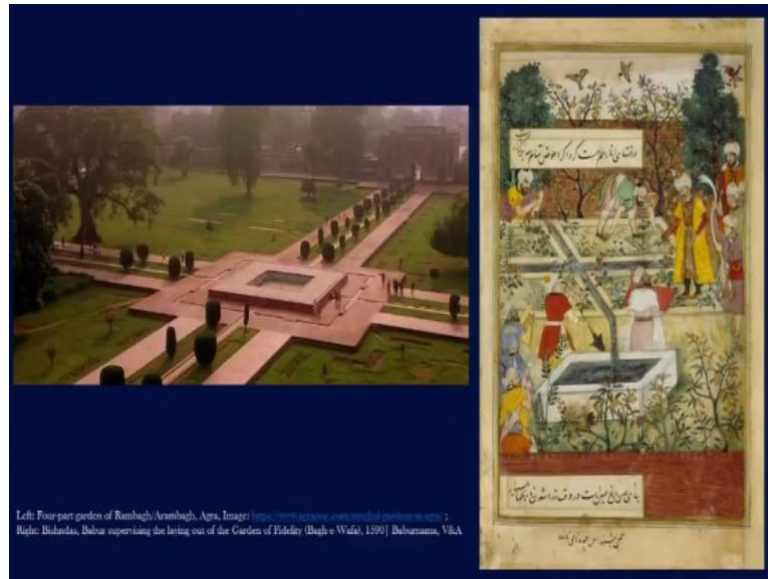


**Indian Art: Materials, Techniques and Artistic Practices**  
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**Lecture – 27**  
**Idea of Garden**

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Hello everyone. We are continuing our discussion on the garden; the significance of garden and we have already delved into the history of the Mughals. And so first we see how Padishah Babur, when he arrived in the Indian subcontinent, he already was acquainted with the practice of making gardens in the barren lands or the lands which were unused, and so it was part of his political conquest.

At the same time, this idea of transforming this land into something much more habitable, much more pleasurable and so on. So, basically bringing the paradise into the earth. So, this idea we find that to be very that prompted his ambitions of designing Agra, the city which came to be the capital city of the Mughals for a very long time. So, in the 16th century when we find that Babur first arrived in Agra.

Then of course as we know that in the north Indian plains and in this particular area where the Doab region which is between these two great rivers that is Ganga and Yamuna, here we find the land is mostly plain. There are no hills or there are no other kinds of like ups and downs which Barber was used to. So, when he looked into this place and usually in a garden, the

source of water has always been very important as I have already mentioned how the sources of water that holds high relevance in the Islamic philosophy.

Now, when Babur came to this particular area in the part of this North Indian plains, then he realized that kind of this ups and downs from which the mountain streams can be directed to the gardens for making these water channels is not something that is possible. And there is a reason, we also find that he had also looked for the natural sources of water and for that we also see how he had chosen the site of Agra which is right beside the river Yamuna to be this new site for building all his gardens.

So, one of the early gardens that we find that is today known as Aram Bagh or Ram Bagh and that is there in Agra, we have a shot from this garden on the left side of the screen. And here we find this clear implication of this chaharbagh planning, where there are those symbolic channels of water which are flowing to the centre part of this garden that is there. And in the centre, there is this one reservoir and at the centre there is also a fountain.

So, this is how the entire garden area was divided into these four parts. And as we have already discussed that we do not know that what all trees were there when this garden was established. Now, the thing we also find that since this is a cultivated area, either square or rectangular in shape, that is the reason it is usually we find those areas are walled. So, there are high walls which will protect these places, for example here we see.

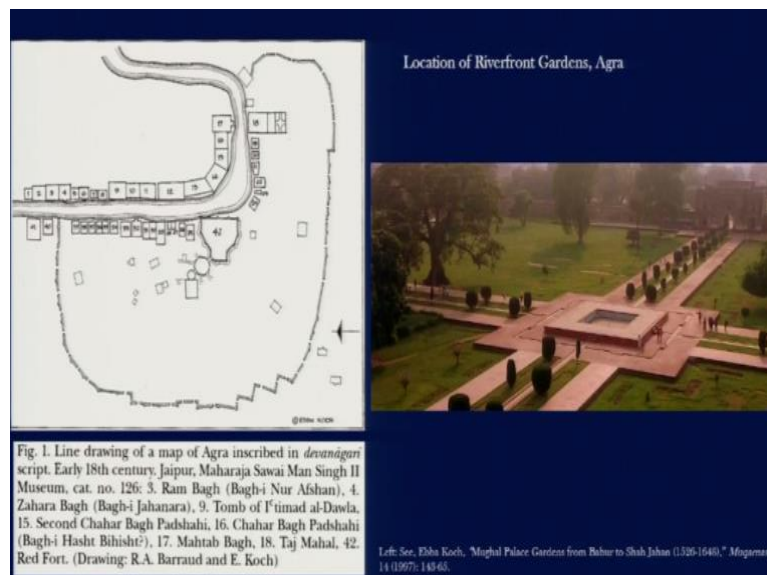
So, the high walls will be there to protect these places from the hustle and bustle of the city and whatever is there around it. And then there are also that gateways, for example, the one we have here. So, these gateways will be there for the elites and the royals to come inside this garden of paradise. So, this is one of the earliest surviving gardens that we find in Agra from this Mughal times and slowly we find that there had been more and more development.

Now, this is an image that comes from Baburnama which was painted in around 1590 and so on, so in the late 16th century and then in this one we find how Babur is supervising making of one of the gardens. So, this is the Garden of Fidelity or Bagh-e Wafa. And then this is that where we find that there are different kinds of trees and people are still working here either for constructing the place or for taking care of it.

So, they are already flowering and like plants which bear fruits that we have in this image. And then here it is also how this chaharbagh plan is now being laid out here, so people are working. And this high wall that I have already mentioned that which is also there in the architectural remains in Agra that we see today. All of those things are there in this image. So in other words, the images, the paintings that actually gives us a sense of how these places have not just been there in the past, but how those places were also used.

So, there are bird singing, in some of the other images we also find representation of animals. So those also add to what we know about these gardens in the early modern times and of course in the Mughal times.

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So, this is an image that we find in art historian Ebba Koch's writing and she had made this. She had made a number of drawings on the location of the gardens in Agra and she had also used one of these historic maps which showed Agra and all the adjoining gardens. So, around this area, what we find that this is the area of the city, and in this city this is the river Yamuna that we find and right beside the river Yamuna on both its banks there are many gardens.

So, all these are the location of the gardens. And altogether there have been around 41 Gardens. So some of the gardens, we do not really see them today and some of them have been restored. Now, in terms of this one as we see that this is the fort that we have here, the Agra fort that we know, so that is also situated by the river. And then all these other gardens that we have and not necessarily all those gardens were built by the Mughal royals.

But they were also built by the administrators, the ministers and so on who were working for the Mughal royals. So, we see that all the elites of Agra in 16th century 17th century and later times, they were building gardens in the both sides of the river. And this is the location that is number 18 as we see this is the location of Taj Mahal. We will be addressing the history of Taj Mahal later in this lecture.

It should give us an idea of the garden; it not just became prevalent for exercising this Islamic philosophy on earth but it had much more sociocultural aspects as well and of course that as I have already mentioned that Babur also wanted to transform the lands which he had conquered, so that also adds to the political aspect of it. Now, in the sociocultural aspect what we find that the gardens have not just been there for people to have these places as recreational places, but often there were also tombs like the tombs of the revered ones.

Tombs of the noted nobles and so on, so they were also placed in these gardens. Now, there are also some of the residential complexes which we will find that they were situated right beside the garden or at one of the corners of the garden. So, if there are these residential complexes or the tomb complexes, either we find them to be at the centre of the garden or for many tombs that we find in Agra.

In which we find that the tombs or the residential complexes will be farther moved to the corner of the garden to have a view of the river, the river had been an integral part of the entire city planning and landscape. Now, another thing we also need to remember that in the 16th century Agra was perhaps one of the most populous, as the same time Agra was also one of the most prosperous cities in the entire South Asia and perhaps one of the noted cities in the entire world.

So, of course today we do not really see the city of Agra the same way, but it had been the Mughal capital for a long time period. So, that is a reason one can imagine that how all the nobles, all the royals, and of course the kings and so on all of them were interested to build their gardens by the river. So, in one hand we find there are those symbolic rivers which are made into this tangible garden by the means of those water channels that is there.

And on the other hand, we also have the river Yamuna, this actual river in the landscape which had also played a very important role for supplying water in these gardens and also for nurturing the livelihood of the people in the northern Indian plain. So, that is how the significance of

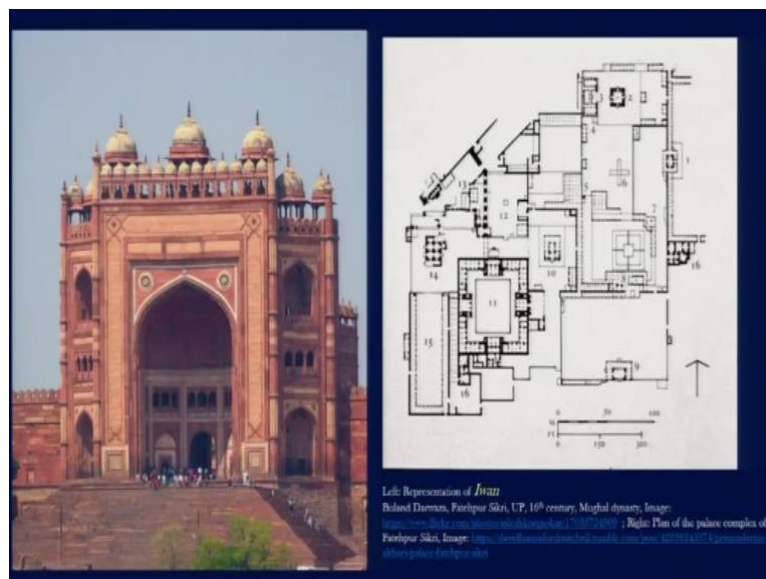
water something that I have already mentioned at the beginning of this lecture that how monsoon was also important in terms of for Hajj.

And then here we find that the symbolic representation of the rivers of the paradise, at the same time the actual river Yamuna they became very important part of the landscape here. Now talking about Yamuna, we should also remember that this new way of understanding the relevance of the city and also the new way of understanding the relevance of this river that was there in Agra was drastically different from the town of Braj or Brajbhoomi which was not that far from Agra.

So in Braj, we find the river was considered to be the holy river and on the banks of Braj we find that how that already has been very important in the Hindu belief for its association with Lord Krishna. Now, if that is one way of treating or like paying respect to the river that we find in Braj, and from there when we come to Agra, we find there is much more, it is a different way of paying homage or respect to the river.

And that is by understanding perhaps its core relation to the rivers of paradise, but not explicitly saying that, and also that how these two places even though they are not that far from each other, at how these two places, they also stand drastically different in terms of how the land is utilized and how the river is treated and how the places are organized or used by the devotees.

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So, from the garden plannings in Agra, we find that there was also a time when the capital was moved from Agra to the city of Fatehpur Sikri and that happened during the time of Mughal

emperor Akbar. So, Mughal emperor Akbar is one of the most important at the same time significant rulers during the Mughal time and during the Mughal era and he is known for assimilating different kinds of cultural, religious and artistic practices.

So, for that reason what we find that he was not only just interested in this Timurid or Persian plan of making the gardens or how to bring this idea of this Persian garden to the Indian subcontinent, but he was equally invested in exploring some of the local materials and bringing the Persian plan close to something that was already there in this particular land, right. So, for that reason what we find that when he decided to move from Agra to Fatehpur Sikri and this move did not happen very easily.

But also this particular move from Agra to Fatehpur Sikri it happened only for 10 years and after that they relocated to the city of Agra, but when this happened this was a chance for emperor Akbar to exercise his new aspirations and all these ideas about how to bring different kinds of belief system, philosophies, culture and artistic practices together and in this one also we find this idea of the garden that played a very important role.

So, the city of Fatehpur Sikri and if you remember that we have already spoken about this area, the Sikri is known for its sandstone, the red sandstone, and also we have this slightly yellowish and the grey sandstone that we find in this region. So, the red characteristic Sikri sandstone is something that Akbar had picked up and he had utilized this particular sandstone to the highest possible extent.

So, the red sandstone we also find that was used for different Buddhist images, for Hindu images and now we see the same material was used in a very different context for making this city of Fatehpur Sikri, the city of victory. So, here on the right side of the screen, we have a planning of the fort complex of Fatehpur Sikri, the palace complex of Fatehpur Sikri. And in this one we find there are two major gardens which are there.

And those will be; one garden was there by the Diwan-E-Aam the place of public audience where the ruler or the king would need the public for knowing their grievances or listening to them. And then the other garden was there in the Zenana complex or the complex of the women and that particular garden it was not situated on the ground level, but it was situated on the upper storey of a building.

So, it is kind of that we see this idea of the garden had not only just allowed them to experiment it with the palace complexes, but they were also doing experiments in terms of where to place the garden and what all different kinds of explorations can be done. And why I say this garden planning is also important for making the palace complex is because in these two very important areas, we find the garden and the gardens also sort of shape what all buildings will be there around it.

So, that is how we find the location of the garden is also something that is significant for making the architectural spaces in this entire palace complex. And if we get into the details of the architecture that what all was happening and why I say this particular site of Fatehpur Sikri was such an important place that is because we see that some of the characteristic features that Akbar was successful to bring from the Persian context.

For example, iwan was brought together with some of the elements of the Rajput architecture. So, for example to study iwan there is no better example than looking into Buland Darwaza the main gateway towards the Fatehpur Sikri palace complex. So, this is Buland Darwaza on the left side of the screen and here what we find that what is iwan, iwan is basically this large arched gateway like this one, this is an arch and we see there is this large arch gateway.

So, these gateways that has four sides and for the four sides only one side will have a huge opening or like a considerably big opening and the three other sides will be closed compared to what is there in one side. So, this particular form we find not only for making the gateways, but also in the religious structures, for example in the masjid and the tombs and so on. So, this iwan structure, we will be looking into it again and again when we study the Mughal structures.

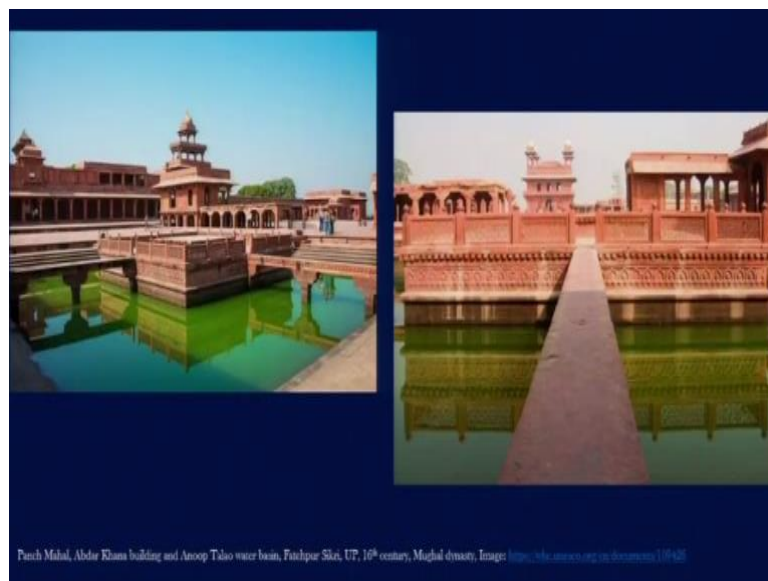
So, this iwan structure, we find that was brought from the Persian architecture lexicon and then that was matched with some of the other architectural forms, for example the one we have here and this is called the chhatri and chhatri is something that is these covered pavilions which were prevalent in the Rajput architecture and the chhatris have also been used as the memorial architectural forms in the Rajput context.

So, we see these chhatri structures are being brought from the Rajput context and then that was merged with the Persian architectural form and that is how this very syncretic architectural

form was created. And if we also see the kind of material those are used here in terms of how this red sandstone plays a very important role in its aesthetics and then there is also this yellow ochre or cream sandstone is there.

And then there is also the sandstone which is grey, and all these things are then there that is matched by the white marble. So, marble has been used in the architecture during Akbar's time period very selectively and this balance between red and white has been used to enhance the aesthetic appeal of these monumental architectural forms.

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If we get a little more into this cultural assimilation that happened during Akbar's time period, we also see how there are certain areas and what have also been very interesting in terms of the assimilation that took place. So, one of the areas will certainly be within the palace complex of Fatehpur Sikri. And here we have one of the important sites in this palace complex that is Anup Talao.

And in Anup Talao also we find a similar kind of plan like the chaharbagh garden planning or the four part garden planning has played out. So, Talao which is also a man-made tank this is where in its for ground plan and as the chaharbagh plans will have that water channels, four water channels meeting at the centre, and here instead of the water channels it is actually like filled with water. And then there are four pathways which take the people at the centre of this structure.



So, it is almost the opposite of using water. So how water channels are flowed to the centre and here it is surrounded by water, but these pathways will lead people to the centre and at the centre stage, which also sort of mimics the central this reservoir kind of shape in the chaharbagh gardens, this is the place which was used for performances and different kinds of activities.

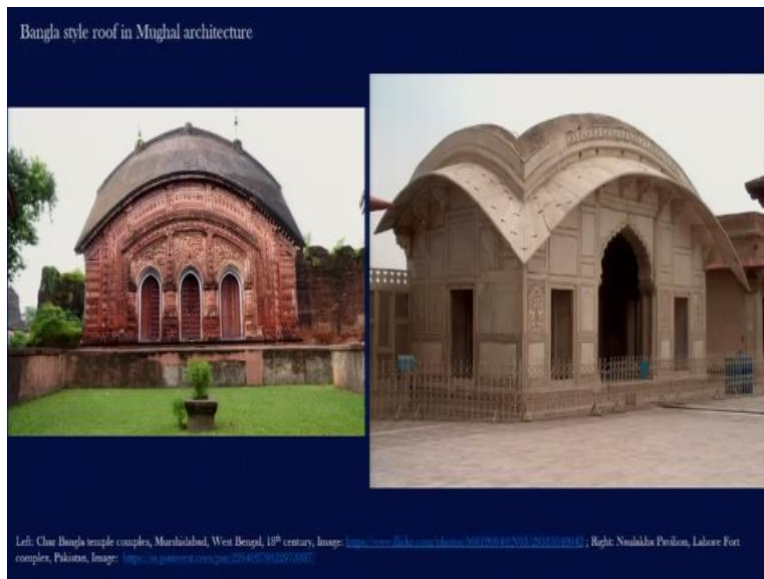
So, this is something we find how the garden not only just this chaharbagh planning that not only just made its impact on how the gardens were constructed in Agra and Fatehpur Sikri, also how the other architectural plans were laid out around the garden, but people were doing that, the artisans, the Mughal artisans, the architects, the sculptors and masons, they were doing different kinds of experiments to see what all different way this planning can be implemented.

And apart from this garden and apart from this Talao, we also see that there were some of the other structures, for example Panch Mahal and of course the Abdar Khana and so on, there these different kinds of architectural forms were being utilized. So, in one hand, if we see how this architectural form in the chhatri and then if we see that iwan and the arched gateways which are also characteristic in the Mughal context, all of them are there.

So, in the other hand we also find that how they were matched seamlessly, they have not been used as like collage of different materials put together abruptly, but they were matched seamlessly and the aesthetics of this red and white stones, the red which its rich warm colour and white being something that is pristine and at the same time white is also something that is related to spirituality.

So this materiality, spirituality and bringing like two different religions together, two different cultures together that all had worked out very well in the town planning as well as making the architecture of Fatehpur Sikri.

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And if we see that what all were these different aspects and how different kinds of architectural motifs were brought into this conversation about the intercultural dialogue that took place in the Mughal architecture, so this is another example. So, we know that during the Mughal time period, the most of the Indian subcontinent was brought under the Mughal rule, something that we have seen during Ashoka's time period.

And after Ashoka, there was no other ruler or no other dynasty which could bring the large chunk or like most parts of the Indian subcontinent under their rule. So, during Akbar's time period, we already know how from the eastern frontier of the Indian subcontinent that is today's Bangladesh and northeast India those parts and then up to until the western frontiers of Pakistan and today's Afghanistan were all under the Mughal rule and they were also expanding to the sites in the Deccan India.

So, we will be getting into the Deccan history, so for that I am not getting into the details right now. However, what we find that some of the structures which were prevalent in Bengal in the eastern frontier of the Mughal state, for example these terracotta temples. So here as we see these terracotta temples, and if you remember that our lecture on the Draupadi ratha in Mamallapuram.

I had already mentioned how this heart like structure that is not always there in the temples or in the religious architecture in the Indian subcontinent except for a few pockets. So, this is one of the examples that in Bengali architecture we find that how this terracotta temples would

have this hut like roof and which is also called chala roof. Chala means this thatched roof which is placed on the top of these huts.

So, this particular structure in which we find this chala roof and with the terracotta reliefs and plaques placed all over the exterior of the temples, this particular roof we also find with this that was adopted in the Mughal architectural lexicon and that also came into being this Bangla style roof, so that was called in the Mughal architecture. And some of the impact of this Bangla style roof we find in the city of Agra in the northern Indian plains and different other parts of northern and eastern India.

And this particular example here that we have on the right side of the screen that actually comes from Lahore in the Lahore fort area, which was also built by the Mughals, and this is called Naulakha pavilion. And Naulakha pavilion in this one we see that there is this marble structure, of course it was built in the 17th century, so it was later from Akbar's time period, but by this time we know this way in which the architectural style, this Bangla style roof had already been established in the Mughal architecture.

So, in this Naulakha pavilion, we find that how this Bangla style roof was reinterpreted, but not with terracotta, not with brick or thatched roof, but with marble as well as sometimes we also find with sandstone as well. So, there are these kinds of like exchanges of material, exchanges in terms of these different sculptural forms and that took place in this under the Mughal rule. And these are also some of the things that we see how the artisanal works in terms of like utilizing stone.

Utilizing different kinds of the local material were incorporated as part of the Mughal practices. So, if we think about the use of red sandstone that was there in the northern Indian plains, so for example as we have seen in Sikri like the Sikri sandstone that was made as a very important part of the Mughal buildings, then the marbles usually came from Rajasthan, so the area what we know today as Rajasthan or Rajputana.

And so Makrana and some of the other places were very well known for these marbles which were used and which were utilized in these buildings. Now, some of the other things that we also find here is that there are not really too many of the sculptures that we find in these

buildings and that also gives rise to the utilization of plastic or three-dimensional images and they are used in Islam.

But we see that there are vegetal motifs, scribble motifs and different kinds of low reliefs those were carved onto this stone surfaces. So here in the Naulakha pavilion, we see that there are at least two kinds of this embellishment those are used here. One will be the stone carving and the other thing is called inlay work or parchinkari, so we will get into the details of both these kinds of work and their relationship to the city planning, the gardens and everything else and we will continue this discussion. Thank you.