SURREAL OR PRACTICAL? INDIA’S ETHEREAL ARCHITECTURE

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BUDDHIST MONUMENTS

Stupas at Sanchi
Stupa II, Stupa of the Saints, 75-50 BCE
Aniconic symbols of the Buddha
Stupa I, The Great Stupa, 50 BCE-50 CE
South torana, gateway, Asokan column, c. 250 BCE

Bharhut Stupa
vedika, railing, 100-50 BCE, Indian Museum, Kolkota
cf. Narrative panels, events in the life of the Buddha
Kushan Period, Gandhara, 2nd century CE 3rd Floor Galleries, Asian Art Museum

HINDU TEMPLES

Dasavatara (Vishnu) Temple, Deogarh, Gupta, c. 500-550 CE cf. Standing images of Vishnu in AAM galleries

Parasurameshvara (Shiva) Temple, Bhubanesvar, Orissa, c. 650 CE cf. linga in Indian Gallery, and also in Himalayan Gallery

Kandariya Mahadeva (Shiva) Temple, Khajuraho, Candela Dynasty, 1025-50 CE cf. apsaras, heavenly female deity, Indian Gallery

JAIN TEMPLES

Chaumukha Temple, Ranakpur, Rajasthan, started 1440 completed 1496 CE
cf. Jain seated and standing Jinas, and hanging bracket musicians in Indian Galleries, Asian Art Museum

Vardhamana (c. 540-468 BC) founder of Jainism, son of Siddhartha, chief of the Jnatrikas, a ksatriya clan, a contemporary of Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha), he was known to his followers as Mahavira, the Great Hero.

jina

tirthankara

Adinatha (Rsabhanatha)
Neminath
Parsvanatha
Mahavira
Digmbaras
Svetambaras

1st tirthankara (identified by his long hair)
22nd tirthankara (usually green carnation)
23rd tirthankara (usually protected by naga)
24th tirthankara
sky-clad sect
white-clad sect

MUGHAL MONUMENTS
Mughal Dynasty: 1526-1887
Babur: 1483-1530 r. 1526-1530
Humayun: 1508-1556 r. 1530-1556
Akbar: 1541-1605 r. 1556-1605
Jahangir: 1569-1627 r. 1605-1627
Shah Jahan: 1592-1666 r. 1627-1658

Humayun’s Tomb, Delhi, completed 1571
Commissioned possibly by a wife, Hajji Begum. Main patron, Akbar acting on Advice of Bhairam Khan, his chief military advisor. Architect: Mirak Sayyid (Mirza) Ghias, originally from Herat, Persia.

*char bagh*: four-fold garden defined by narrow waterways double dome

Fatehpur Sikri, 1571-1585
Akbar built Fatehpur, City of Glory, at Sikri, to honor Shaik Salim Chishti, who foretold the birth of his son Salim (Jahangir) b. 1569, and to celebrate his victories over the Rajput forts at Chitor and Ranthambor in 1568 and 1569.

- Diwan-i-Aam: Hall of Public Audience
- Diwan-i-Khass: Hall of Private Audience (Imperial column in interior)
- Ankh Michauli: Treasury
- Astrologer’s Seat
- Panch Mahal: 5-storey Wind Palace
- Anup Talao: Peerless Pool
- Jami Masjid: Great Mosque
- Buland Darwaza: Victory Gate
- Shaikh Salim Chishti’s Tomb

Taj Mahal, Agra (begun 1632 completed 1643)
The 'Crown Palace' built as the mausoleum for Mumtaz Mahal (1593-1631), 2nd wife of Shah Jahan who died on June 17, 1631. Mumtaz Mahal 'The Chosen One of the Palace' was the daughter of Asaf Khan, the brother of Nur Jahan, 2nd wife of Jahangir, Shah Jahan’s father. Shah Jahan died in 1666; he was imprisoned in the Red Fort, Agra, by his third son, Aurangzeb, and was also buried in the Taj Mahal.

Architect: Ustad Isa from Persia
Calligrapher: Abd al-Haq from Shiraz, entitled Amanat Khan 'Trustworthy Noble' *pietra dura*, marble inlaid with precious and semi-precious stones *char bagh*: four-fold garden

B’HAI TEMPLE
Lotus Temple, Delhi

References:
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