

HISTORY

Chapter 5: Rulers and Buildings



Rulers and Buildings

Monuments and Their Importance

Monuments are an important source of history as they tell us about the religious beliefs of the people and give us an insight into the scientific and technological knowledge which existed during that time. During the medieval period, two kinds of structures were mostly made. The first group of structures included forts, palaces and residences of the nobles, gardens and tombs. The second group included the structures which were meant for public use such as temples, mosques, wells, tanks and bazaars. By constructing the second group of buildings, the kings wanted to show that they cared for their subjects and tried to win the support and loyalty of the people.

General Designs of Architecture

- One common feature of the buildings in the Indian subcontinent was the creation of a detailed **superstructure** (part of a building above the ground floor).
- The architects added more rooms, doors and windows to the existing buildings. These were added by placing a horizontal beam across two vertical columns. This style of architecture is known as **trabeate** or **corbelled**.
- This style was increasingly used in the building of temples, tombs and mosques and step wells located within or near these buildings.
- Two technological styles are evident from the monuments of the twelfth century. The first is that the arches were created to carry the weight of the superstructure above the doors and windows. This style came to be known as the **arcuate** technique.
- Secondly, limestone cement increasingly began to be used in the constructions. Since it was hard quality cement, it hardened into concrete when mixed with stone chips. It made the building of structures easier and faster.

Here are some of the greatest monuments of the period.

The Qutb Minar: The construction of the Qutb Minar was started by Qutbuddin Aibak but completed by Iltutmish in about 1229 C.E. The minar has balconies under which small arches and geometric designs were laid out. The surface of the minar is curved and

angular. This was an engineering wonder which was extremely difficult to achieve in the twelfth century. It created a sense of awe and respect among the people for the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate.



In the corbelled technique, a horizontal beam is placed across two vertical beams.

Temples: The temples built during this time were beautifully constructed. Many large temples were constructed by the kings. Many a times, through the building of a temple, the ruler tried to assert his position as the most powerful and divine. People considered the temples as miniature models of the world ruled by the kings and its allies. By worshipping in the temples, it was supposed that the kings who built them had brought the just rule of the gods on the earth.

- The Rajarajeshvara Temple at Thanjavur has the tallest shikara (the rising spiral tower of the temple) among the temples which were built during this period. Since a building with such a huge rising tower was difficult to build in those days due to the absence of cranes, the architects built an inclined path from the base to the top of the temple. This path started four kilometres away from the temple so that it did not become too steep. This path was dismantled after the construction of the temple. This was a very unique way of construction. A village near the temple called Charupallam is still called the 'Village of the Incline'.



The Rajarajeshwar temple at Thanjavur

- The Kandariya Mahadeva Temple at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh is dedicated to Lord Shiva. It is known for its carved structures. It was constructed in 999 CE by King Dhangadeva belonging to the Chandela dynasty. The gateway of the temple is beautifully carved and leads to the main hall called the mahamandapa where dances were performed. The chief deity was kept in the main shrine called the garbhagriha. At this place only the king, his close family members and the priests would gather. The Kandariya Mahadeva temple was a royal temple and hence common people were not given entrance.



The Kandariya Mahadeva Temple at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh

As temples were often built by kings as a mark of their power and wealth, they were attacked by the rival invading kings.

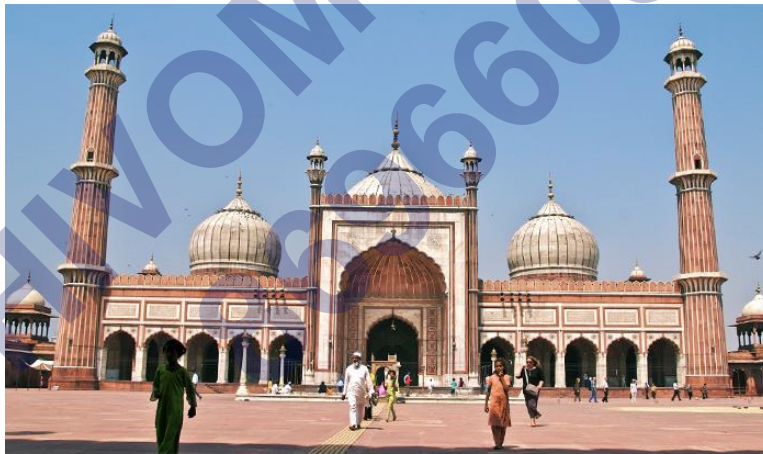
- For instance, when the Pandyan King Shrimara Shrivallabha invaded Sri Lanka, he damaged the Buddhist temple and seized the golden statue of Buddha. Later, the next

Sinhalese ruler, Sena II invaded Madurai and made efforts to find the golden statue of Buddha.

- The Chola King Rajendra I built a Shiva temple in his capital which was filled with the statues of deities captured from defeated rulers.
- Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni who lived at the same time as that of Rajendra Chola attacked many temples in India and plundered them. One of the famous plunders of Ghazni was in the temple of Somnath. By plundering the temple, he tried to assert himself as a great hero of Islam.

Mosques: The mosque is a Muslim place of worship. Muslim sultans were described as the 'Shadow of God' by the Persian Chronicles.

- Quwwat al-Islam mosque was one of the earliest mosques to be built in India by Qutbuddin Aibak at Delhi.
- Jami Masjid was built by Shah Jahan in his new capital at Shahjanabad. It is the largest mosque in India and faces the west.



The Jama Masjid

Water Reservoirs

One of the welfare activities of a ruler was to build water reservoirs for the benefit of the people. The king who constructed wells, tanks or step wells was regarded highly by his subjects. Sometimes, these reservoirs were a part of a temple, mosque or *gurudwara* (a place where the Sikhs worship).

Hauz-i-sultani was a large water reservoir which was constructed by Iltutmish outside Delhi-i-Kuhna.

Gardens, Forts and Tombs

Gardens

- The Mughal ruler Babur took a keen interest in gardens. He usually laid gardens within rectangular walled enclosures which were divided into four parts by artificial water channels. These gardens came to be known as **chahar baghs** as they were divided into four symmetrical divisions.



The Mughal gardens were divided into four divisions by artificial channels of water and were known as **chahar baghs**

- Some important **char baghs** were laid out by Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan in Kashmir, Delhi and Agra.

Tombs

A central towering dome and a tall gateway became an important feature of Mughal architecture. These features were visible for the first time in the tomb of Humayun.

- This tomb was placed in the centre of a big **chahar bagh**. It was constructed with red sandstone and white marble.
- Shah Jahan built the **Taj Mahal**, one of the greatest buildings which have been built till now. He adapted the river front garden in the layout of the **Taj Mahal**.



The Taj Mahal

- The Taj Mahal was built of white marble. The tomb was placed on a terrace by the edge of the river and a garden was laid to its south.
- This pattern was adopted by Shah Jahan in order to gain control of the access to River Yamuna which nobles had till now.

Forts

- Shah Jahan built the diwan-i-khas and the diwan-i-aam in the forts of Agra and Delhi.



The diwan-i-khas inside the Red Fort

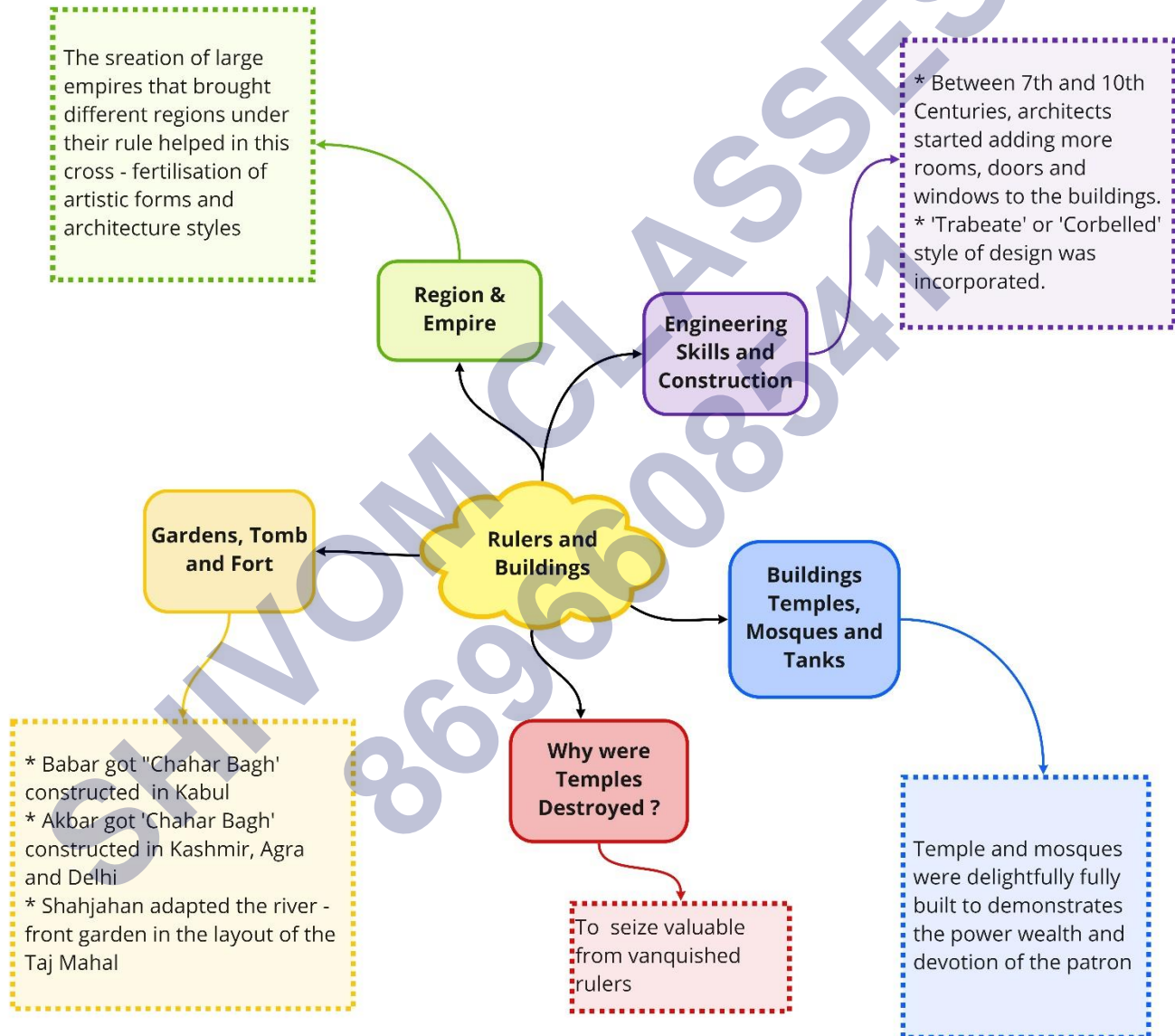
- The construction of these halls was carefully planned. These halls of audience were placed within a large courtyard.
- The audience halls of Shah Jahan resembled a mosque. His throne was placed on the pedestal which was frequently described as the qibla (the direction faced by Muslims during the prayers) as everyone faced that direction when the court was in session. This was an architectural feature which suggested that the king is a representative of god on earth.

- Shah Jahan used the technique of pietra dura in some of his buildings. This technique involved the inlaying of fitted, highly polished and coloured stones to create images.

Regions and Empires

- There was an increase in the construction of buildings from the eighth to the eighteenth centuries. The ideas of construction in one region were sometimes very similar to those in the other regions.
- For example in Vijaynagar, the elephant stables of the rulers were deeply influenced by the architectural styles found in the nearby kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda.
- In Vrindavan, near Mathura, the architectural styles of temples were similar to the Mughal palaces in Fatehpur Sikri.
- The inclusion of distinct regions in the Mughal Empire led to the fusion of various architectural styles.
- The Mughals used the 'Bangla dome' (roof of a building which resembles a thatched roof) in their architecture.
- The architectural styles of many buildings in Fatehpur Sikri were being influenced by the buildings of Gujarat and Malwa.
- Even after the disintegration of the Mughal Empire, their style of architecture influenced the building of various structures in different parts of the country.

Class : 7th Social Studies (History)
Chapter 5 - Rulers and Buildings



Important Questions

➤ Multiple Choice Questions:

Question 1. Humayun's tomb was built:

- (a) Between 1571 and 1671
- (b) Between 1545 and 1556
- (c) Between 1562 and 1571

Question 2. Kandariya Mahadeva temple built in:

- (a) 1000
- (b) 999
- (c) 1099

Question 3. Qutb Minar has:

- (a) 2 storeys
- (b) 5 storeys
- (c) 7 storeys

Question 4. The Kandariya Mahadeva temple dedicated to:

- (a) Ganesh
- (b) Shiva
- (c) Ram

Question 5. World famous Taj Mahal was built by:

- (a) Shah Jahan
- (b) Akbar
- (c) Babur

Question 6. The Rajarajeshvara temple located in:

- (a) Thanjavur
- (b) Pondicherry
- (c) Agra

Question 7. Akbar's architects were inspired from:

- (a) Babur
- (b) Alauddin Khilji

(c) Taimur

Question 8. Chahar Bagh was not constructed in:

(a) Kashmir

(b) Jaipur and Lucknow

(c) Agra and Delhi

Question 9. Which one was not built by Shah Jahan?

(a) Taj Mahal and Moti Masjid in Agra

(b) Red Fort and Jama Masjid in Delhi

(c) Qutb Minar

Question 10. Qutb Minar built by Iltutmish in the year:

(a) 1229

(b) 1250

(c) 1300

Question 11. How did kings win the praise at their subjects?

(a) By making structure for their use.

(b) By distributing wealth

(c) By distributing grains and foods

(d) None of these

Question 12. Who had constructed Hauz-i Sultani?

(a) Sultan Iltutmish

(b) Raziyya

(c) Qutubuddin Aybak

(d) Ghiyasuddin Balban

Question 13. The Agra fort was built by whom?

(a) Shah Jahan

(b) Akbar

(c) Jahangir

(d) Babar

Question 14. Why were the baolis constructed?

(a) To provide a place for bathing for royals

- (b) To fulfil the water demands
- (c) For rain water harvesting
- (d) For entertainment of royals.

Question 15. The Qutub Minar was constructed by whom?

- (a) Shah Jahan
- (b) Jahangir
- (c) Humayun
- (d) Qutbuddin Aybak

➤ **Fill in the blanks:**

1. Large stepped-wells were known as _____.
2. _____ destroyed Somnath temple.
3. The Agra fort was built by _____.
4. The Kandariya Mahadeva temple was constructed by _____.
5. Dhangadeva belongs to _____ dynasty.

➤ **Very Short Questions:**

1. What were havelis?
2. When was Humayun tomb constructed?
3. How did Persian court chronicles describe sultan?
4. Explain the term mahamandapa.
5. What is a superstructure?
6. Who built Jami Masjid?
7. Who built Rajarajeshvara temple?
8. What is a shikhara?
9. What is pietra-dura?
10. Who constructed kandariya mahadeva temple and when?

➤ **Short Questions:**

1. Which style was used in the construction between the eighth and thirteenth centuries?
2. Why were temples destroyed?
3. Who built Qutb Minar?

4. What types of architects found between seventh and tenth centuries?
5. How is the “trabeate” principle of architecture different from the “arcuate”?

➤ Long Questions:

1. Construction of Rajarajeshvara temple was not easy. Give reason.
2. Write about shah Jahan audience hall.
3. Write a short note on the Kandariya Mahadeva temple?
4. 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?
5. What is gothic architecture?

ANSWER KEY –

➤ Multiple Choice Answer:

1. (c) Between 1562 and 1571
2. (b) 999
3. (b) 5 storeys
4. (b) Shiva
5. (a) Shah Jahan
6. (a) Thanjavur
7. (c) Taimur
8. (b) Jaipur and Lucknow
9. (c) Qutb Minar
10. (a) 1229
11. (a) By making structure for their use.
12. (a) Sultan Iltutmish
13. (b) Akbar
14. (c) For rain water harvesting
15. (d) Qutbuddin Aybak

➤ Fill in the blanks:

1. Baolis.
2. Sultan Mahmud.

3. Akbar.
4. Dhangadeva.
5. Chandela.

➤ Very Short Answer:

1. Large mansions of merchants were called havelis.
2. Tomb of Humayun, constructed between 1562 and 1571.
3. Persian court chronicles described the Sultan as the "Shadow of God".
4. It refers to the main hall of the temple where dances were performed.
5. Superstructure refers to the part of a building above the ground floor.
6. Jami Masjid was built by Shah Jahan in his new capital at Shahjahanabad.
7. It was built by King Rajarajadeva for the worship of his god, Rajarajeshvaram
8. Shikhara, a Sanskrit word translating literally to "mountain peak", refers to the rising tower in the Hindu temple architecture of North India.
9. Pietra-dura refers to coloured, hard stones placed in depressions carved into marble or sandstone creating beautiful, ornate patterns.
10. The Kandariya Mahadeva temple dedicated to Shiva was constructed in 999 by the king Dhangadeva of the Chandela dynasty.

➤ Short Answer:

1. Between the eighth and thirteenth centuries the trabeate style was used in the construction of temples, mosques, tombs and in buildings attached to large stepped-wells (baolis).
2. Temples were destroyed because kings built temples to demonstrate their devotion to God and their power and wealth. It is not surprising that when they attacked one another's kingdoms they often targeted these buildings.
3. The first floor was constructed by Qutbuddin Aybak and the rest by Iltutmish around 1229. Over the years it was damaged by lightning and earthquakes and repaired by Alauddin Khalji, Muhammad Tughluq, Firuz Shah Tughluq and Ibrahim Lodi.
4. Between the seventh and tenth centuries architects started adding more rooms, doors and windows to buildings. Roofs, doors and windows were still made by placing a horizontal beam across two vertical columns, a style of architecture called "trabeate" or "corbelled".
5. 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 sometimes carried by arches.

➤ Long Answer:

1. The Rajarajeshvara temple at Thanjavur had the tallest shikhara amongst temples of its time. Constructing it was not easy because there were no cranes in those days and the 90 tonne stone for the top of the shikhara was too heavy to lift manually. So the architects built an inclined path to the top of the temple, placed the boulder on rollers and rolled it all the way to the top. The path started more than 4 km away so that it would not be too steep. This was dismantled after the temple was constructed.
2. Shah Jahan’s audience halls were specially constructed to resemble a mosque. The pedestal on which his throne was placed was frequently described as the qibla, the direction faced by Muslims at prayer, since everybody faced that direction when court was in session. The idea of the king as a representative of God on earth was suggested by these architectural features. The construction of Shah Jahan’s audience hall 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.
3. **Kandariya Mahadeva Temple:**
 - The Kandariya Mahadeva temple dedicated to Shiva was constructed in 999 by the king Dhangadeva of the Chandela dynasty.
 - An ornamented gateway led to an entrance, and the main hall (mahamandapa) where dances were performed.
 - The image of the chief deity was kept in the main shrine (garbhagriha). This was the place for ritual worship where only the king, his immediate family and priests gathered.
4. Shah Jahan’s audience halls were specially constructed to resemble a mosque. The pedestal on which his throne was placed was frequently described as the qibla, the direction faced by Muslims at prayer, since everybody faced that direction when court was in session. The idea of the king as a representative of God on earth was suggested by these architectural features. Construction of diwan-i-khas reflected the image of paradise in itself.
5. From the twelfth century onwards, attempts began in France to build churches that were taller and lighter than earlier buildings. This architectural style, known as Gothic, was distinguished by high pointed arches, the use of stained glass, often painted with scenes drawn from the Bible, and flying buttresses. Tall spires and bell towers which were visible from a distance were added to the church. One of the best-known examples of this architectural style is the church of Notre Dame in Paris, which was constructed through several decades in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.