

Lesson at a Glance

- Between the eighth and the eighteenth centuries kings and their officers built two kinds of **structures**—the first were forts, palaces, garden residences and tombs and the second were structures meant for public activity including temples, mosques, tanks, bazaars, etc.
- Merchants and others also carried out construction activity. They built temples, mosques and wells.
- The technologies used in the monuments are unique. It requires sophisticated skills in making a large room with an elaborate superstructure.
- Between the seventh and tenth centuries architects started adding more rooms, doors and windows to building.
- Between the eighth and thirteenth centuries the **trabeate style** (a style of architecture in which roofs, doors and window were made by placing a horizontal beam across two vertical columns) was used in building temples, mosques, etc.
- The early eleventh century temples were decorated with elaborately carved sculptures. The temples had *shikhara* too.
- From the twelfth century **two technological and stylistic developments** came to be noticed—firstly, the weight of the super structure above the doors and window was sometimes carried by arches. This architectural form was known as 'arcuate', secondly, limestone cement was increasingly used in construction.
- **Temples and mosques** were built to demonstrate the power, wealth and devotion of the patron.
- According to an inscription the Rajarajeshvara temple was built by King Rajarajadeva for the worship of his god, Rajarajeshvaram. Here, it is worth mentioning that the name of the ruler and the god are very similar. The king took the god's name because it was auspicious and he wanted to appear like a god.
- But Muslim Sultans and Padshahs did not claim to be incarnations of god. However, Persian court chronicles described the Sultan as the 'Shadow of God'.
- Rulers offered patronage to the learned and pious people.

- Rulers also built tanks and reservoirs and got praise. Sultan Iltutmish won universal respect for constructing a large reservoir just outside *Delhi-i Kuhna*. It was called the *Hanz-i Sultani* or the *king's Reservoir*.
- Kings built temples but they often looted them while attacking one another's kingdoms.
- In the early 11th century when the Chola King Rajendra I built a Shiva temple in his capital he filled it with prized statues seized from defeated rulers.
- Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni attacked the temples of defeated kings and looted their wealth and idols.
- Under the Mughal rulers, gardens, tombs and forts were built.
- Babur was interested in planning and laying out formal gardens, placed within rectangular walled enclosures and divided into four quarters by artificial channels. These gardens were called *chahar bagh*, four gardens, because of their symmetrical division into quarters.
- During Akbar's reign **tomb architecture** became important. His architects turned to the tombs of his central Asian ancestors, Timur. The central towering dome and the tall gateway (pishtaq) were important aspects of Mughal architecture, first visible in Humayun's tomb.
- During Shah Jahan's reign, huge construction activity was carried on in Agra and Delhi.
- Shah Jahan's audience halls were specially constructed to resemble a mosque.
- He adapted the river-front garden in the layout of the Taj Mahal. Here, the white marble mausoleum was placed on a terrace by the edge of the river and the garden was to its south. Shah Jahan developed this architectural form as a means to control the access that nobles had to the river.
- In the new city of Shahjahanabad that he constructed in Delhi, the imperial palace commanded the river-front. Only specially favoured nobles were given access to the river.
- The Mughal rulers were particularly skilled in adapting regional architectural styles in the construction of their own buildings.
- In Bengal, the local rulers had developed a roof that was designed to resemble a thatched hut. The Mughals liked this '**Bangla dome**'.
- In Akbar's capital at Fatehpur Sikri many of the buildings show the influence of the architectural styles of Gujarat and Malwa.

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

Let's Recall

Q. 1. How is the 'trabeate' principle of architecture different from the arcuate?

Ans. In trabeate principle of architecture roofs, doors and windows were made by placing a horizontal beam across two vertical columns.

In arcuate principle of architecture the weight of the superstructure above the doors and windows was carried by arches.

Q. 2. What is a shikhara?

Ans. A shikhara is the top most pointed portion of a temple.

Q. 3. What is pietra dura?

Ans. Pietra dura refers to the coloured, hard stones placed in depressions carved into marble or sandstone which create beautiful ornate patterns.

Q. 4. What are the elements of a Mughal chahar bagh garden?

Ans. Mughal chahar bagh consists of four gardens. These gardens are placed within rectangular walled enclosures and divided into four quarters by artificial channels.

Let's Understand

Q. 5. How did a temple communicate the importance of a king?

Ans. Kings usually constructed temples to demonstrate their devotion to God and their power and wealth. Here we can mention the Rajarajeshvara temple which was built by King Rajarajadeva for the worship of his god, Rajarajeshvaram. It is noticeable that the names of the ruler and the god are very similar. The king took the god's name because it was auspicious and he wanted to appear like a god. Through the rituals of worship in the temples one god i.e. Rajarajadeva honoured another i.e., Rajarajeshvaram.

Kings usually constructed the largest temples. The other, lesser deities in the temple were gods and goddesses of the allies and subordinates of the ruler. The temple was a miniature model of the world ruled by the king and his allies. As they worshipped their deities together in the royal temples, it seemed as if they brought the just rule of the gods on earth.

Q. 6. An inscription in Shah Jahan's diwan-i khas in Delhi stated, "If there is Paradise on Earth, it is here, it is here, it is here". How was this image created?

Ans. Shah Jahan's diwan-i khas was designed in such a way that it fused together in a grand harmonious synthesis. It was carefully planned. It was placed within a large courtyard. Behind the emperor's throne there were a series of *pietra-dura* inlays. It depicted the legendry god Orpheus playing the lute. The diwan-e khas was aimed to communicate that the king's justice would treat the high and the low as equals, creating a world where all could live together in harmony. The diwan-i khas reflected the image of a paradise in itself.

Q. 7. How did the Mughal court suggest that everyone—the rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak—received justice equally from the emperor?

Ans. The Diwan-i am of the Mughal court suggested that justice was made for all in an equal way. The construction of Shah Jahan's audience hall was designed to communicate that the king's justice was equal for the high and the low. Its aim was to create a world where all could live together in harmony. There was no difference between the rich and poor in the emperor's court.

Q. 8. What role did the Yamuna play in the layout of the new Mughal city at Shahjahanabad?

Ans. The river Yamuna had a very significant role in the layout of the new Mughal city at Shahjahanabad. Shah Jahan preferred the river-front garden in the layout of the Taj Mahal. He developed the same architectural form as a means to control the access that the nobles had to the river. In the new city of Shahjahanabad the imperial palace also commanded the river-front. Only the most favoured nobles were given access to the river. Other than those had to construct their homes in the city away from the river Yamuna. It expanded the layout of the city.

Let's Discuss

Q. 9. The rich and powerful construct large houses today. In what ways were the constructions of kings and their courtiers different in the past?

Ans. The rich and powerful construct large houses today. But these houses are not the same as those of the kings and their courtiers in the past. The houses of the kings and their courtiers were big structures with big courtyard, thick walls, domed-roofs, huge pillars, big gardens and well-decorated halls. But today houses have no courtyards nor gardens nor thick walls nor domed-roofs. In many ways these are inferior to those of the kings and their courtiers houses.

Q. 10. Look at Figure 4. How could that building be constructed faster today?

See Fig. 4 in NCERT Textbook, page 62

Ans. Such buildings were usually constructed as a matter of pride in old days. It was very difficult to construct them but they were made possible with the help of skilled masons and labourers. Such buildings took a very long time and a number of labourers to be constructed. But now as technologies have advanced, we have many facilities, equipments, tools which can construct huge buildings very easily and in less time.

Let's Do

Q. 11. Find out whether there is a statue of or a memorial to a great person in your village or town. Why was it placed there? What purpose does it serve?

Ans. There is a very busy chowk in my village. We find there a statue of Subhash Chandra Bose and hence this chowk is known as Subhash Chowk. Subhash Chandra Bose was such a great person that he dared to challenge the British empire by forming his own army. He is now no more but his statue is there to inspire us. Its purpose is to encourage the youth to do something different and challenging.

Q. 12. Visit and describe any park or garden in your neighbourhood. In what ways is it similar to or different from the gardens of the Mughals?

Ans. The gardens of Mughals gardens were spread over a very large area. There were a large variety of flowers. They were well-decorated and protected. But the garden in my neighbourhood is not so large. Everyone has easy access to this garden. So the flowers are not safe. Thus, we don't find any similarity.