

A Study of Indian Architecture: Reference of Mughal Empire

***Dr. Bhawani Singh Gurjar**

Abstract

As you go through the cities of Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, Mumbai, Calcutta, and the southern part of India, you see many beautiful architecture. Some of them are historical sites, palaces, sanctuaries, churches, mosques, and places of remembrance. They established themselves in considerable numbers both before and after the coming of Christ. This engineering, which stands strong and raised and helps us recall that glorious history that was our own, has been a part of many centuries. This is due to the fact that engineering and craftsmanship form an important part of Indian culture. In today's engineering, there are a lot of distinctive features that were developed over a long period of Indian history. The Harappan Civilization's urban centers, which boast exceptional town planning, provide the oldest and most startling evidence of Indian architecture. Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain architectural styles were used in the post-Harappan era. Engineering techniques from the Persian and local cultures were combined throughout the medieval ages. From that point on, the Indian design styles of the West had an effect. Thus, Indian design is a synthesis of indigenous aesthetics and foreign influences, giving it a distinctively new aspect.

Keywords: Harappa, Dravida, Mauryan, Chola, Chalukya, Architecture, Hindu, Buddhist, Islam.

Introduction

Architecture predates the contemporary era. It started as soon as the first caveman started to construct his own dwelling. When man left the natural habits of thick forest coverings, he first started to build and repair his own shelter. In order to create bigger and more protected places, man's creative abilities were aroused, and he started to construct structures with an innate aesthetic sense. Thus, architecture was created, which is a product of human requirements, creativity, building capacity, and labor capability. Architecture adapted the social norms, economic success, and religious practices of many eras as well as the local and regional cultural traditions. Therefore, studying architecture enables us to get an understanding of India's rich traditions and cultural diversity. In diverse areas and regions of the nation, Indian architecture varies. The growth of Indian architecture was typically influenced by numerous large and significant historical changes, apart from these evident and natural evolutions from the pre-historic times. The rise and fall of powerful dynasties and empires on the sub-continent naturally had an impact on the development and character of Indian architecture, as did the effect of the nation's many regions. Let's examine the method used to

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assess Indian architecture. India's history, culture, and religion all have a strong influence on the country's architecture. With the passage of time, Indian architecture developed and absorbed the many influences that resulted from India's centuries-long dialogue with other parts of the globe on a global scale. The oldest known structures from India date to approximately 7000 BC and are located in Mehragahr. However, the Harappan era in northern India, which began about 2500 BC, is when the first true stone construction emerged (modern Pakistan). The Harappans constructed large towns with paved streets, fortifications, public baths, and warehouses. However, it took about two thousand years after the fall of the Harappan civilisation, around 2000 BC, for anybody to construct a sizable stone structure in India. In the year 250 BC, Indian builders did start constructing large structures once again, although at first they used wood. No one in India understood how to construct large stone structures securely. Initially, architects constructed solid stone structures, which were essentially earth mounds encased in stone or brick, similar to the previous ziggurats in West Asia and the pyramids in Egypt or Peru. These structures were referred to as stupas. Soon after, about 200 BC, builders started excavating Buddhist temples into cliff faces rather than using stone for construction. This was a nice starting point since it is simpler. But in 350 AD, under the Gupta era, Indian builders finally started to construct stone temples. The majority of them were Hindu temples. Particularly in southern India, builders constructed better and better stone temples between 350 and 1000 AD, while in northern India they continued to carve new temples into the sides of cliffs at Ellora and Elephanta. Indian architects improved gradually as they constructed temples. Architects started using mortars to keep the stones together about 500 AD. Temples have towers above them and columns around them. Indian builders started using iron beams in lieu of wood ones about the year 1000 AD. When the Abbasid conquerors arrived in India in 1100 AD, the majority of the northern population converted to Islam. As a result, Indian builders constructed many Islamic mosques, often using remnants of demolished Hindu temples to demonstrate their victory over Hinduism. However, residents in southern India continued to build larger Hindu temples with more elaborate carvings.

Mughal Architectural

The Indo-Islamic architectural style flourished throughout the Mughal era (1526–1857), dominating the landscape in the northern regions of the Indian subcontinent, including Delhi, Agra, and the Lahore area. Under the Delhi Sultanate, India had already seen colossal buildings that beautifully portrayed the fusion of Indian and Turkish architectural forms by the 15th century. We shall talk about the Mughal Period's art and architecture in this post. The Mughal style of architecture added a new dimension to tomb construction.

These are constructed on platforms and encircled by beautifully landscaped gardens with decorative fountains. The mosque at Fatehpur Sikri, which has three domes measuring 290 feet by 470 feet and two royal graves, is a well-known example. The lovely gardens that were created around the tombs and other structures during the Mughal era represented a distinctive architectural development. Jahangir and Shah Jahan, respectively, created the Shalimar Gardens in Kashmir and Lahore. The Mughals supported India's cultural and architectural development. This essay focuses on the Mughal dynasty's architectural advancements.

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Some of the most famous Architecture created during the Mughal era are

- Taj Mahal – It was built by Shah Jahan between 1632 and 1653, in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recognized the Taj Mahal as a World Heritage Site in 1983. It is located in Agra.
- Red Fort – UNESCO designated it as the World Heritage Site in 2007. It was built by Shah Jahan when he decided to move the capital from Agra to Delhi. It was the residence of Mughal rulers.
- Shalimar Gardens – It is a 40-acre garden built by Shah Jahan in 1642. It was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1981.
- Jama Masjid – Built by Shah Jahan. The construction was completed in 1656.
- Badshahi Mosque – At the time of completion in 1673, it was the largest mosque in the world. It was built during the reign of Aurangzeb.
- Humayun’s Tomb – It was built in 1570 in memory of Emperor Humayun, it was declared as the world heritage site in 1993.

Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate the numerous Mughal architectural
2. To highlight the key characteristics of Mughal architecture,
3. To recognize the evolution of architecture under different Mughal emperors.
4. To concentrate on the Mughal Emperors' Period Development of Mughal Architecture Skills

Methodology

The study is supported by secondary data. Given the nature of the current research, secondary sources have to be used to gather material for this exploratory and descriptive paper. Research studies, books, journals, newspapers, current academic working papers, and websites of the Indian government were used to gather secondary data.

Features & Architectural Development of Mughal Architecture

Mughal patronage led to the magnificent but elegant architecture becoming increasingly elaborate. The Mughal architectural style blends elements of Persian, Turkish, and Indian architecture to create a unique Indo-Islamic aesthetic. Several imposing forts, mosques, and mausoleums were built under their rule, along with magnificent cities like Fatehpur Sikri and Shahjahanabad.

Important Mughal Architectural Features

1. An architectural fusion of Turkish, Persian, and Indian styles.

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2. A variety of building types, including imposing gateways, forts, mausoleums, palaces, mosques, sarais, etc.
3. Red sandstone and white marble were the main building materials.
4. Particular characteristics, include the Charbagh style (garden plan) of the mausoleums, prominent bulbous domes, thin turrets at the corners, large entrances, lovely calligraphy, arabesque, and geometric patterns on pillars and walls, and royal halls supported on pillars.

Architecture under different Mughal Emperors:

Babur: Due to his brief rule (1526–1530), which was mostly occupied by war, Babur was only able to leave behind two notable buildings: the Jama Masjid in Sambhal, close to Delhi, and the Kabuli Bagh mosque in Panipat.

Additionally, at Agra, he constructed Ram Bagh, the first Charbagh-style Mughal Garden in India (1528).

Humayun: He succeeded Babur, although he fought Sher Shah Suri on a regular basis throughout the duration of his rule. He started building the city of Dinpanah but was unable to complete it. The first majestic Mughal monument was Humayun's Tomb, widely known as the Taj Mahal's forerunner and erected by his widow Hamida Begum under the direction of Persian architect Mirak Mirza Ghiyas. The mausoleum, which is constructed on an elevated platform, combines the artistic styles of India and Persia utilizing red sandstone and white marble. Its style is Persian Charbagh. In 1993, UNESCO designated the tomb as a World Heritage Site. The Taj Mahal, which was constructed following the Charbagh pattern, is the culmination and maybe the most well-known monument.



Figure;1 Image: Humayun's Tomb- Charbagh Style

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Akbar: The Mughal art and architecture saw enormous growth under the reign of Akbar (1556–1605). He created Fatehpur Sikri, the first planned Mughal city, which served as his capital from 1571 until 1585. Some of the significant structures in Fatehpur Sikri include the Buland Darwaza (1576), which was constructed to celebrate Akbar's triumph against the Gujarati rulers, Jama Masjid, Diwan-i-aam, Diwan-i-khaas, Birbal's residence, and the Tomb of Saint Salim Chisti. In Vrindavan, he also constructed the Temple of Govind Dev. The whole city of Fatehpur Sikri (City of Victory), which Akbar later constructed, makes considerable use of the Mughal style's low arches and bulbous domes. The location of Sikri, which was built in 1571, was a reflection of Akbar's thanks to a Muslim saint at Sikri for the birth of his son. Soon after, courtiers erected residences all around the palace and mosque. The rebuilt city remained the imperial capital until it was abandoned in 1585.

Agra Fort:

Located in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, the Agra Fort is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Akbar constructed the majority of the Agra fort between 1565 and 1574. The fort's design makes it abundantly evident that Rajput planning and building were freely included. The Jahangiri Mahal, which was constructed for Jahangir and his family, the Moti Masjid, and the Mena Bazaars are a few of the fort's significant structures. The Jahangiri Mahal is a striking building with a courtyard and double-storeyed halls and chambers around it.



Figure:2:Fatehpur Sikri

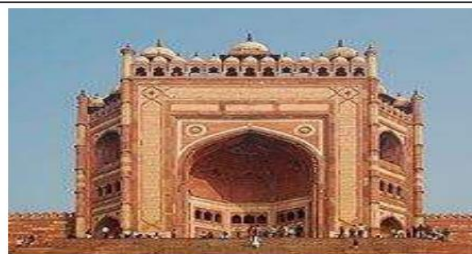


Figure:3: Buland Darwaza

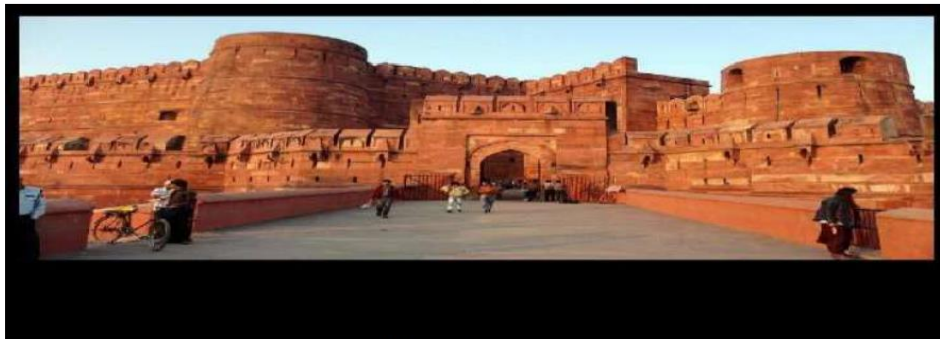


Figure:4:Agra Fort

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Akbar the Great constructed the Buland Darwaza at Agra as a monument to his triumph. Akbar constructed Buland Darwaza, sometimes referred to as the Gate of Magnificence, in 1576 to mark his triumph over Gujarat and the Deccan. It is 50 meters above the ground and 40 meters high. About 54 meters from the ground, the structure's overall height.

The building of Fatehpur Sikri, his capital city close to Agra and a site of Jain pilgrimages, is considered to be Akbar's finest architectural accomplishment. The walled city's construction was begun in 1569 and finished in 1574. Some of the most stunning religious and secular structures could be seen there, attesting to the Emperor's goal of establishing social, political, and religious unification. The enormous Jama Masjid and the little Tomb of Salim Chisti served as the principal places of worship. The royal ladies resided in the Haramsara, the royal seraglio at Fatehpur Sikri. The entrance to the Haramsara is located on the Khwabgah side and is divided from it by a line of cloisters.

According to Abul Fazl, at Ain-i-Akbari, the Harem was guarded by older and active women within, eunuchs were positioned outside the enclosure, and loyal Rajput guards were stationed at a suitable distance.

The biggest palace in the Fatehpur Sikri seraglio, connecting to the smaller haramsara sections, is Jodha Bai's Palace. The main entry is two stories tall and projects out from the front to resemble a porch and lead to a recessed entrance with a balcony. Inside, a quadrangle is encircled by rooms. Hindu sculptures of various types are incorporated into the room's columns as decorations.



Figure:5:Jami Masjid, Fatepur Sikri



Figure:6:Tomb of Sheikh Salim Chishti (1478-1572) Fatepur Sikri, Constructed 1580-81



Figure:7:Fatehpur Sikri Port, Capital of Mughal of Empire from 1571-1585

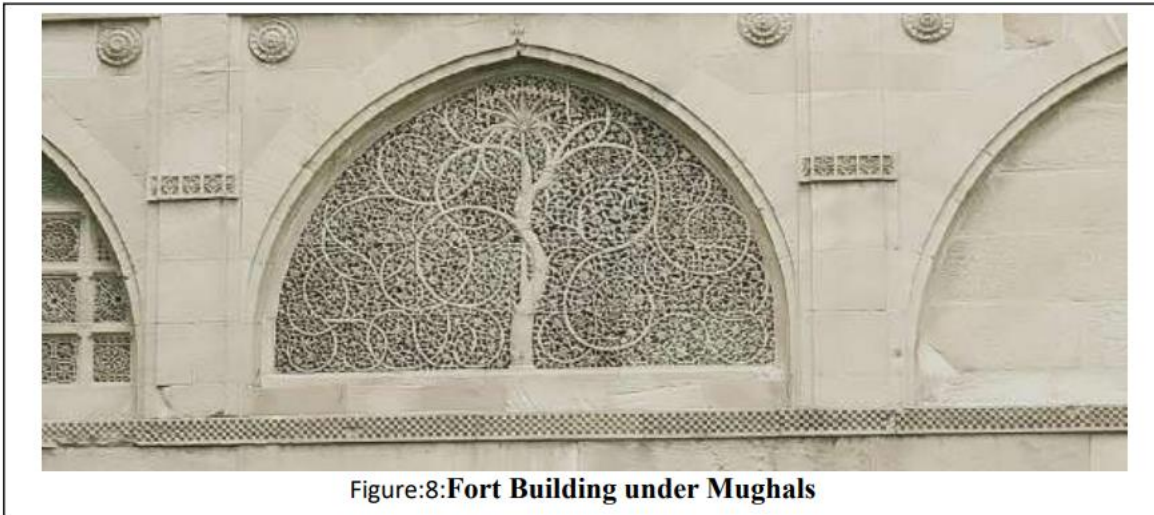
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One of the best specimens of Mughal architecture created in the years 1580 and 1581 is said to be Shaikh Salim Chisti's mausoleum. The tomb is a square marble room with a verandah that was constructed in 1571 at the corner of the mosque enclosure. A beautifully crafted lattice screen surrounds the cenotaph. It preserves the resting site of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti of Ajmer's descendent Khwaja Salim Chisti (1478–1572), a Sufi saint who resided in a cave on the Sikri ridge. Akbar built the monument as a sign of respect for the Sufi saint who prophesied the birth of his son.

Sidi Saiyyed Mosque Built 1573, Ahmedabad, Gujrat

One of Ahmedabad's best architectural works is the Sidi Saiyyed Mosque, which is situated near Laldarwaja. The Sidi Saiyyed Mosque, also called Sidi Saiyyad ni Jali, is well-known. Built in 1572–1573 AD, the mosque (Hirji Year 980). The magnificent architectural heritage of the African diaspora in India was lauded in the construction of this stone monument. During the Mughal era, Sidi Saiyyed, a slave of Sultan Ahmed Shah, constructed it. The mosque is renowned for its distinctive windows with carved stone latticework. It serves as Ahmedabad's equivalent of the Charminar.



Forts and tombs built under the patronage of Mughal rulers have a remarkable similarity to Islamic structures.

- Persian and Indian styles were skillfully combined to produce the high-caliber, precise masterpieces.
- Delicate ornamentation with arches, decorative sections with fine geometrical designs and inscriptions were major highlights. The forts had arrangements for soldier barracks, private and public halls for meetings, horse and elephant stables, and gardens at the entrance.

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- The forts had distinct domes, sleek towers at corners with the magnificent halls in the center supported by pillars and broad entrances. Which includes Shah Jahan's Red Fort as an illustration.
- All of the structures from that era make extensive use of red sandstone and white marbles, and there are decorative colorful tiles, painted motifs on the walls and ceiling, and lavishly carved doors that display the wonderful details and taste of the Emperors.

Shah Jahan:

Jahangir banned the erection of a dome above his grave, hence the Jahangir Tomb in Lahore is devoid of one.

Shah Jahan created exquisite structures to show off his dominance as opposed to the massive monuments his predecessors had constructed. The palaces built under Shah Jahan's reign at Agra, Delhi, and Lahore show how the intensity and uniqueness of this preceding architectural style gave way to a delicate grace and refinement of detail. The Taj Mahal in Agra and his wife Mumtaz Mahal's mausoleum are two examples. The Jama Masjid in Delhi and the Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque) in the Agra Fort are two outstanding structures from his period. Their placement and construction were meticulously chosen to provide a pleasant impression and a sense of vast elegance and well-balanced proportion of elements. Shah Jahan also repaired structures that are encompassed in the Lahore Fort, including the Moti Masjid, Sheesh Mahal, and Naulakha Pavilion. He also constructed a mosque at Thatta bearing his name, the Shahjahan Mosque, albeit it was not constructed in the Mughal style but rather in Safavid and Timurid, which were inspired by Persian design. Shah Jahan also constructed the Red Fort at Shah Jahanabad, which is now Old Delhi, his new capital. The Diwan-i-Aam and Diwan-i-Khas structures, which are unique to the red sandstone Red Fort, are well-known. Shaikh IIm-ud-din Ansari, the emperor's court physician, constructed Wazir Khan Mosque, another mosque

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in Lahore, during his reign. It is renowned for its lavish ornamentation, which nearly entirely covers every interior surface.

Taj Mahal

Shah Jahan, the monarch, erected the Taj Mahal, a World Heritage Site, between 1630 and 1649 in honor of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. Its construction cost 32 million rupees, took 22 years, 22,000 workers, and 1,000 elephants. (equivalent to \$827 million in US dollars in 2015) It is a sizable, white marble edifice with an iwan (an arch-shaped gateway) and a big dome and finial on top that stands on a square foundation. The Shah Jahan sarcophagus, which is positioned off-center in the crypt chamber below the main floor, is the only exception to the longest plane of symmetry that runs across the whole complex. In order to match the mosque facing Mecca that is situated to the west of the main building, this symmetry is extended to the construction of a whole mirror mosque in red sandstone. The building has been ornamented with gem inlay work and Jali work using the large-scale decorative technique known as parchin kari.

The Shalimar Bagh

It is a complex of Mughal gardens that is situated in Lahore, the capital of the Punjab province of Pakistan. The gardens were created at the height of the Mughal Empire's artistic and aesthetic achievements. During the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan, work on the gardens started in 1641 and was finished in 1642. The Shalimar Gardens were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1981 because they represent Mughal garden design at its pinnacle of development.

During the Mughal era, other significant styles included:

Sikh Style: Originating in the Punjab area, the style was influenced by Mughal architecture. The chhatris and arches were noticeable. The domes evolved become a significant component of Sikh architecture. The Golden Temple, which Arjan Dev finished in 1604, is a prime example of Sikh architecture.

Rajput Style: This style combines Islamic and indigenous elements. They constructed magnificent palaces and forts. The Rajput style of architecture made great use of arches, cornices, and hanging balconies.

Under Jahangir, the use of lighter, more muted colors was combined with an increasing level of brushwork finesse. The principal topics were depictions of nature, durbar scenes, portraits, and the king's personal life as it is shown in Jahangirnama. He supported the use of the European aesthetic in his artists' creations. The well-known painters of Jahangir's court were Aqa Riza, Abul Hasan, Mansur, Bishan Das, Manohar, Goverdhan, Balchand, Daulat, Mukhlis, Bhim, and Inayat.

Shah Jahan gave greater attention to the building, yet the paintings were also in great demand. Paintings during this time lost their sensuality and become icy and grandiose.

Only a few paintings from Aurangzeb's court have survived to provide information about the

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evolution of the art during his reign since he did not promote the culture of paintings.

The Rajput miniature painting style was heavily inspired by the Mughal masterpieces. Awadh, Rajputana, Sikh, and Deccan regions also developed new court cultures as a result of the court artists' expansion across the declining Mughal empire.

Conclusion

The Mughal monarchs enjoyed creating things. Such structures were created up till the time of Shahjahan and are regarded as outstanding examples of architectural talent. The art known as Mughal architectural art is a synthesis of Hindu art in India with Islam art from central Asia. Akbar participated in the creation of this work of art. In the same way that his viewpoint in politics was national, so was his viewpoint in architecture. Akbar utilised Hindu artists and art in accordance with his own preferences and resources to construct the structures. Prior to him, during the Delhi Sultanate, Hindu art influenced Islamic art.

The generosity of Akbar made it even stronger. The genesis of Islamic and Hindu art may also be attributed to the bulk of artists being Hindu and to the structures being built to suit the climate of India. Therefore, from the time of Akbar, the art that resulted from the fusion of Hindu and Islamic art may be recognized as a national skill in architecture. Islamic art was used as inspiration for the rounded domes, towers, arches, roofs, columns, and pointed arches used in this architectural technique. Initially, red stone was used, and emphasis was placed on building structures that were both large and strong. Later, however, white marble was used, and efforts were made to make those structures as aesthetically pleasing as possible through carving, the use of gold-silver water, and vibrant designs. With the addition of all of this Mughal architectural talent, the greatest and most magnificent structures were built during this time.

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