

The Mughal architecture shows cultural interactions with the neighbouring regions and it also evolved a style which is an assimilation of sensual architectural traditions. Kh. Farrukh Riaz Butt peeps into some of the wonderful creations of that period

The Mughal domination of the Indo-Pak sub-continent marks the beginning of a new era of great intellectual and artistic traditions.

They brought perfection in every aspect of arts and crafts. Descended from the family of Taimur, the Mughals gave an impetus to all form of socio-cultural activities. In the early years, the political conditions were not stable and therefore no work of excellence was produced. As time went on, a form of architectural style reflecting the aesthetic sense of the ruling dynasty developed — which is undoubtedly the most important style of South Asia. Several factors were responsible for the development of the art.

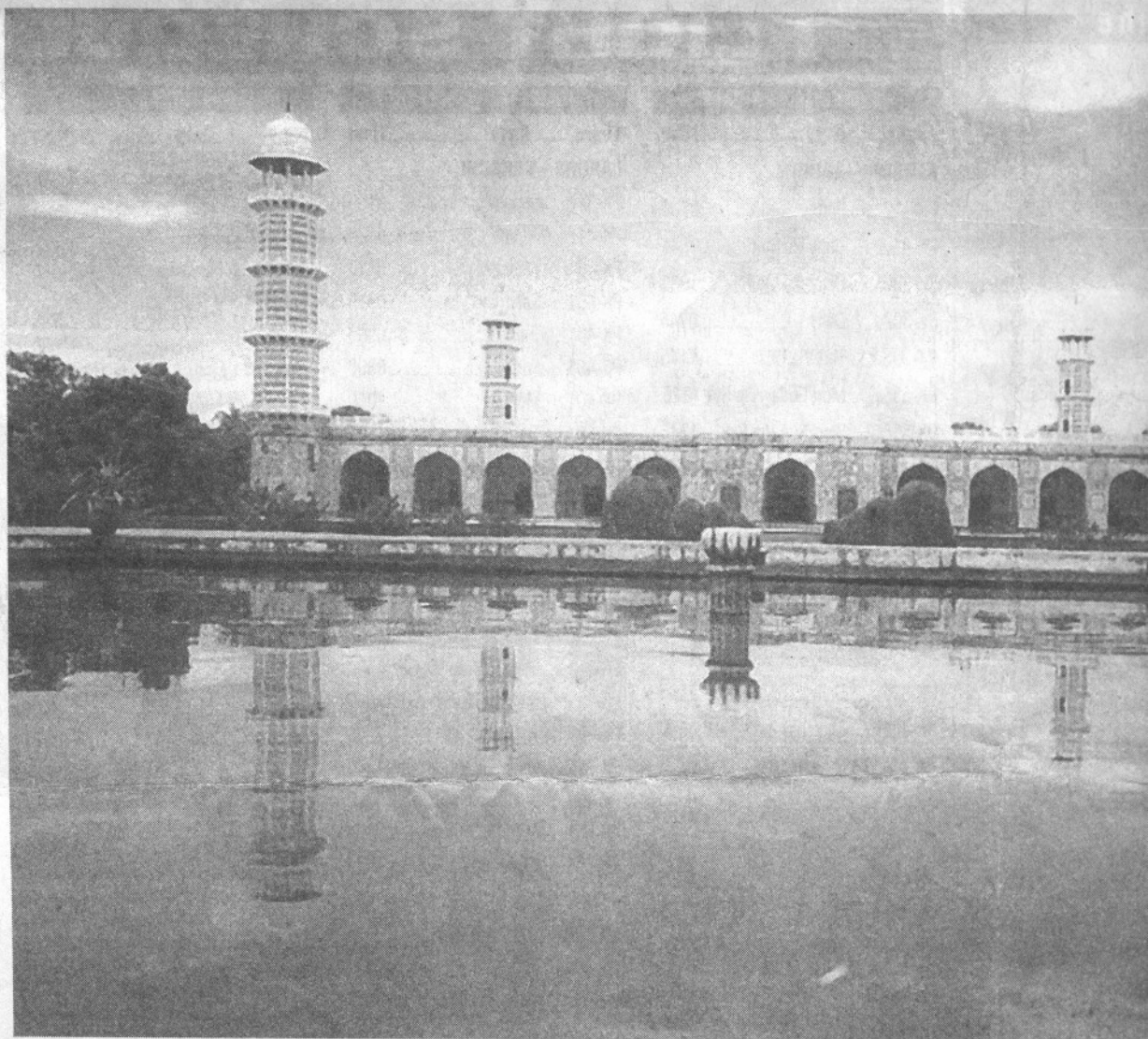
The power and wealth of the empire and the relatively peaceful conditions greatly contributed to the development of this art. But the main factor was the imperial patronage and the aesthetic nature of the emperor. The Mughals built varieties of buildings such as forts, palaces, mosques, tombs, gardens, and caravansarais. The architecture of the Mughal period can be divided into two phases.

The buildings constructed of red sandstone represent the first phase during the reign of Akbar and Jahangir while the second phase is represented by the marble buildings of Shah Jahan.

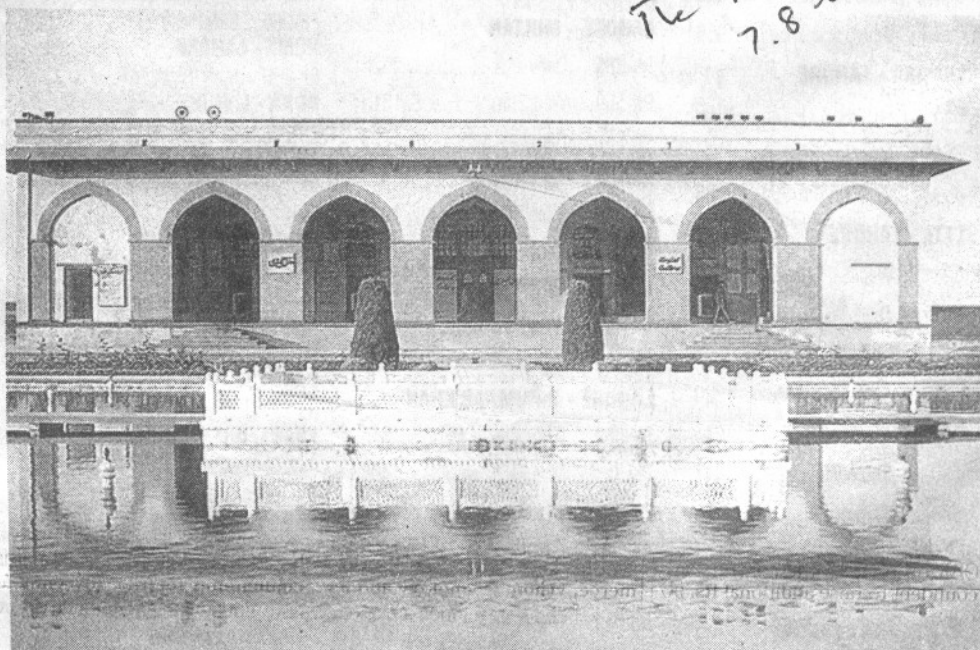
The Mughal rule was interrupted for a short while by Sher Shah Suri, who ousted Humayun and occupied the throne of Delhi. Having experience of the building art at Sasaram, he greatly effected the future of Muslims architecture as can be verified from his monumental fort at Rohtas near Jehlum to have a constant check on the Gakkars.

Islam Shah Suri built a mosque at Shahdra Lahore. The Suri architecture truly reflects the style of the age.

The Rohtas fort lies about 12 miles northwest of Jehlum. Its solid and massive fortification wall varies in thickness from 30 to 40 ft. The



The jewel of Lahore



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An important building of Jahangir's period is the Wazir Khan Masjid outside the Masti Gate of the Lahore Fort. It was built by Maryam — the mother of Jahangir — in 1614 AD. This mosque is famous for its prominent frescoes and frescoes paintings.

During the time of Shah Jahan, Persian influence came to the fore. This period marks a transition from the buildings of red sandstone to marble structures represented by the Taj Mahal, the Itimad-ud-Daula, the Nurjahan and Jahangir's tomb. The beginning of the Mughal architecture. The character of the building was brought a change in architectural decoration. Shah Jahan's architecture is characterized by the use of white marble and intricate carvings.

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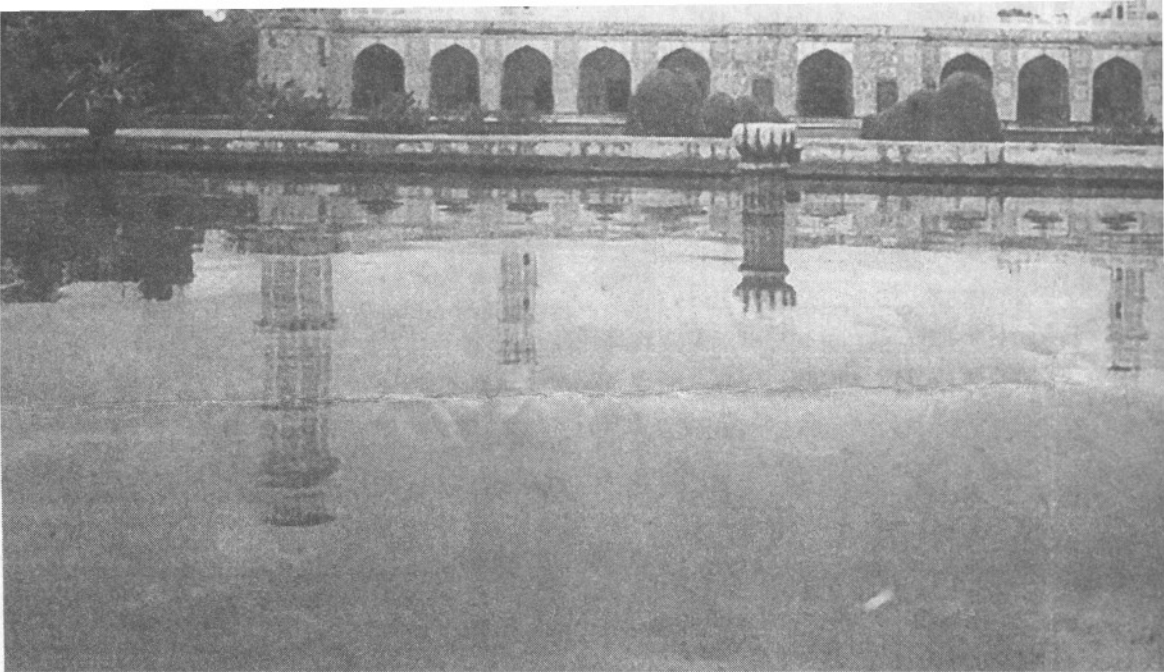
Islam Shah Suri built a mosque at Shahdra Lahore. The Suri architecture truly reflects the style of the age.

The Rohtas fort lies about 12 miles northwest of Jhelum. Its solid and massive fortification wall varies in thickness from 30 to 40 ft. The circuit of the fort is 2.5 miles and is provided with 68 bastions and 12 gates.

The Sohail Gate is still in a good state of preservation and rises to a height of 70 ft. The central archway is enclosed in a large arched recess with an oriel window, projecting from the alignment of the wall on either side. King Akbar laid the concrete foundation of the Mughal architecture.

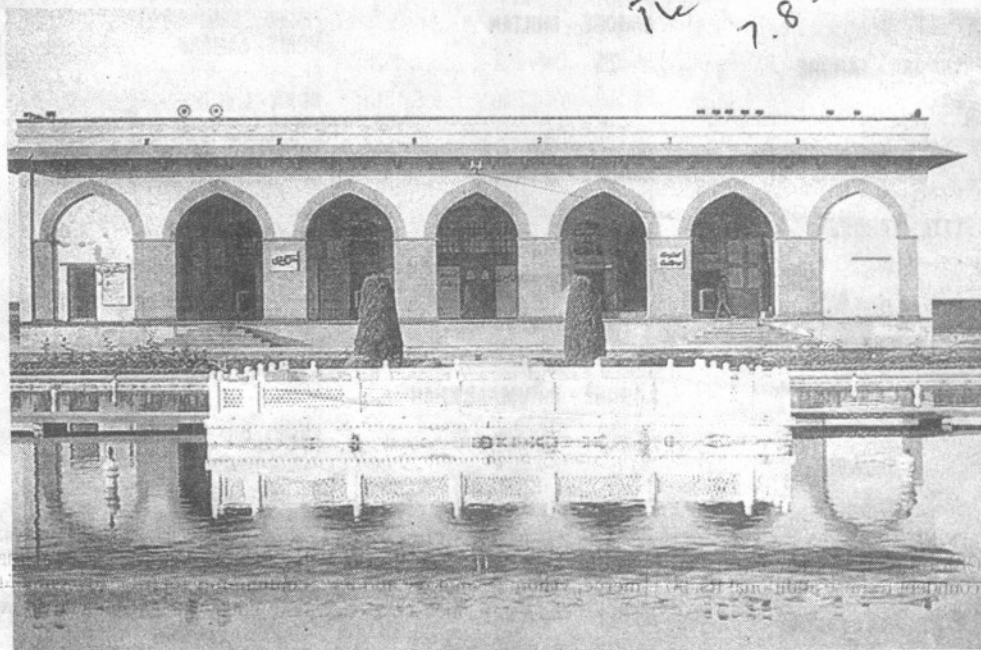
However, his predecessors Babar (1526-30) and Humayun (1530 to 40 and 1555-56) were the real founders of the building art. Babar was fond of ornamental gardens and laid many gardens during his short reign.

Humayun did not produce any building but his contacts with Satavid rulers had far reaching influence on the art



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and architecture of the subcontinent. On his return from the Satavid court, he was accompanied by Persian artistes.

Although this Persian tradition did not reveal itself during his lifetime but came to the forth after his death as can be seen in his own mausoleum. It was built by his queen Haji Begum eight years after his death. In Pakistan, the only building representing this early phase of Mughal architecture is Kamran's Baradari in Lahore in between the River Ravi, now completely renovated.

Akbar was more inclined towards indigenous Indian art and architecture. The Akbari style of architecture was greatly influenced by Gujrati, Suri and Persian style.

Lahore, the second home of Mughals excels in secular and

religious buildings of this period. Akbar replaced the mud fort with brick masonry in 1566 AD. The fort 1200 x 1050 feet in area was divided into two parts.

The Southern portion was reserved for the administrative buildings while the royal apartments were constructed at the back. Later on, his successors Jahangir, Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb made many additions to it. The buildings of Akbar and Jahangir's quadrangle, and were decorated with floral designs and sculpted animals. These are in marked contrast to the buildings of Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb e.g. Moti Masjid, Naulakha, Shish Mahal and Badshahi Masjid. All these buildings are constructed mainly of white marble and decorated with Pietra — dura

work, the tile and stone mosaic and frescoes.

Akbar also built a fort at Attock on the left bank just below the confluence of the Kabul and Indus rivers. The fort completed in 1683 was constructed from locally available stone set in lime mortar. The arches, vaults and domes are built with bricks. The fortification wall is more than a mile in circumference and is provided with 18 bastions. Its characteristic features are its battlements, loopholes, machicolations and a covered gallery on the top. It was provided with three gateways, which are not used now. A few others were added later. Except the underground chamber, no old buildings have survived in the fort. Jahangir's main interest was miniature painting and under his

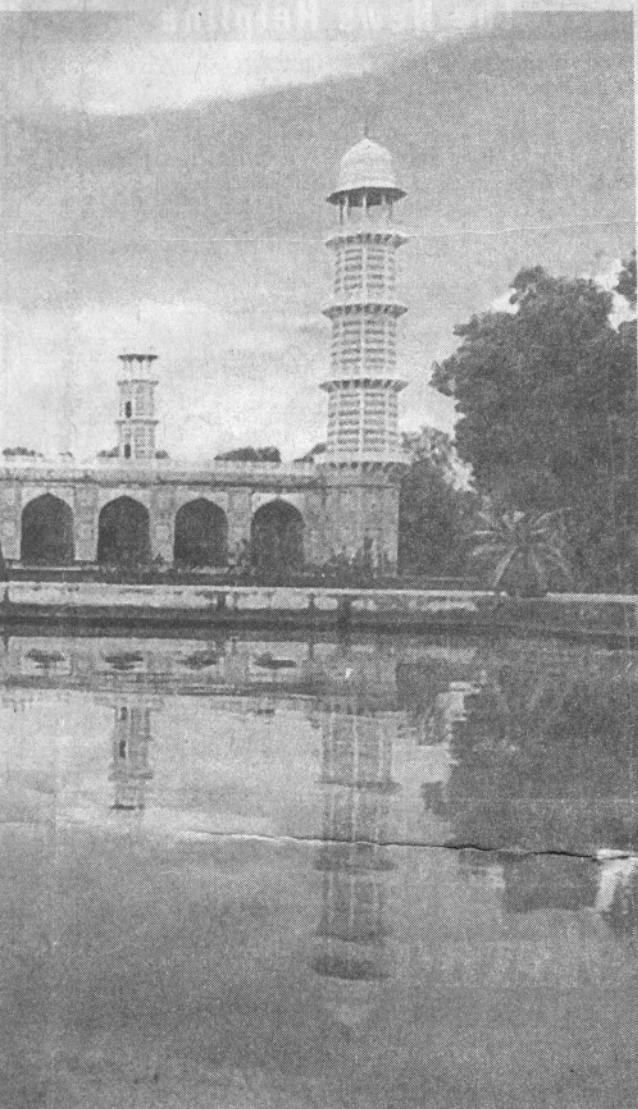
patronage, this highest perfection

An important Jehangir's period Zamani Masjid Masti Gate of the It was built by Ma — the mother of 1614 AD. This most prominent for fresco paintings.

During the transition from the buildings of red marble to the buildings of white marble represented by the construction of the Itmad-ud-Daula, Nur-Jahan and Jahangir's tomb. The beginning of the Mughal architecture. The building brought a new architectural decoration.

Shah Jehan's Engineer King of numerous buildings in Lahore Fort. Diwan-e-Aam, Naulakha, Moti Masjid, and Shalimar. Lahore. But his contribution is the Masjid — The Jehangir City.

Wazir Khan Governor of Lahore masjid in 1630 constructed of traditional manner. Its feature is its decoration of its surface decorated — both externally and internally with and fresco. Moreover, calligraphic style lavishly used both



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An important building of Jehangir's period is Maryam Zamani Masjid outside the Masti Gate of the Lahore Fort. It was built by Maryam Zamani — the mother of Jehangir, in 1614 AD. This mosque stands prominent for its famous fresco paintings.

During the time of Shah Jehan, Persian influence came to the forth. This phase of transition from earlier buildings of red sandstone to marble structure is represented by the tomb of Itmadad-Daula, fathers of Nurjehan and Jehangir's Prime Minister. The tomb marks the beginning of the marble architecture. The changes in the building material also brought a change in architectural decoration.

Shah Jehan — The Engineer King of India, built numerous building in Lahore. In Lahore Fort, he added Diwan-e-Aam, Shish Mahal,

outside on the wall surfaces.

Equally significant is also the Shah Jahani Mosque at Thatha. It was started during the reign of Shahjehan in 1647 but completed by Aurangzeb in 1658-59. Other monuments constructed at Thatha include the tombs of Mirza Isa Khan Tarkhan, Baqi Beg, Tughral Beg and Diwan Shurfa Khan.

Aurangzeb — the last emperor of the great Mughal built the Badshahi Masjid Lahore, it was built and completed under the governorship of Fidai Khan Koka in 1647. The mosque (567x567) consists of two parts: the prayer chamber and a courtyard and can be approached through an imposing gateway. The prayer chamber is deep and its floor was originally paved with cut-bricks in the form of musallahs (prayer-rug) marked with Sang-i-Arbi and black marble. The facade is composed of eleven arches, the central one higher than the other and marks the main entrance into the prayer chamber. The

masjid is provided with eight tall octagonal minarets, one at each corner of the prayer chamber and one each at the four corners of the whole complex.

The Mughal monuments in NWFP are mainly located in and around Peshawar city. The earliest buildings of the period date back to Akbar's reign. The hind fort built by Akbar in 1586 is situated on the West Bank of River Indus. It was constructed of small bricks and stones as can be judged from the patches still surviving at certain points. Another monument of the same period, built by Shah Qutb (Zain Al Abiden) is near Dilazak, Peshawar. It is octagonal in plan and is provided with four entrances. The octagon stopped by a 16-sided drum, which supports a low dome. Internally, it is square in outline and each side has an arched panel, above which runs a horizontal line of moulding. Above this moulding some patches of wall paintings are preserved. Inside the mission hospital at Peshawar is an octagonal building with four arched entrances one on each side. It is covered by a double dome created on a high octagonal drum. This building is attributed to Nawab Syed Khan, Governor of Kabul Province during the time of Shah Jahan and probably marks his last resting place.

The tomb of the masjid of Sheikh Imam al Din at Palosi Piran near University of Peshawar are also worth mentioning. According to the marble inscription inside the tomb, the sheikh died in 1650 AD and his tomb was completed in 1658 AD.

It is square in shape and is raised on a high platform. The

square chamber carries an octagonal drum, which supports a high dome. Externally it is lime plastered and internally it is richly painted with floral decoration. Attached but to the west of tomb is the Majid.

The prayer chamber is rectangular in plan and its facade is provided with arched openings. The prayer chamber is covered with three domes and is decorated with wall paintings sowing cypresses and other floral designs.

It was during the region of Shah Jehan that his eldest daughter Jahan Ara Begum (1640), converted Gor Khuttee in to a caravan sarai and named it Sarai Jahanabad. It has the characteristic features of a Mughal caravan Sarai. With its two magnificent gateways, the western and eastern, it encloses an area of 700 x 700 ft.

It was enclosed by a high surrounding wall with an open court yard. Inside along the periphery wall rooms are constructed for the treaders or merchants moving between India and Central Asia. it is also recorded that she built a masjid and a hamam in this Sarai but have not escaped the ravages of time and presently only two gateways and some rooms on the southern side survive.

But the most splendid structure in Peshawar is Mahabat Khan Masjid. It is constructed on a high plat form with three entrances except the Kibla side. It is rectangular in plan 185 x 163 with a richly decorated prayer chamber. The facade of the prayer chamber has two tall minarets one at each end. It was built by Mahabat Khan in the reign of Aurangzeb.

This is a brief sketch of the glorious Islamic architectural heritage, which gradually developed and saw its culmination in the Mughal period. It shows cultural interactions with the neighbouring regions and evolved a style which is an assimilation of sensual architectural traditions but the credit goes to the muslims, who gave the Islamic art and architecture a unique character.

Now that we are an independent nation, it is our duty to prove our identity as Muslims. It is high time to project our heritage and to take effective measures for its protection and preservation for the coming generations.

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Shah Jehan — The Engineer King of India, built numerous building in Lahore. In Lahore Fort, he added Diwan-e-Aam, Shish Mahal, Naulakha, Moti Masjid, Diwani-e-Khas. Moreover, he also built tombs of Jehangir, Nurjehan, Asif Khan, Ali Mardan Khan and Shalimar Garden in Lahore. But his matchless contribution is Wazir Khan Masjid — The Jewel of Lahore City.

Wazir Khan (Ilmuddin), Governor of Lahore built this masjid in 1634. It is constructed of brick in a traditional manner but its main feature is its decoration. Every inch of its surface is profusely decorated — both externally and internally with tile mosaic and fresco paintings. Moreover, different calligraphic styles have been lavishly used both inside and

outside on the wall surfaces.

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