countries), as well as in cultural resources, World Heritage, and cultural sites, where Pakistan ranks 29 out of 139. Also creative industries' exports rank a respectable position (33/139): as will be discussed below, this aspect could represent one of the main keys for future touristic development in Multan.

4.2 Improving Tourism in Pakistan: An Open Challenge

Historically, Pakistan is one of the most ancient lands, with strong cultural and historical roots, that have to be preserved from the rapid transformations taking place (*The early history of Multan* 1963). When compared with other South Asian countries such as India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, Pakistan shows a lower position in tourism arrivals. Actually India boosts its incomes from tourism, having ranked 68 out of 139 (unlike Pakistan, 125/139) and 12 out of 26 countries in the Asia Pacific region (whereas Pakistan remains 24/26). From a comparison on different parameters between India and Pakistan, India shows a better attitude on behalf of the population towards foreign visitors, as well as a stronger government prioritization towards travel and tourism. Along with China, India is also well assessed for its natural and cultural resources (ranking 8/139 and 24/139), with many World Heritage sites, strong creative industries, and many international fairs and exhibitions. India also has reasonable air and ground transport infrastructure; however some aspects remain underdeveloped, with fewer hotel rooms per capita compared

⁵ 2009 is also a particular year due to the beginning of the world crisis that affected many different contexts and countries, not only from the economical point of view.

⁶ Policy rules and regulations (such as prevalence of foreign ownership, foreign ownership restrictions, Visa requirements) have been ranked in an average of 119/139; for safety and security (business cost of terrorism) Pakistan is 138 over 139. For the affinity for travel and tourism, it ranks 135/139, and for facilities as the quality of general hotel rooms, Pakistan deserves the position 131/139. Prioritization of travel and tourism and effectiveness of marketing and branding is also in a very low position.

to international standards. Pakistan should also increase such aspects: a widespread network of fairs and exhibitions, for example, could actually represent further valid reasons for international arrivals in the country; furthermore in 2009, the WEF ranked Pakistan as one of the top tourist destinations for its World Heritage sites. In 2010, to promote Pakistan's unique and various cultural heritage, the PTDC launched a large campaign, including events such as fairs and religious festivals, regional sporting events, various arts and craft shows, folk festivals, and the opening of several historical museums (Tourism Events in Pakistan in 2010, PTDC website). Nevertheless, unfortunately Pakistan is not well advertised regarding the level of safety (World Economic Forum 2012), and such data damages the country's image with major impact on tourism, obscuring its qualities related to its very good position in South Asia for tourists' attractions, deep culture, and heritage sites. All these data are signs of the necessity to highlight and improve the significance in these areas, by making available supportive business opportunities, as well as involving public and private stakeholders in planning, organizing, and implementation of tourism plans.

4.3 A Role for Multan, the City of Saints

Among the different initiatives undertaken for the revitalization of the arrival of tourists in the country, in 2006, The Guardian released a report titled *The Top Five Tourist Sites in Pakistan*: the five sites were Taxila, Lahore, the Karakoram Highway, Karimabad, and Lake Saiful Muluk (*The Top Five Tourist Sites in Pakistan; The Guardian* 2006). In 2007 the Prime Minister launched the *Visit Pakistan* marketing campaign, in order to promote Pakistan's unique and varied cultural heritage. In the general absence of numerous tourists in the country, the travel retail providers looked to package their tours in a way that increasingly attracted specialized visitors wanting to visit for niche reasons. Specialist packaged tours included adventure tourism in the Himalayas, ecotourism, cultural tourism, horse safari tours, and bird-watching tours. Art workshops, hiking and trekking tours, hunting packages, and rock climbing tours were also featured strongly among the proposals. A potential reevaluation of the different touristic itineraries, based on the strengthening of specialized tourism for each individual place to visit, could actually represent a focal strategy for the touristic development of Pakistan, identifying the unique culture, history, and leisure amenities of each province and encouraging provincial exchanges. A series of initiatives should be strengthened, such as publicizing local festivals and sporting events through the media and the tourist information centers; improving access, signs, and facilities at tourist sites; and developing budget-priced accommodation and camping sites. This strategy could satisfy every kind of tourist, both for cultural or natural reasons, having religious or adventure-related aims and interest in archeology or business. Among the *Top Five* of The Guardian, Taxila could be the center for archeology; the Karakoram Highway is a great landscape attraction, being the only way to the tourist attractions of the Northern Areas,

connecting with China, and being the highest road in the world (5,000 m); Karimabad is the tourist oasis for excellence; Lake Saiful Muluk defines an important natural destination; while Lahore is the cultural capital of the country. In this framework of niche travelers, Multan, one of the most ancient living cities of Southwest Asia and today the sixth largest city in Pakistan, could certainly play a strategic role in this national network. The original city comprised of the Citadel, or Fort (now known as Qila Qasim Bagh), and a Walled City is like an open book of history for all the subcontinents where every invader, from Alexander, through to the Mughals, right up to the British, has fought for its control. Throughout history Multan has maintained its position of a sociopolitical and religious hub, spread over a period of almost 5,000 years. Multan has always been a place of worship, with people coming for pilgrimages from all over the subcontinent: also known as the city of saints and shrines, it gathers in one place more tombs of saints and Sufis (highly regarded here) than anywhere else on earth.⁷ Indeed, this city was an important center of learning and pilgrimage for many cultures: the base of the Hindus was the Temple of the Sun, in Qila Qasim Bagh. The rise of Islam strongly influenced the city of Multan, becoming the first center of Muslim culture in the subcontinent and the hub of the Sufis, even when the rest of the Punjab continued under Hindu rule; several tombs and shrines are outstanding examples of pre-Mughal Muslim architecture (from the sixteenth century). Despite the similarities of Muslim and Hindu heritage, indeed, a fierce dichotomy in religion, languages, social customs, education, and ideology is still readable in the existing cultural heritage of this site. The province of Multan has always played an important role in the area, also due to the fertility of its rivers and agricultural produce, as well as the prosperity of trade and commerce. Multan lies in South Punjab, near the River Chenab: this strategic position, in the geographical center of Pakistan and along the major nodes of interest, makes this city a potential destination for tourism and cultural heritage, not only of great interest, but even easily accessible and potentially well linked from all over Pakistan by road, rail, and air. In consideration, the main touristic route identified by The Guardian list of top places to visit could be improved and completed by adding Multan and Karachi. While Karachi could be the capital of leisure, shopping, dining, and recreational activities, the religious heritage of Multan, with Buddhist, Sikh, and Muslim shrines, identifies it as the potential religious capital of the country. Its rich culture, influenced by different civilizations that flourished here leaving their imprints, provides an appeal for Multan that is hard to match in other parts of the world. Such a role as an important religious capital should be improved by developing a wide range of religion-based programs and even exploiting existing events, such as the annual Multan Sufi festival.

⁷ TDCP (Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab).

4.4 Critical Aspects: A Framework of Different Cases

All around the world, religious tourism represents a potential powerful tool, capable of attracting huge flows of tourists and new opportunities for socioeconomic development. Despite their nature of little villages, with nothing of the rich cultural heritage of Multan, famous European religious places, such as Fatima, or Lourdes, have become pillars in the principal religious itineraries, basing their entire economy on tourism-related activities, while Multan is not yet taking advantage of its great touristic potential as a main religious destination of the country. Nevertheless, this situation could totally change by introducing and improving appropriate policies of intervention related to restoration projects, urban planning, and high-quality facilities. A look at some of the maps available on the Web sites, presenting some services (such as high-quality international hotels), shows how even the appearance, concerning the international advertising for tourism in Multan, should be significantly improved. A comparison with other touristic cities in the national framework has revealed the low level of services offered by Multan with respect to these places. Islamabad, for example, despite counting far fewer places of interest, presents a much higher quantity of tourists than Multan, offering many more tourist facilities. Another interesting case concerns the comparison with Karachi: despite a population ten times lower than Karachi (i.e., 13 million people) and a clearly smaller urban surface, Multan shows a level and number of historical and cultural places to visit that have nothing to envy to the great Karachi. Despite this, Karachi registers a much higher number of tourists compared to Multan. These cases bring us back to the main point, the very high potential of Multan for a significant touristic development, as well as its present impossibility to fully exploit such great potential.

4.5 The Touristic Development in the Multan Walled City

The numerous monuments inside the old city primarily comprise tombs, shrines, mosques, temples, gateways, city walls, and fort walls. Many of them are located within the Walled City of Multan and Qila Qasim Bagh, whereas others, also of great interest, are outside the Walled City. The proposed interventions aim to develop tourism through an optimum use of Multan's natural, cultural, and historical resources, which would also impact positively on the environment, as well as on the economy, increasing employment opportunities and stimulating the entrance of foreign capitals into the country. In order to grow into a major economic generator and labor-intensifying industry, the tourist sector in Multan should be developed for domestic as well as for foreign tourism: both kinds, with their expenditure in local communities, play an important role in the growth of tourism in Pakistan, contributing to the economic development of the area. The first intervention is related to the creation of three touristic itineraries in the Walled

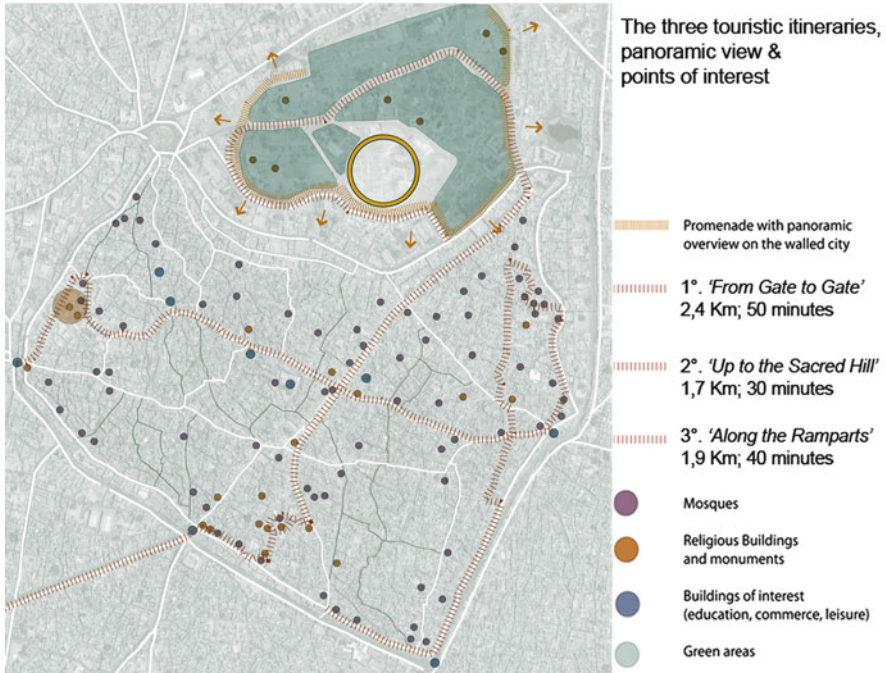


Fig. 4.1 The three touristic itineraries; panoramic view and points of interest



Fig. 4.2 Proposal for the reorganization of Akbar Street

City (Fig. 4.1 shows paths, length, and duration of each one). The first one, from Haram Gate to the Fort, passes through the *cardo*, with a rich concentration of bazaars. A proposal for the reorganization of the square in front of Haram Gate has been developed, together with a reassessment of Akbar Street (Fig. 4.2) which, connecting the station with the Haram Gate, could become a boulevard model through a significant reduction of private motorized traffic with the introduction of public transport by the new shuttle (see Chap. 16) and improvement of the

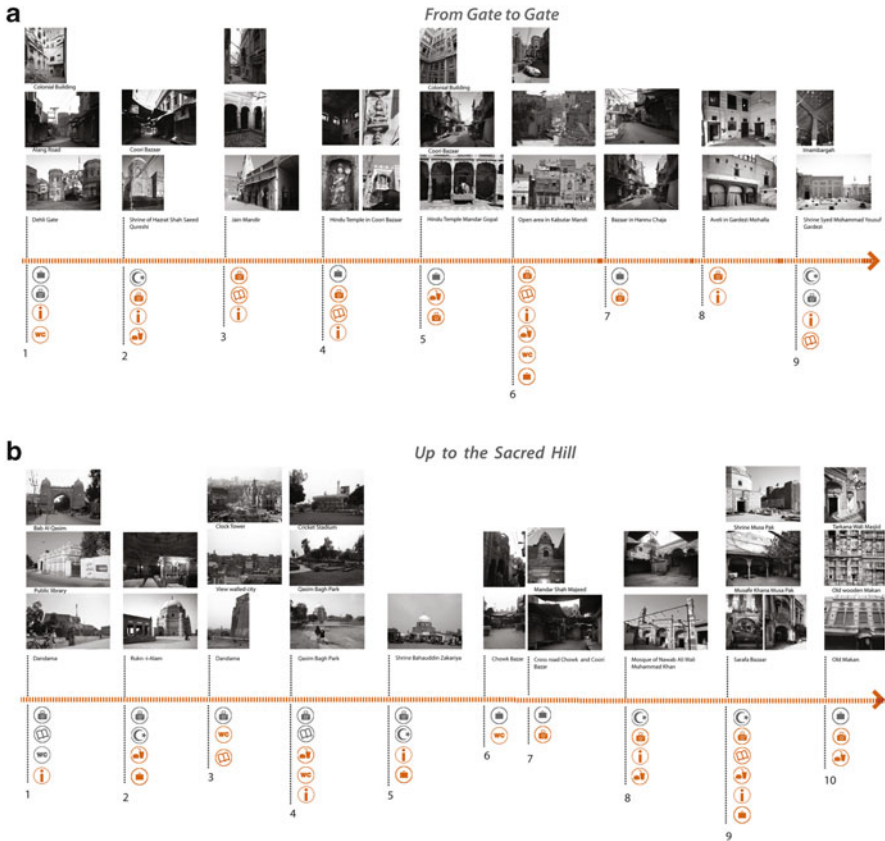


Fig. 4.3 (a, b) Monuments, architectures, and points of interest along the first and second itinerary. Different services available for each stop along the way

pedestrian accessibility. Arriving by train or by bus in the central station, one could take the shuttle to Haram Gate or walk along the new boulevard, making it an integral part of the first itinerary. The second itinerary starts from the Delhi Gate and passes along the *decumanus*, with a significant presence of tombs, shrines, mosques (including that at the intersection with the *cardo*), and temples, as well as a very well-preserved sacred complex of precious shrines and religious buildings, sited in the Shah Gardez Mohalla, near Bohar Gate the last stop of this path. Both gates are served by the shuttle system. The third itinerary is characterized by a pleasant walking promenade above the wall's ramparts, offering different perspectives of view, and it is part of a project for the improvement of this high walk over the ramparts; it ends at Delhi Gate. At the end of this path, one could continue inside the Walled City, visiting the interesting monuments of the eastern sector. For each itinerary a series of significant points have been identified, such as monuments and touristic and leisure facilities (Fig. 4.3a,b). A more detailed project has been developed along the first itinerary, using four different typologies of signposting

SINAGES POSITION



Fig. 4.4 Different typologies of signage along the first itinerary and possible positions

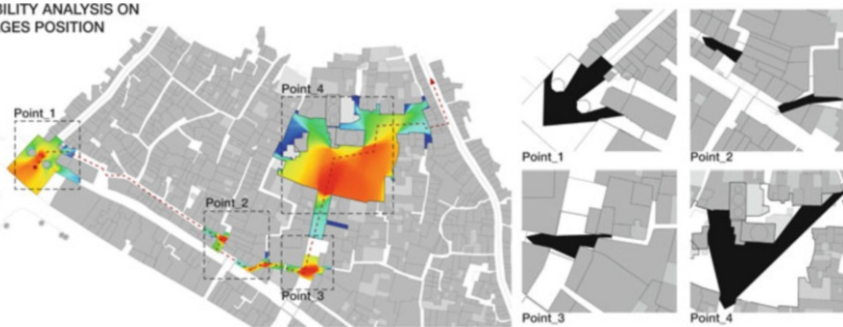
VISIBILITY ANALYSIS ON
SINAGES POSITION

Fig. 4.5 Analysis of the different optical cones for each node of the path, aimed at the identification of the points with best visibility (*warmer colors*)

to guide the tourist: the first type would be placed at the beginning of each itinerary, offering information about the whole path; the second is the information board, in front of each significant religious or cultural building, that would give information of each building; the third typology, placed in correspondence of possible deviations, represents the directing system for each itinerary; and finally, the fourth kind would provide information about the location of tourist facilities (not only hotels, restaurants, bars, and info points but also museums, festivals, and location of craft activities), and this would be integrated in all the itineraries (Fig. 4.4). For a correct choice of the sites for each signpost, a specific analysis, made with specific software, has been developed on different optical cones in order to locate the points along the way with optimum visibility. This study has analyzed each node of the path characterized by a change of direction, identifying the areas that provide the best visibility for the signposts (Fig. 4.5). A series of architectural suggestions and references have been considered for the most significant religious, historic, and architectural hot spots, as well as for empty urban spaces inside the Walled City, reusable as new public areas for leisure and rest and provided with info points (Fig. 4.6). Many courtyards and terraces existing in the Walled City, identified as



Fig. 4.6 Suggestions for the touristic use of empty urban spaces, for leisure, rest, and information centers



Fig. 4.7 (a, b) References of tourism facilities in courtyards and terraces of ancient buildings developed in the Islamic culture



Fig. 4.8 Casa Nova, Franciscan house for pilgrims



Fig. 4.9 (a, b) Christ Church Guest House

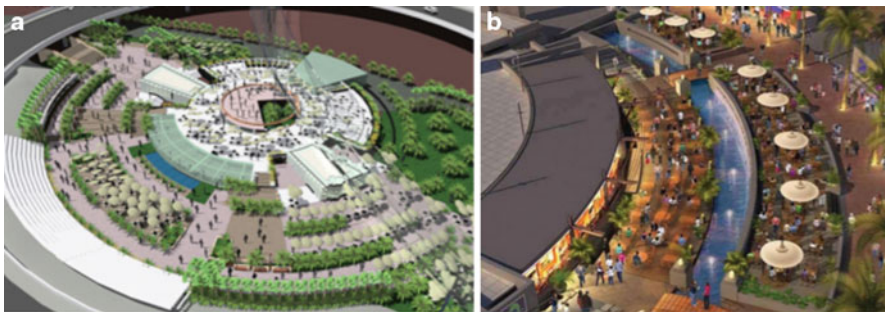


Fig. 4.10 (a, b) Project for the Port Grand Food and Entertainment Complex, Karachi, 2011

spaces of great architectural potential, could be renovated taking a cue from the rich and wide Islamic architectural tradition, interesting cases where ancient buildings of high value have been renovated and used for tourism facilities (Fig. 4.7a,b). With regard to eventual accommodation, a series of references have been specifically identified for the possible development of particular typologies of hostels, specifically thought for religious devotees and often organized in structures already existing in close proximity to significant sacred monuments (Figs. 4.8 and 4.9a,b). Finally, despite the great importance of religion in Multan, this city is not only the “city of saints” but also an industrial city, producing fertilizer and processing textiles (as for cotton products). The industrial vocation of Multan is related to the potential improvement of the touristic sector, characterized by the production of local handicrafts, ranging from ceramics to carpets, among others. This important characteristic could represent the basis for the introduction in Multan of creative workshops, fairs, and exhibitions aimed at the discovery, learning, and promotion of local handicrafts, products, and traditions. An interesting case is the city of Karachi that, in 2011, was invested by a huge project, the *Port Grand Food and Entertainment Complex* (Figs. 4.10a,b, 4.11, and 4.12a,b,c,d): a recreational area built in the center along the waterfront of the nineteenth-century Native Jetty



Fig. 4.11 Qasim Bagh area, Multan

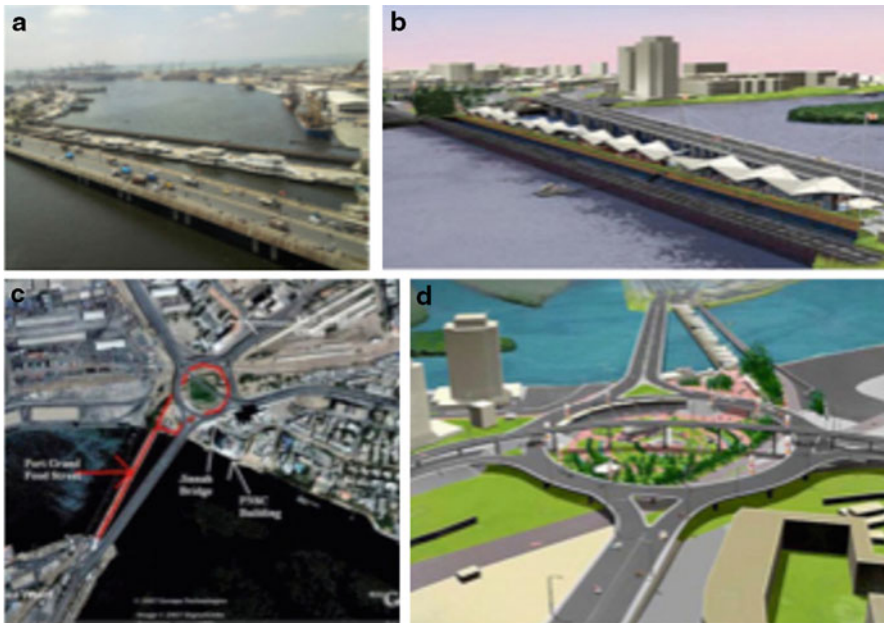


Fig. 4.12 (a–d) The Port Grand Food and Entertainment Complex, Karachi, 2011. Different views of the project

Bridge; the complex was expected to attract up to 5,000 visitors a day, reflecting the shared image of Karachi as a capital of leisure and major hub of shopping, dining, and recreational activities. This project could represent an architectural and functional point of reference for Multan, as also investigated in the chapter *Microcredit System for Building Rehabilitation and Strengthening Arts and Crafts*, in particular for the area of Qasim Bagh (Fig. 4.11): since its destruction, in the nineteenth century, this place lost the main part of its historic treasures; its actual importance is due to the presence of the British obelisk and two shrines that represent the epitome of the local culture of Muslim South Asia, where Islam spread through the Sufi teachers (the Sheikhs). Over time, a stadium has been built in the Fort area and the green spaces nowadays offer a pleasant promenade with a panoramic view on the Walled City below. Following the virtuous case of Karachi, even Qasim Bagh, a point of great potential for the city, *virgola* could be reconsidered as a strategic place to host periodical fairs at different times of the year, *virgola* reflecting the local culture and customs, as well as attracting a specialized kind of tourism. It could also be used as a daily local market where farmers exhibit and sell their products and local crafts. These events could be held in cooperation with the hotels and the new tourism facilities in the Walled City.

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