



MUGUAL ARCHITECTURE

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The Mughals were great patrons of art and architecture. Under them, architecture regained its place of importance, as new buildings were built with great vision and artistic inspiration.

BABAR

Babur undertook the construction of mosques in Panipat and Rohilkhand, both constructed in 1526 A.D. However, his reign was too short-lived to inspire any new style or technique.

HUMAYUN

Humayun's reign was marked with constant power struggle with Sher Shah Suri. So, he couldn't focus much on art and architecture. He led the foundation of a city named Dinpanah, but couldn't finish it. Persian style became prominent in the architecture of this period.



SHER SHAH

During his brief reign, Sher Shah built few monuments. He built the Qila-eQuhunah (Mosque of the Old Fort) mosque in Delhi. He built the famous Rohtas Fort in Pakistan. He constructed the Sher Shah Suri Masjid in Patna in Afghan style to mark his reign. His period is a transition from Lodhi style to Mughal style of architecture. He also undertook the re-construction and extension of an old Mauryan route and renamed it as Sadak-e-Azam (Great Road) which was later called as Grand Trunk Road. He ensured adequate presence of sarais and trees for travellers. Sher Shah Suri's tomb was built at his birthplace Sasaram. It is made up of red sandstone and is situated inside a lake. The constructions under Sher Shah continued the traditions of the Delhi Sultanate period. After Akbar ascended the throne of Delhi in 1556, the golden period of Mughal art and architecture started.



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AKBAR

Akbar took a keen interest in the development of art and architecture during his reign. The principal feature of the constructions during Akbar's reign was the use of red sandstone. He also introduced the use of 'Tudor arch' (four centred arch). Some of the prominent construction works undertaken during Akbar's reign are described below:

Agra Fort

It was one of the first constructions started during the reign of Akbar. However, most of the structures present inside the fort were done during the reign of Shah Jahan.

Some of the prominent buildings here are:

- Moti Masjid, made by Shah Jahan.
- Diwan-i-aam (Hall of Public audience) by Shah Jahan.
- Diwan-i-khas (Hall of Private audience) by Shah Jahan.
- Jahangiri Mahal
- Sheesh Mahal (Turkish Bath)

The gardens inside the fort are built using the Charbagh style. During the reign of Akbar, more than 5000 women stayed in his harem inside this fort.



AKBAR

Fatehpur Sikri

One of the highlights of Indo-Islamic architecture was the creation of a new capital city by Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri. It has been described as a “frozen moment in history” as the buildings here represent a unique blend of Hindu and Persian styles. Some of the important buildings inside the city are:

1. Buland Darwaza the imposing 40 metred sandstone structure was built in 1576 AD, to commemorate Akbar’s victory over Gujarat. It is the largest gateway of the world.
2. Salim Chisti’s tomb was built in 1581 AD. It has beautiful Jaali work in white marble. It has arabesque patterns with inscriptions of Quranic verses on the walls. It is in the imperial complex which also has Buland Darwaza and Jama Masjid. It was further decorated by Jahangir in 1606 AD.
3. Panch Mahal is a five-storied structure made of columns and is inspired by the concept of Persian badgir (windcatcher)
4. Jodha Bai’s palace or Mariam-uz-Zamani’s palace (Mary of the Age) has beautiful interiors with Hindu motifs of bell and flowers.

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5. Ibadat Khana Akbar used to meet the leaders of different religions here to have discussion.
6. Pachisi Court in the courtyard where Akbar is said to have played chess.
7. Hiran Minar was built in memory of Akbar’s favourite elephant, named Hiran. It also served as lighthouse for travellers. It is uniquely designed and its exterior wall contains tusk like spikes.

JAHANGIR

During the reign of Jahangir, architecture took a back seat as he focused more on paintings and other forms of art. However, he oversaw the construction of some noteworthy monuments including Akbar's tomb in Sikandra. He also built his own tomb at Lahore. Further, he developed a number of gardens during his reign, e.g. the Shalimar Bagh in Kashmir. He also built the Moti Masjid at Lahore.

During the reign of Jahangir, his wife Noor Jahan also undertook some major construction projects, the tomb of Itmad-ud-daulah, father of Noor Jahan, being an excellent example. It was during this time that white marble became the chief building material, replacing red sandstone which had been used till now. The tomb of Itmad-ud-daulah was the first Mughal work made completely of white marble. It also has some of the finest pietra-dura works.

SHAH JAHAN

Under Shah Jahan, Mughal architecture reached its climax. Some of his principal works are described below

1. Taj Mahal
2. Red Fort in Delhi
3. Jama Masjid in Delhi
4. Shalimar Bagh in Lahore
5. City of Shahjahanabad
6. Besides such large scale constructions, one of his finest works was the construction of Peacock Throne that is one of the finest examples of metal work in this period.



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AURANGZEB

During the reign of Aurangzeb, Mughal architecture declined. Being a puritanical, he didn't take an active interest in the pursuit of art and architecture.

MUHAMMAD AZAM SHAH

He was the last of the Mughals to undertake architectural constructions. He built Biwi-ka-Maqbara in memory of his mother Begum Rabia Durani, wife of Aurangzeb. It is situated in Aurangabad and has been described as a poor imitation of Taj Mahal. He also built Zinat Mahal in Delhi in memory of his wife

During the Mughal period, two other styles of architecture developed in the region of Rajasthan and Punjab.

Sikh Style:

Sikh style of architecture developed in the region of modern day Punjab. It was heavily influenced by the Mughal style of architecture. Some of the features of the Sikh school are:

- The use of multiple Chhatris or kiosks on the top of the construction.
- Use of shallow cornices.
- The buildings had fluted domes, which were generally covered by brass and copper guilds for decoration and support.
- The arches were decorated by the use of numerous foliations.
- Example: Shri Harmandir Sahib or Golden temple. It was initiated in 1585 and completed by Arjan Dev in 1604.

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Rajput Style

The Rajput constructions of the period were also influenced by the Mughal style, but were unique in the size and scope of their constructions. They generally undertook the building of imposing palaces and forts. Some of the unique features of Rajput architecture are as follows:

- They introduced the concept of hanging balcony, which were constructed in all shapes and sizes.
- The cornices were built in the shape of an arch such that the shadow took the shape of a bow.



Thank You