

Architectural Development under the Mughal Period

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ABSTRACT

The Mughal period (1526-1857) witnessed the development of the Indo-Islamic architecture at a massive scale, dominating the landscape in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent viz Delhi, Agra and Lahore region. By the 15th century, India had already seen the monumental constructions depicting the beautiful blend of the Indian and Turkish architectural styles under the Delhi Sultanate. In this article, we will discuss the art and architecture during the Mughal Period. The Mughal architecture gave a different dimension to tomb building. These are built on platforms and are surrounded by gardens laid out with ornamental fountains. A famous example is the mosque at Fatehpur Sikri - three domes of 290 ft by 470 ft and with two royal tombs. A unique architectural development in the Mughal time was the beautiful gardens developed around the tombs and other buildings. The Shalimar Gardens in Kashmir and Lahore were developed by Jahangir and Shah Jahan respectively. The Mughals encouraged cultural and architectural growth of India. This paper focus on architectural development in the Mughal dynasty.

Keywords: Mughal Period, Delhi Sultanate, Architecture, Monuments, Fatehpursikri, etc.,

Introduction

Mughal art and architecture, a characteristic Indo-Islamic-Persian style that flourished on the Indian subcontinent during the Mughal empire (1526–1857). This new style combined elements of Islamic art and architecture, which had been introduced to India during the Delhi Sultanate (1192–1398) and had produced great monuments such as the Qutb Minar, with features of Persian art and architecture. Mughal monuments are found chiefly in India, but there are also many remains in Pakistan. This article discusses these distinctive forms of art and architecture as they developed under a succession of Mughal emperors.

The Mughals constructed excellent Forts, Mosques, Mausoleums, Gardens and Cities. Mughal architecture begins with Akbar who displayed great passion for buildings with meticulous planning and constructing splendid edifices. He made the best use of the Hindu and Persian style of architecture. The salient features of Akbar's buildings are the use of red sandstone inlaid with white marble and painted designs on walls and ceiling.

The new Indian Architecture of the Mughal period is called Mughal Architecture. The Mughal architecture was an amalgamation of Persian, Turkic, Timurid Iranian, Central Asian, and Indian Hindu style of architecture.

Mughal architecture first developed and flourished during the reign of Akbar. In this period there was extensive use of red sandstone as a building material. Mughal architecture reached its peak during the rule of Shah Jahan. The decline of Mughal architecture began during the rule of Aurangzeb and post his death. The Mughals were known for building beautiful quadrilateral gardens.

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 analyze the various styles of Mughal architecture
2. To describe the salient features of Mughal architecture
3. To identify the Architectural Development under various Mughal Rulers.
4. To focus on Development of Mughal Architecture Skills in the Mughal Emperors' Period

Methodology

The research is based on secondary data. It's an exploratory and descriptive in nature given the nature of the present study, it was required to collect information from the secondary sources. Secondary information was collected from research studies, books, journals, newspapers, ongoing academic working papers and websites of Government of India.

Mughal Architecture: Features & Architectural Development

Under the patronage of Mughals, the architecture became more grandiose while retaining its elegance. The Mughal architecture is a distinctive Indo-Islamic architectural style which combines the characteristics of the Persian, Turkish, and the Indian style. The marvelous cities like Fatehpur Sikri and Shahjahanabad were established during their reign along with several majestic forts, mosques, and mausoleums throughout their kingdom.

Important Features of Mughal Architecture

1. Blend of Indian, Persian, and Turkish architectural style.
2. Different types of buildings, such as majestic gates (entrances), forts, mausoleums, palaces, mosques, sarais, etc.
3. Building material: Mostly, red sandstone and white marble were used.
4. Specific features such as the Charbagh style (garden layout) of the mausoleums, pronounced bulbous domes, slender turrets at the corners, broad gateways, beautiful calligraphy, arabesque, and geometric patterns on pillars and walls, and palace halls supported on pillars.

Architectural Development under various Mughal Rulers:

Babur: Due to his short reign (1526-1530), most of which was spent in wars, Babur could not leave any significant construction except the mosque of Kabuli Bagh at Panipat and Jama Masjid at Sambhal near Delhi. He also built Ram Bagh, the first Mughal Garden in India (1528) in Charbagh Style located in Agra.

Humayun: He succeeded Babur, but throughout his reign, he was constantly embroiled in a struggle with Sher Shah Suri. He laid the foundation of the city named Dinpanah but could not finish it. Humayun's Tomb, also known as the precursor of the Taj Mahal was the first imposing structure of the Mughals which was built by his widow Hamida Begum and designed by Persian architect Mirak Mirza Ghiyas. The mausoleum built upon a raised platform is a mix of Indian and Persian artistry using red sandstone and white marble. It has a Persian Charbagh style. The tomb was declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993. The Taj Mahal is the climax and therefore perhaps the most famous monument built under the Charbagh layout.



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

Charbagh Style is a Persian style garden layout in which the main building is placed at the center of a quadrilateral garden with shallow water channels neatly dividing the area into smaller park.

Akbar: The reign of Akbar (1556-1605) witnessed immense developments in Mughal art and architecture. He built the city of Fatehpur Sikri which was the first planned city of the Mughals and served as his capital from 1571 to 1585. Buland Darwaza (1576, built to commemorate Akbar's victory over Gujarat kings), Jama Masjid, Diwan-i-aam, Diwan-i-khaas, Birbal's house, Tomb of Saint Salim Chisti are some of the important monuments in Fatehpur Sikri. He also built the Temple of Govind Dev in Vrindavan. Akbar went on to build the entire city of Fatehpur Sikri (City of Victory) in which extensive use was made of the low arches and bulbous domes that characterize the Mughal style. Built in 1571 the choice of the site of Sikri reflected Akbar's gratitude to a Muslim saint at Sikri for the birth of his son. Courtiers soon followed suit and built homes surrounding the palace and mosque. The new city became the capital of the empire, but in 158 it was abandoned.

Agra Fort:

Agra fort is a UNESCO world heritage site in Agra, Uttar Pradesh. The major part of Agra fort was built by Akbar from 1565 to 1574. The architecture of the fort clearly indicates the free adoption of the Rajput planning and construction. Some of the important buildings in the fort are Jahangiri Mahal built for Jahangir and his family, the Moti Masjid, and Mena Bazaars. The Jahangiri Mahal is an impressive structure and has a courtyard surrounded by double-storeyed halls and rooms.

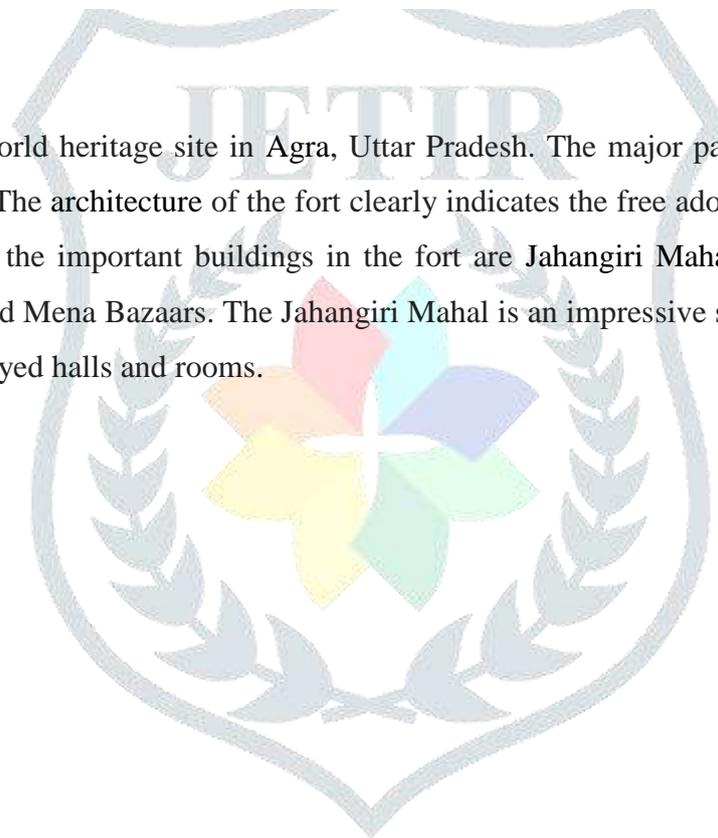




Figure:2:Fatehpur Sikri

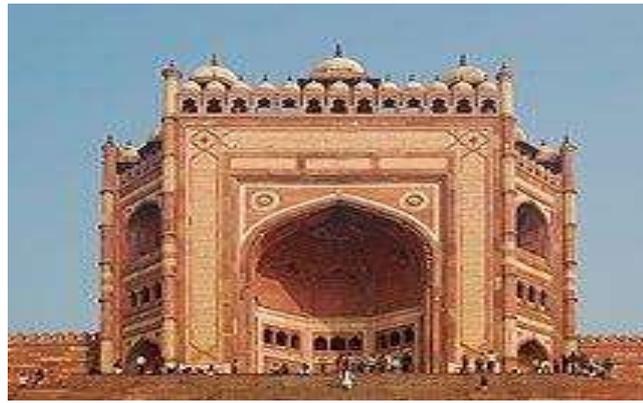


Figure:3: Buland Darwaza

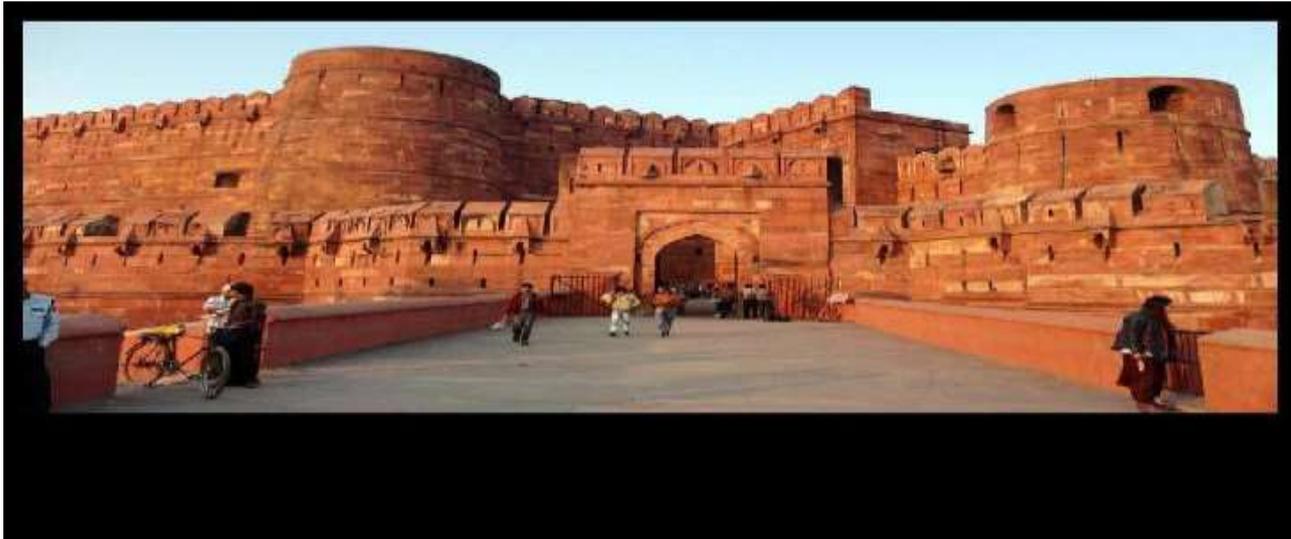


Figure:4:Agra Fort

Buland Darwaza, Agra was built by Akbar the Great to commemorate his victory. Buland Darwaza, also known as the Gate of Magnificence, was built by Akbar in 1576 to commemorate his victory over Gujarat and the Deccan. It is 40 metres high and 50 metres from the ground. The total height of the structure is about 54 metres from ground level.

Akbar's greatest architectural achievement was the construction of Fatehpur Sikri, his capital city near Agra at a trade and Jain pilgrimages. The construction of the walled city was started in 1569 and completed in 1574. It contained some of the most beautiful buildings – both religious and secular which testify to the Emperor's aim of achieving social, political and religious integration. The main religious buildings were the huge Jama Masjid and small Tomb of Salim Chisti. The Haramsara, the royal seraglio in Fatehpur Sikri was an area where the royal women lived. The opening to the Haramsara is from the Khwabgah side separated by a row of cloisters. According to Abul Fazl, in Ain-i-Akbari, the inside of Harem was guarded by senior and active women, outside the enclosure the eunuchs were placed, and at a proper distance there were faithful Rajput guards. Jodha Bai's Palace is the largest palace in the Fatehpur Sikri seraglio, connected to the minor *haramsara* quarters. The main entrance is double storied, projecting out of the facade to create a kind of porch leading into a recessed entrance with a balcony. Inside there is a quadrangle surrounded by rooms. The columns of rooms are ornamented with a variety of Hindu sculptural motifs



Figure:5:Jami Masjid, Fatepur Sikri

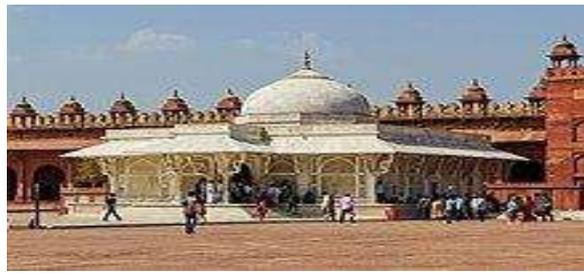


Figure:6:Tomb of Sheikh Salim Chishti (1478-1572) Fatepur Sikri, Constructed 1580-81



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

The tomb of Shaikh Salim Chisti is considered to be one of the finest examples of Mughal architecture built during the years 1580 and 1581. The tomb, built in 1571 in the corner of the mosque compound, is a square marble chamber with a verandah. The cenotaph has an exquisitely designed lattice screen around it. It enshrines the burial place of the Sufi saint, Salim Chisti (1478 – 1572), a descendant of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti of Ajmer, who lived in a cavern on the ridge at Sikri. The mausoleum, constructed by Akbar as a mark of his respect for the Sufi saint, who foretold the birth of his son.

Sidi Saiyyed Mosque Built 1573, Ahmedabad, Gujrat

Sidi Saiyyed Mosque one of the finest Architecture of Ahmedabad located in Laldarwaja Ahmedabad. Sidi Saiyed Mosque popularly known as Sidi Saiyyad ni Jali. The mosque was built 1572-73 AD (Hirji Year 980).It was built with sublime ode in stone to the extraordinary architectural legacy of the African diaspora in India. It was built by Sidi Saiyyed a slave of sultan Ahmed shah during Mughal Rule. The mosque is famous for unique carved stone latticework windows. It's symbolic of Ahmedabad like Charminar to Ahmedabad.

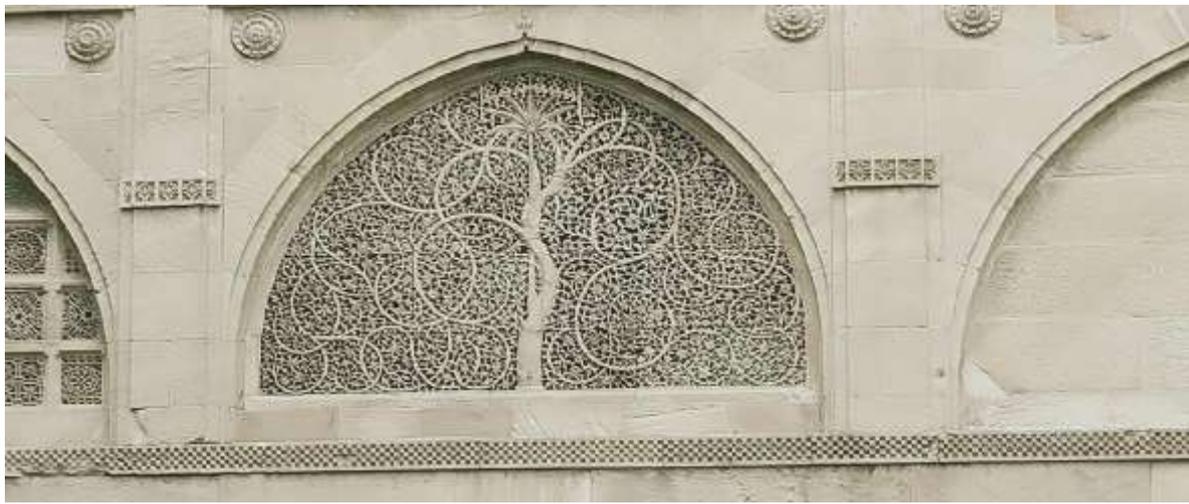


Figure:8:Fort Building under Mughals

Under the patronage of Mughal emperors, the architecture of forts and tombs saw a striking resemblance to Islamic architecture.

- Persian and Indian styles were intelligently fused to create the works of quality and precision.
- Placed in the walled gardened enclosure the forts had distinct domes, sleek towers at corners with the magnificent halls in the center supported by pillars and broad entrances.
- 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. An example of which is the Red Fort by Shah Jahan.
- Use of decorated colored tiles, painted designs on walls and ceiling, profusely carved doorways show the beautiful detailing and taste of the Emperors.
- Extensive use of red sandstone and white marbles is seen in all the buildings of that time.

Shah Jahan: Figure:9”



The Tomb of Jahangir at Lahore does not have a dome as Jahangir forbade construction of a dome over his tomb.

Rather than building huge monuments like his predecessors to demonstrate their power, Shah Jahan built elegant monuments. The force and originality of this previous building style gave way under Shah Jahan to a delicate elegance and refinement of detail, illustrated in the palaces erected during his reign at Agra, Delhi and Lahore. Some examples include the Taj Mahal at Agra, the tomb of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. The Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque) in the Agra Fort and the Jama Masjid at Delhi are imposing buildings of his era, and their position and architecture have been carefully considered so as to produce a pleasing effect and feeling of spacious elegance and well-balanced proportion of parts. Shah Jahan also renovated buildings such as the Moti Masjid, Sheesh Mahal and Naulakha pavilion, which are all enclosed in the Lahore Fort. He also built a mosque named after himself in Thatta called Shahjahan Mosque (not built in the Mughal architecture, but in Safavid and Timurid architecture that were influenced by the Persian architecture). Shah Jahan also built the Red Fort in his new capital at Shah Jahanabad, now Old Delhi. The red sandstone Red Fort is noted for its special buildings-Diwan-i-Aam and Diwan-i-Khas. Another mosque was built during his tenure in Lahore called Wazir Khan Mosque, by Shaikh Ilm-ud-din Ansari who was the court physician to the emperor. It is famous for its rich embellishment which covers almost every interior surface.

Taj Mahal

The Taj Mahal, a World Heritage Site was built between 1630–49 by the emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal . Its construction took 22 years and required 22,000 laborers and 1,000 elephants, at a cost of 32 million rupees. (corresponding to US\$ 827 million in 2015) It is a large, white marble structure standing on a square plinth and consists of a symmetrical building with an *iwān* (an arch-shaped doorway) topped by a large dome and finial.

The building's longest plane of symmetry runs through the entire complex except for the sarcophagus of Shah Jahan, which is placed off centre in the crypt room below the main floor. This symmetry is extended to the building of an entire mirror mosque in red sandstone, to complement the Mecca-facing mosque placed to the west of the main structure. *Parchin kari*, a method of decoration on a large scale-inlaid work of jewels and *Jali* work has been used to decorate the structure

Shalimar Bagh

It is a Mughal garden complex located in Lahore, capital of the Pakistani province of Punjab. The gardens date from the period when the Mughal Empire was at its artistic and aesthetic zenith. Construction of the gardens began in 1641 during the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan, and was completed in 1642. In 1981 the Shalimar Gardens were inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site as they embody Mughal garden design at the apogee of its development.



Figure:10: Tajmahal

Shahi Hammam:



Figure:11:The central chamber of the Shahi Hammam is decorated with frescoes

Shahi Hammam is a Persian-style bath which was built in Lahore, Pakistan, in 1635 C.E. during the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan. It was built by chief physician to the Mughal Court, Ilam-ud-din Ansari, who was widely known as Wazir Khan. The baths were built to serve as a waqf, or endowment, for the maintenance of the Wazir Khan Mosque.

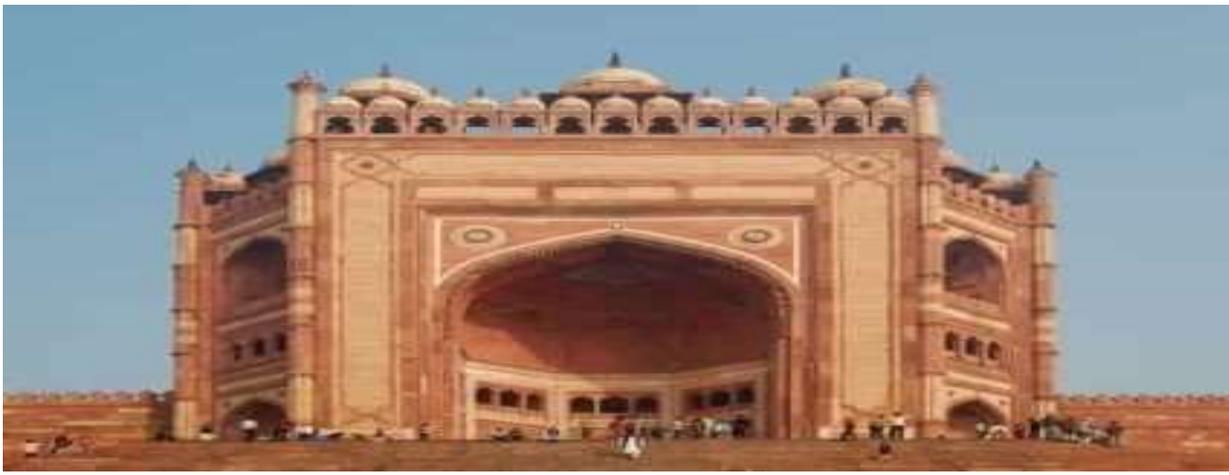


Figure:12:Buland Darwaza- Fatehpur Sikri

Important developments during Akbar's reign:

1. The architecture at Fatehpur Sikri is an excellent blending of Persian, Central Asian, and various Indian (Bengal and Gujarat) styles.
2. Extensive use of red sandstone.
3. Indian elements such as deep eaves, balconies, and kiosks of the Bengal and Gujrat styles blended with Central Asian component of glazed tiles.

Jahangir (1605-1627):

- The prince had a special appreciation for the paintings over architecture. He built the tomb of Itimad-ud-Daula (father of his wife Nur Jahan) displaying the world's finest Pietra-dura works and completed Akbar's tomb at Sikandra.
- He also built the famous Shalimar Bagh in Srinagar, Moti Masjid at Lahore.

Pietra Dura- also called as Parchin Kari is an inlay technique of pictorial mosaic work using cut and fitted, highly polished semi-precious stones as decorative art.



Figure:13:Image: Pirtea Dura in Tai Mahal

Other major styles during the Mughal period were:

Sikh Style: Influenced by the Mughal architecture, the style developed in the Punjab region. The arches and chhatris were prominent. The domes became an important feature in the Sikh architecture. Golden Temple completed by Arjan Dev in 1604 is an epitome of Sikh architecture.

Rajput Style: It blends local and Islamic styles. They built majestic forts and palaces. The hanging balcony, cornices, and arches were used extensively in the Rajput style of architecture.

Under Jahangir, the period saw more and more refinement in brushwork along with the use of lighter and subdued colors. The main themes revolved around the king's own life pictured in Jahangirnama, durbar scenes, portraits, and portrayal of nature. He encouraged his artists to emulate the European style as well in their pieces of work. Aqa Riza, Abul Hasan, Mansur, Bishan Das, Manohar, Goverdhan, Balchand, Daulat, Mukhlis, Bhim, and Inayat were the famous painters in the court of Jahangir.

Shah Jahan focussed more on the architecture, though the paintings flourished as well. The paintings of this period lost their sensuousness and became cold and opulent.

Aurangzeb did not encourage the paintings' culture, and only a few survive from his court to give an account of the development of the art in his reign.

The Mughal paintings greatly influenced the Rajput miniature painting style. Moreover, as the Mughal empire was on the decline, the court artists spread throughout the kingdom and gave rise to new court cultures in the provinces of Awadh, Rajputana, Sikh, and Deccan.

Conclusion

Mughal emperors were fond of making buildings. Till the period of Shahjahan such buildings were made, which are considered as excellent samples of architectural skills till yet. The art which is called as Mughal architectural art is the combined form of Islam art of mid Asia and Indian Hindu art. Akbar contributed in the production of this art. Akbar's point of view was national in political field, similarly his point of view was national in architecture's field and according to his own desire and facility used Hindu's art and artists in making the buildings. Before him in the period of Delhi Sultans, Islamic art was affected by Hindu's art. Akbar's generosity increased it more. Be in majority of Hindu artists and to construct the buildings according to Indian climate were also become responsible for the origin of Islamic and Hindu's art. So, from the reign of Akbar the art which was developed from the combination of Hindu and Islamic art can be accepted National Architecture Skill. In this architecture skill rounded domes, towers, arch, roofs, columns and pointed arches were taken from Islamic art. Initially, Red stone was used and focus was given on constructing the building very big and strong also, but later on the use of white marble in buildings was included and tried to make those most beautiful by carving, the use of **gold-silver** water and colorful designs. On adding all of this Mughal Architecture Skill became the best and more beautiful buildings were constructed in this period. The first

building constructed in the reign of Akbar is **Humayun ka Makabara** in Delhi. It was made by the stepmother of Akbar on getting the services of Persian artist **Meeran Mirza Gias**. There is an effect of Persian art on it. The art of this building of long necked tomb can be compared with Timur and **Bibi Khanam ka Makbara** in Samarkand. There is no doubt, the buildings made in Fatehpur Sikri are considered as the best among all the buildings of Mughal period. Historian **Smith** has written: "As Fatehpur Sikri nothing could be made before it and it is also not possible to be made after it. It is a romance designed on the stones." Akbar also constructed few forts, tombs and fountains etc., on Atak, Medta and Ajmer etc. and other places. The Charbagh is constructed around the tomb. To make beautiful buildings on making the gardens is the main speciality of Mughal architecture skills. That speciality was also used in this tomb. The drains are made for the flow of water from the main room of buildings. There are set of fountains in between it. Roads are made for coming and going in tomb. Among buildings initially constructed by Mughal the tomb of Humayun is the most beautiful. It is also very strong, because of which it is fully secured till yet. Mughal architecture is a unique Indo-Islamic architectural style that flourished in northern and central India from the 16th to the 18th centuries under the patronage of Mughal monarchs. It's a stunningly symmetrical and ornate blend of Persian, Turkish, and Indian architecture.

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