

A Universal Symbol of “Love & Romanticism”: The Taj Mahal

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Abstract: *The Taj Mahal is an ivory white marble mausoleum on the south bank of the Yamuna River in the Indian city of Agra. The eternal beauty of the monument lies in its location, architecture and the feeling that went behind its construction. For times immemorial the Taj will stand as a symbol of eternal love. The Taj Mahal in India is a must visit for everyone at least once in a lifetime. It was commissioned in 1631 by the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan, to house the tomb of his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal. The tomb is the centerpiece of 17-hectare complex, which includes a Mosque and a guest house, and is set in formal gardens bounded on three sides by a crenellated wall. The architectural wonder of the Taj Mahal is a monument of love, purity and beauty that Shah Jahan had built in the loving memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. Thus, the Taj Mahal is essentially the mausoleum of the mughal Empress Mumtaz Mahal*

Keywords: Taj Mahal, Romanticism, Monument, India, Sacrifice, Queen, Symbol Of Love, Architecture, Marble, Garden, Flowers

I. INTRODUCTION

The TajMahal was constructed in the 17th century. When the young prince Khurram (1592-1666), favourite son of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir, met ArjumandBanu Begum, descended from Persian nobility, he was instantly dazzled by her beauty and was determined to marry her. They were betrothed in 1607, when he was 15 and she 14, but had to wait for another five years to marry, until the court astrologers found an auspicious date for the wedding. After they were married, the prince, finding his wife 'elect among all the women of the time', gave her the title of MumtazMahal, Jewel of the Palace'. For the next 19 years the couple were inseparable, with Mumtaz, despite her many pregnancies, often travelling with her husband on his military campaigns. The prince took two other wives, but according to court chroniclers, his feelings for Mumtaz 'exceeded by a thousand times what he felt for the others'. In 1627, when he succeeded to the throne as Shah Jahan, his trust in her was so great that he gave her his imperial seal, the MuhrUzah. In 1631 MumtazMahal accompanied her husband on a military campaign to the Deccan and died at Burhanpur while giving birth to their 14th child. Devastated by her death, the Shah went into mourning for a year and built the TajMahal in her honour, and the name, which means 'Crown Palace', is a derivation of her name. It took 22 years to complete.

Aims And Goals Of The Study

- To search the reason, why some people are expressing the Tajmahal as Tejomahal.
- Why 'UNESCO' world Heritage Site listed it in the historical famous Architecture.
- Curiosity to Know how this mausoleum of grandeur has been Visited by the lacs of people from the outside of India.
- To search the history of its making in such a subtle construction before somany Centuries.
- To understand the intimate details of this architecture inside and outside.
- To know about the romantic love of Emperor Shah Jahan towards The Begum Mumtaj through the study of The TajMahal.

II. METHODOLOGY

This paper totally based on primary and secondary Source materials like books, articles and relevant website which are critically and analytically examined.

History of the TajMahal

It was built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife MumtazMahal with construction starting in 1631 AD and completed in 1648 AD, with the mosque, the guest house and the main gateway on the south, the outer courtyard and its cloisters were added subsequently and completed in 1653 AD. Rauza-i-Munawwara which means of Unique building It is renamed as TajMahal by Shah Jahan. Today it is listed as one of the new Seven Wonders of the World. It's the history of TajMahal that adds a soul to its magnificence, a soul that is filled with love, loss, remorse, and love again. An example of how deeply a man loved his wife, that even after she remained but a memory, he made sure that this memory would never fade away. This man was the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, who was head-over-heels in love with MumtazMahal, his dear wife. She was a Muslim Persian princess (her name ArjumandBanu Begum before marriage) and he was the son of the Mughal Emperor grandson of the Akbar the great.

Design

It was designed by Ustad Ahmad Lahouri, and is generally regarded as the best example of Mughal architecture, which is a blend of Indian, Persian and Islamic styles. The construction process involved 22,000 workers and artisans from all over central Asia and beyond. It is thought that over 1,000 elephants were used to transport building materials. Precious and semi-precious stones inlaid into the white marble include jade and crystal from China, turquoise from Tibet, Lapis lazuli from Afghanistan, sapphire from Sri Lanka, and carnelian from Arabia. The complex of TajMahal majorly consists of five structures - Darwaza (main gateway), Bageecha (gardens), Masjid (mosque), Rauza (main mausoleum) and Naqqarkhana (rest house). The TajMahal complex consists of the tomb at its center (58 feet in diameter and 81 feet high).it is the main attraction.

Marble

White marble is one of the most striking and prominent features of the TajMahal. The marble used was quarried in Makrana, 200 miles away. Reportedly, it took 1,000 elephants and an untold number of oxen to drag the extremely heavy marble to the building site. For the massive marble pieces to reach to higher spaces of the TajMahal, a giant, two-mile-long earthen ramp was built. The TajMahal is topped with a huge double-shelled dome that stretches 240 feet and is also covered in white marble. Four thin, white marble minarets stand tall at the corners of the second plinth and surround the mausoleum.

Calligraphy & Inlaid Flowers

Most pictures of the TajMahal show only a large white building. Though still lovely, this doesn't do the real structure justice. These photos leave out intricacies and it is these details that make the TajMahal astoundingly feminine and opulent. On the mosque, guest house, and large main gate at the southern end of the complex appear passages from the Quran or Koran, the holy book of Islam, written in calligraphy. Shah Jahan hired master calligrapher Amanat Khan to work on these inlaid verses. Masterfully done, the finished verses from the Quran are inlaid with black marble. They are a stately yet soft feature of the building. Although made of stone, the curves mimic real handwriting. The 22 passages from the Quran are said to have been chosen by Amanat Khan himself. Interestingly, Amanat Khan was the only person who Shah Jahan allowed to sign his work on the TajMahal. Almost more impressive than the calligraphy are the delicate inlaid flowers found throughout the TajMahal complex. In a process known as parchinkari, highly-skilled stone cutters carved intricate floral designs into the white marble flowers and they came from around the world. These include lapis lazuli from Sri Lanka, jade from China, malachite from Russia, and turquoise from Tibet.

The Garden

Islam holds the image of Paradise as a garden. Thus, the garden at the TajMahal was an integral part of making it Heaven on Earth. The TajMahal's garden, which is situated to the south of the mausoleum, has four quadrants. These are

divided by four "rivers" of water (another important Islamic image of Paradise) that gather in a central pool. The gardens and rivers were filled by the Yamuna River via a complex underground water system. Unfortunately, no records remain to tell the exact plants in these gardens.

Shah Jahan's Death

ShahJahan remained in deep mourning for two years and never fully healed after the death of his favorite wife. This gave MumtazMahal and Shah Jahan's fourth son Aurangzeb the opportunity to successfully kill his three elder brothers and imprison his father. After 30 years as emperor, Shah Jahan was usurped and placed in the luxurious Red Fort in Agra in 1658. Forbidden to leave but with most of his usual luxuries, Shah Jahan spent his final eight years gazing out a window at the TajMahal. When Shah Jahan died on January 22, 1666, Aurangzeb had his father buried with MumtazMahal in the crypt beneath the TajMahal. On the main floor of the TajMahal above the crypt now sits two cenotaphs (empty public tombs). The one in the center of the room belongs to MumtazMahal and the one just to the west is for Shah Jahan. Surrounding the cenotaphs is a delicately-carved, lacy marble screen. Originally it had been a gold screen but Shah Jahan had that replaced so that thieves would not feel tempted to steal it.

Destruction of the TajMahal

Shah Jahan was wealthy enough to support the TajMahal and its mighty maintenance costs, but over the centuries, the Mughal Empire lost its riches and the TajMahal fell into ruins. overseas. It was Lord Curzon, the British viceroy of India, who put and to this. Rather than looting the TajMahal, Curzon worked to restore it.

The TajMahal Now

The TajMahal has once again become a magnificent place with 2.5 million visitors each year. People can visit during the daytime and watch as the white marble appears to take on different hues throughout the day. Once a month, Visitors have the opportunity to make a short visit during a full moon to see how the TajMahal seems to glow from the inside out in the moonlight. The TajMahal was placed on the World Heritage List by 'UNESCO' in 1983, but this protection has not guaranteed its safety. It is now at the mercy of pollutants from nearby factories and excessive humidity from the breath of its visitors.

Analysis

The TajMahal is India's star tourist attraction. It is also a World Heritage Monument. TajMahal, built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan for his beloved wife, MumtazMahal is an international emblem of love. It is believed that the monarch built this glorious monument to keep his promise that he had made to the queen during her lifetime; after MumtazMahal's death, the emperor ordered to build the most magnificent memorial of the world over the graveyard of his wife. It took 15 long years and hard work of approximately 20,000 masons, artisans and laborers to construct this exquisite beauty; Shah Jahan was also entombed here after his death. Hence throughout the year, folks of lovebirds are seen posing together in front of TajMahal to make their love memorable and life lasting.

III. CONCLUSION

TajMahal means "Crown Palace" and is in fact the most well preserved and architecturally beautiful tomb in the world. It is best described by the English poet, Sir Edwin Arnold, as "Not a piece of architecture, as other buildings are, but the proud passions of an emperor's love wrought in living stones." It is a celebration of woman built in marble and that's the way to appreciate it. It is a "symbol of eternal love."

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