

Taj Mahal



Taj Mahal لَحْم جَات

UNESCO World Heritage Site

Type Cultural

Criteria i

Designated 1983 (7th session)

Reference No. 252

State Party India

Region Asia-Pacific

Location	Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India
Coordinates	27.174799°N 78.042111°E﻿ / ﻿27.174799°N 78.042111°E﻿ / 27.174799; 78.042111
Elevation	171 m (561 ft)
Built	1632–1653
Architect	Ustad Ahmad Lahauri
Architectural style(s)	Mughal architecture
Visitation	More than 3 million (in 2003)

Location in western Uttar Pradesh, India

The Taj Mahal Hindi from Persian/Urdu: لَحْم جَات "crown of palaces", pronounced also "the Taj" is a white marble mausoleum located in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India. It was built by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his third wife, Mumtaz Mahal. The Taj Mahal is widely recognized as "the jewel of Muslim art in India and one of the universally admired masterpieces of the world's heritage".

Taj Mahal is regarded by many as the finest example of Mughal architecture, a style that combines elements from Islamic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish and Indian architectural styles.

*In 1983, the Taj Mahal became a UNESCO World Heritage Site. While the white domed marble mausoleum is the most familiar component of the Taj Mahal, it is actually an integrated complex of structures. The construction began around 1632 and was completed around 1653, employing thousands of artisans and craftsmen. The construction of the Taj Mahal was entrusted to a board of architects under imperial supervision, including Abd ul-Karim Ma'mur Khan, Makramat Khan, and Ustad Ahmad Lahauri. Lahauri is generally considered to be the principal designer.*Contents [hide]

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Origin and inspiration

Main article: [Origins and architecture of the Taj Mahal](#)

In 1631, Shah Jahan, emperor during the Mughal empire's period of greatest prosperity, was grief-stricken when his third wife, Mumtaz Mahal, died during the birth of their 14th child, Gauhara Begum. Construction of the Taj Mahal began in 1632. The court chronicles of Shah Jahan's grief illustrate the love story traditionally held as an inspiration for Taj Mahal. The principal mausoleum was completed in 1648 and the surrounding buildings and garden were finished five years later. Emperor Shah Jahan himself described the Taj in these words:

Shah Jahan, who commissioned the Taj Mahal -"Shah jahan on a globe" from the Smithsonian Institution
Artistic depiction of Mumtaz Mahal

Taj Mahal site plan.

The Moonlight Garden to the north of the



Yamuna.

Terrace area: Tomb, Mosque and Jawab.

Charbagh (gardens).

Gateway, attendant accommodations, and other tombs.

Taj Ganji (bazaar)

*Should guilty seek asylum here,
Like one pardoned, he becomes free from sin.
Should a sinner make his way to this mansion,
All his past sins are to be washed away.
The sight of this mansion creates sorrowing sighs;
And the sun and the moon shed tears from their eyes.
In this world this edifice has been made;
To display thereby the creator's glory.*

The Taj Mahal incorporates and expands on design traditions of Persian architecture and earlier Mughal architecture. Specific inspiration came from successful Timurid and Mughal buildings including; the Gur-e Amir (the tomb of Timur, progenitor of the Mughal dynasty, in Samarkand), Humayun's Tomb, Itmad-Ud-Daulah's Tomb (sometimes called the Baby Taj), and Shah Jahan's own Jama Masjid in Delhi. While earlier Mughal buildings were primarily constructed of red sandstone, Shah Jahan promoted the use of white marble inlaid with semi-precious stones, and buildings under his patronage reached new levels of refinement.



Architecture

Tomb



Northern view, from across the river Yamuna

Eastern view, early in the day

Western viewed, late in the day

The tomb is the central focus of the entire complex of the Taj Mahal. This large, white marble structure stands on a square plinth and consists of a symmetrical building with an iwan (an arch-shaped doorway) topped by a large dome and finial. Like most Mughal tombs, the basic elements are Persian in origin.

The base structure is essentially a large, multi-chambered cube with chamfered corners, forming an unequal octagon that is approximately 55 metres (180 ft) on each of the four long sides. On each of these sides, a huge pishtaq, or vaulted archway, frames the iwan with two similarly shaped, arched balconies stacked on either side. This motif of stacked pishtags is replicated on the chamfered corner areas, making the design completely symmetrical on all sides of the building. Four minarets frame the tomb, one at each corner of the plinth facing the chamfered corners. The main chamber houses the false sarcophagi of Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan; the actual graves are at a lower level.

The marble dome that surmounts the tomb is the most spectacular feature. Its height of around 35 metres (115 ft) is about the same as the length of the base, and is accentuated as it sits on a cylindrical "drum" which is roughly 7 metres (23 ft) high. Because of its shape, the dome is often called an onion dome or amrud (guava dome). The top is decorated with a lotus design, which also serves to accentuate its height. The shape of the dome is emphasised by four smaller domed chattris (kiosks) placed at its corners, which replicate the onion shape of the main dome. Their columned bases open through the roof of the tomb and provide light to the interior. Tall decorative spires (guldastas) extend from edges of base walls, and provide visual emphasis to the height of the dome. The lotus motif is repeated on both the chattris and

guldastas. The dome and chattris are topped by a gilded finial, which mixes traditional Persian and Hindustani decorative elements.

View from Masjid

The main finial was originally made of gold but was replaced by a copy made of gilded bronze in the early 19th century. This feature provides a clear example of integration of traditional Persian and Hindu decorative elements. The finial is topped by a moon, a typical Islamic motif whose horns point heavenward. Because of its placement on the main spire, the horns of the moon and the finial point combine to create a trident shape, reminiscent of traditional Hindu symbols of Shiva. The minarets, which are each more than 40 metres (130 ft) tall, display the designer's penchant for symmetry. They were designed as working minarets — a traditional element of mosques, used by the muezzin to call the Islamic faithful to prayer. Each minaret is effectively divided into three equal parts by two working balconies that ring the tower. At the top of the tower is a final balcony surmounted by a chattri that mirrors the design of those on the tomb. The chattris all share the same decorative elements of a lotus design topped by a gilded finial. The minarets were constructed slightly outside of the plinth so that, in the event of collapse, (a typical occurrence with many tall constructions of the period) the material from the towers would tend to fall away from the tomb.

Base, dome, and minaret

Finial

Main iwan and side pishtaq

Simplified diagram of the Taj Mahal floor plan

Minaret

Minaret

Exterior decoration

Calligraphy on large pishtaq

The exterior decorations of the Taj Mahal are among the finest in Mughal architecture. As the surface area changes the decorations are refined proportionally. The decorative elements were created by applying paint, stucco, stone inlays, or carvings. In line with the Islamic prohibition against the use of anthropomorphic forms, the decorative elements can be grouped into either calligraphy, abstract forms or vegetative motifs.

Throughout the complex, passages from the Qur'an are used as decorative elements. Recent scholarship suggests that the passages were chosen by Amanat Khan. The texts refer to themes of judgment and include:

Surah 36 – Ya Sin

Surah 39 – The Crowds

Surah 48 – Victory

Surah 67 – Dominion

Surah 77 – Those Sent Forth

Surah 81 – The Folding Up

Surah 82 – The Cleaving Asunder

Surah 84 – The Rending Asunder

Surah 89 – Daybreak

Surah 91 – The Sun

Surah 93 – Morning Light

Surah 94 - The Solace

Surah 95 - The Fig

Surah 98 - The Evidence

Surah 112 - The Purity of Faith

The calligraphy on the Great Gate reads "O Soul, thou art at rest. Return to the Lord at peace with Him, and He at peace with you."

The calligraphy was created by a calligrapher named Abd ul-Haq, in 1609. Shah Jahan conferred the title of "Amanat Khan" upon him as a reward for his "dazzling virtuosity".[9] Near the lines from the Qur'an at the base of the interior dome is the inscription, "Written by the insignificant being, Amanat Khan Shirazi." [22] Much of the calligraphy is composed of florid thuluth script, made of jasper or black marble, [9] inlaid in white marble panels. Higher panels are written in slightly larger script to reduce the skewing effect when viewed from below. The calligraphy found on the marble cenotaphs in the tomb is particularly detailed and delicate.

Abstract forms are used throughout, especially in the plinth, minarets, gateway, mosque, jawab and, to a lesser extent, on the surfaces of the tomb. The domes and vaults of the sandstone buildings are worked with tracery of incised painting to create elaborate geometric forms. Herringbone inlays define the space between many of the adjoining elements. White inlays are used in sandstone buildings, and

dark or black inlays on the white marbles. Mortared areas of the marble buildings have been stained or painted in a contrasting colour, creating geometric patterns of considerable complexity. Floors and walkways use contrasting tiles or blocks in tessellation patterns.

On the lower walls of the tomb there are white marble dados that have been sculpted with realistic bas relief depictions of flowers and vines. The marble has been polished to emphasise the exquisite detailing of the carvings and the dado frames and archway spandrels have been decorated with pietra dura inlays of highly stylised, almost geometric vines, flowers and fruits. The inlay stones are of yellow marble, jasper and jade, polished and levelled to the surface of the walls.

Herringbone

Plant motifs

Spandrel detail

Incised painting

Reflective tiles normal exposure

Calligraphy of Persian poems

Finial Floor Tiling

Marble Design Below the Iwans

Interior decoration

Jali screen surrounding the cenotaphs

Tombs of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal at underground level

Cenotaphs, interior of Taj Mahal in ground level

The interior chamber of the Taj Mahal steps far beyond traditional decorative elements. Here, the inlay work is not pietra dura, but a lapidary of precious and semiprecious gemstones. The inner chamber is an octagon with the design allowing for entry from each face, although only the door facing the garden to the south is used.

The interior walls are about 25 metres (82 ft) high and are topped by a "false" interior dome decorated with a sun motif. Eight pishtaq arches define the space at ground level and, as with the exterior, each lower pishtaq is crowned by a second pishtaq about midway up the wall. The four central upper arches form balconies or viewing areas, and each balcony's exterior window has an intricate screen or jali cut from marble. In addition to the light from the balcony screens, light enters through roof openings covered by chattris at the corners. Each chamber wall has been highly decorated with dado bas-relief, intricate lapidary inlay and refined calligraphy panels, reflecting in miniature detail the design elements seen throughout the exterior of the complex.

The octagonal marble screen or jali which borders the cenotaphs is made from eight marble panels which have been carved through with intricate pierce work. The remaining surfaces have been inlaid in extremely delicate detail with semi-precious stones forming twining vines, fruits and flowers.

Muslim tradition forbids elaborate decoration of graves. Hence, the bodies of Mumtaz and Shah Jahan were put in a relatively plain crypt beneath the inner chamber with their faces turned right and towards Mecca. Mumtaz Mahal's cenotaph is placed at the precise center of the inner chamber on a rectangular marble base of 1.5 metres (4 ft 11 in) by 2.5 metres (8 ft 2 in).

Both the base and casket are elaborately inlaid with precious and semiprecious gems. Calligraphic inscriptions on the casket identify and praise Mumtaz. On the lid of the casket is a raised rectangular lozenge meant to suggest a writing tablet. Shah Jahan's cenotaph is beside Mumtaz's to the western side, and is the only visible asymmetric element in the entire complex. His cenotaph is bigger than his wife's, but reflects the same elements: a larger casket on a slightly taller base, again decorated with astonishing precision with lapidary and calligraphy that identifies him. On the lid of this casket is a traditional sculpture of a small pen box.

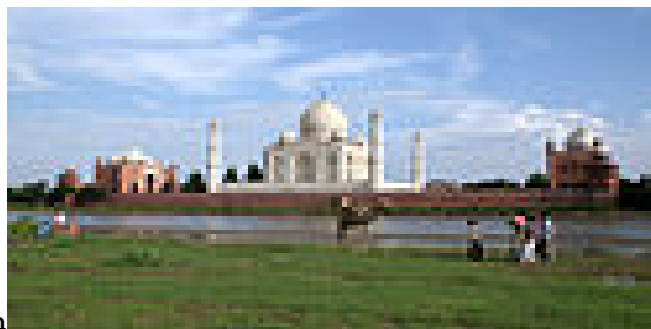
The pen box and writing tablet were traditional Mughal funerary icons decorating the caskets of men and women respectively. The Ninety Nine Names of God are found as calligraphic inscriptions on the sides of the actual tomb of Mumtaz Mahal, in the crypt including "O Noble, O Magnificent, O Majestic, O Unique, O Eternal, O Glorious... ". The tomb of Shah Jahan bears a calligraphic inscription that reads; "He traveled from this world to the banquet-hall of Eternity on the night of the twenty-sixth of the month of Rajab, in the year 1076 Hijri."

Arch of Jali

Delicate pierce work

Detail of Jali

Detail of Pietra dura jali inlay



Garden

Walkways beside reflecting pool

The complex is set around a large 300-metre (980 ft) square charbagh or Mughal garden. The garden uses raised pathways that divide each of the four quarters of the garden into 16 sunken parterres or flowerbeds. A raised marble water tank at the center of the garden, halfway between the tomb and gateway with a reflecting pool on a north-south axis, reflects the image of the mausoleum. The raised marble water tank is called al Hawd al-Kawthar, in reference to the "Tank of Abundance" promised to Muhammad. Elsewhere, the garden is laid out with avenues of trees and fountains. The charbagh garden, a design inspired by Persian gardens, was introduced to India by the first Mughal emperor, Babur. It symbolises the four flowing rivers of Jannah (Paradise) and reflects the Paradise garden derived from the Persian paridazea, meaning 'walled garden'. In mystic Islamic texts of Mughal period, Paradise is described as an ideal garden of abundance with four rivers flowing from a central spring or mountain, separating the garden into north, west, south and east.

Most Mughal charbaghs are rectangular with a tomb or pavilion in the center. The Taj Mahal garden is unusual in that the main element, the tomb, is located at the end of the garden. With the discovery of Mahtab Bagh or "Moonlight Garden" on the other side of the Yamuna, the interpretation of the Archaeological Survey of India is that the Yamuna river itself was incorporated into the garden's design and was meant to be seen as one of the rivers of Paradise. The similarity in layout of the garden and its architectural features with the Shalimar Gardens suggest that they may have been designed by the same architect, Ali Mardan. Early accounts of the garden describe its profusion of vegetation, including abundant roses, daffodils, and fruit trees. As the Mughal Empire declined, the tending of the garden also declined, and when the British took over the management of Taj Mahal during the time of the British Empire, they changed the landscaping to resemble that of lawns of London.

Outlying buildings

The Great gate (Darwaza-i rauza)—gateway to the Taj Mahal

The Taj Mahal complex is bounded on three sides by crenellated red sandstone walls, with the river-facing side left open. Outside the walls are several additional mausoleums, including those of Shah Jahan's other wives, and a larger tomb for Mumtaz's favourite servant. These structures, composed primarily of red sandstone, are typical of the smaller Mughal tombs of the era. The garden-facing inner sides of the wall are fronted by columned arcades, a feature typical of Hindu temples which was later incorporated into Mughal mosques. The wall is interspersed with domed chattris, and small buildings that may have been viewing areas or watch towers like the Music House, which is now used as a museum.

Interior of the Taj Mahal mosque

The main gateway (darwaza) is a monumental structure built primarily of marble which is reminiscent of Mughal architecture of earlier emperors. Its archways mirror the shape of tomb's archways, and its pishtaq arches incorporate the calligraphy that decorates the tomb. It utilises bas-relief and pietra dura inlaid decorations with floral motifs. The vaulted ceilings and walls have elaborate geometric designs, like those found in the other sandstone buildings of the complex.

Taj Mahal mosque.

At the far end of the complex, there are two grand red sandstone buildings that are open to the sides of the tomb. Their backs parallel the western and eastern walls, and the two buildings are precise mirror images of each other. The western building is a mosque and the other is the jawab (answer), whose primary purpose was architectural balance, although it may have been used as a guesthouse. The distinctions between these two buildings include the lack of mihrab (a niche in a mosque's wall facing Mecca) in the jawab and that the floors of jawab have a geometric design, while the mosque floor was laid with outlines of 569 prayer rugs in black marble. The mosque's basic design of a long hall surmounted by three domes is similar to others built by Shah Jahan, particularly to his Masjid-Jahan Numa, or Jama Masjid, Delhi. The Mughal mosques of this period divide the sanctuary hall into three areas, with a main sanctuary and slightly smaller sanctuaries on either side.

At the Taj Mahal, each sanctuary opens onto an enormous vaulting dome. These outlying buildings were completed in 1643.

Panorama of Taj Mahal taken in 2005.

Construction

Ground layout of the Taj Mahal

The Taj Mahal was built on a parcel of land to the south of the walled city of Agra. Shah Jahan presented Maharajah Jai Singh with a large palace in the center of Agra in exchange for the land.[29] An area of roughly three acres was excavated, filled with dirt to reduce seepage, and levelled at 50 metres (160 ft) above riverbank. In the tomb area, wells were dug and filled with stone and rubble to form the footings of the tomb. Instead of lashed bamboo, workmen constructed a colossal brick scaffold that mirrored the tomb. The scaffold was so enormous that foremen estimated it would take years to dismantle. According to the legend, Shah Jahan decreed that anyone could keep the bricks taken from the scaffold, and thus it was dismantled by peasants overnight. A fifteen kilometre (9.3 mi) tamped-earth ramp was built to transport marble and materials to the construction site and teams of twenty or thirty oxen pulled the blocks on specially constructed wagons. An elaborate post-and-beam pulley system was used to raise the blocks into desired position. Water was drawn from the river by a series of purs, an animal-powered rope and bucket mechanism, into a large storage tank and raised to a large distribution tank. It was passed into three subsidiary tanks, from which it was piped to the complex.

The plinth and tomb took roughly 12 years to complete. The remaining parts of the complex took an additional 10 years and were completed in order of minarets, mosque and jawab, and gateway. Since the complex was built in stages, discrepancies exist in completion dates due to differing opinions on "completion". For example, the mausoleum itself was essentially complete by 1643, but work continued on the rest of the complex. Estimates of the cost of construction vary due to difficulties in estimating costs across time. The total cost has been estimated to be about 32 million Rupees at that time.[30]

The Taj Mahal was constructed using materials from all over India and Asia and over 1,000 elephants were used to transport building materials. The translucent white marble was brought from Makrana, Rajasthan, the jasper from Punjab, jade and crystal from China. The turquoise was from Tibet and the Lapis lazuli from Afghanistan, while the sapphire came from Sri Lanka and the carnelian from Arabia. In all, twenty eight types of precious and semi-precious stones were inlaid into the white marble.

The construction of the Taj Mahal was entrusted to a board of architects under imperial supervision, including Abd ul-Karim Ma'mur Khan, Makramat Khan, and Ustad Ahmad Lahauri. Lahauri is generally considered to be the principal designer.

Artist's impression of the Taj Mahal, from the Smithsonian Institution

A labour force of twenty thousand workers was recruited across northern India. Sculptors from Bukhara, calligraphers from Syria and Persia, inlayers from southern India, stonecutters from Baluchistan, a specialist in building turrets, another who carved only marble flowers were part of the thirty-seven men who formed the creative unit. Some of the builders involved in construction of Taj Mahal are:

Ismail Afandi (a.k.a. Ismail Khan) of the Ottoman Empire — Turkish architect, designer of the main dome.

Ustad Isa (Isa Muhammad Effendi) of Persia — Turkish architect, trained by Koca Mimar Sinan Agha of the Ottoman Empire and frequently credited with a key role in the architectural design.

'Puru' from Benarus, Persia — has been mentioned as a supervising architect.

Qazim Khan, a native of Lahore — cast the solid gold finial.

Chiranjilal, a lapidary from Delhi — the chief sculptor and mosaicist.

Amanat Khan from Shiraz, Iran — the chief calligrapher.

Muhammad Hanif — a supervisor of masons.

Mir Abdul Karim and Mukkarimat Khan of Shiraz — handled finances and management of daily production.

History

Taj Mahal by Samuel Bourne, 1860.

Taj Mahal as seen from Red Fort of Agra from where Shah Jahan used to see the mausoleum of his beloved wife during his last years

Soon after the Taj Mahal's completion, Shah Jahan was deposed by his son Aurangzeb and put under house arrest at nearby Agra Fort. Upon Shah Jahan's death, Aurangzeb buried him in the mausoleum next to his wife.

By the late 19th century, parts of the buildings had fallen badly into disrepair. During the time of the Indian rebellion of 1857, the Taj Mahal was defaced by British soldiers and government officials, who chiselled out precious stones and lapis lazuli from its walls. At the end of the 19th century, British viceroy Lord Curzon ordered a sweeping restoration project, which was completed in 1908. He also commissioned the large lamp in the interior chamber, modelled after one in a Cairo mosque. During this time the garden was remodelled with British-style lawns that are still in place today.

Threats

Protective wartime scaffolding

In 1942, the government erected a scaffolding in anticipation of an air attack by German Luftwaffe and later by Japanese Air Force[citation needed]. During the India-Pakistan wars of 1965 and 1971, scaffoldings were again erected to mislead bomber pilots.

More recent threats have come from environmental pollution on the banks of Yamuna River including acid rain due to the Mathura Oil Refinery,[41] which was opposed by Supreme Court of India directives. The pollution has been turning the Taj Mahal yellow. To help control the pollution, the Indian government has set up the Taj Trapezium Zone (TTZ), a 10,400-square-kilometre (4,000 sq mi) area around the monument where strict emissions standards are in place.

Concerns for the tomb's structural integrity have recently been raised because of a decline in the water level of the Yamuna river which is decreasing at a rate of 5 feet a year. In 2010, cracks appeared in parts of the tomb, and the minarets which surround the monument were showing signs of tilting, as the wooden foundation of the tomb may be rotting due to lack of water. Some persons predict that the tomb may collapse within 5 years.

Tourism

The Taj Mahal attracts a large number of tourists. UNESCO documented more than 2 million visitors in 2001, including more than 200,000 from overseas.[45] A two tier pricing system is in place, with a significantly lower entrance fee for Indian citizens and a more expensive one for foreigners. Most tourists visit in the cooler months of October, November and February. Polluting traffic is not allowed near the complex and tourists must either walk from parking lots or catch an electric bus. The Khawasspuras (northern courtyards) are currently being restored for use as a new visitor center.

The small town to the south of the Taj, known as Taj Ganji or Mumtazabad, was originally constructed with caravanserais, bazaars and markets to serve the needs of visitors and workmen.[48] Lists of recommended travel destinations often feature the Taj Mahal, which also appears in several listings of seven wonders of the modern world, including the recently announced New Seven Wonders of the World, a recent poll with 100 million votes.

The grounds are open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays, except for Friday when the complex is open for prayers at the mosque between 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. The complex is open for night viewing on the day of the full moon and two days before and after, excluding Fridays and the month of Ramadan. For security reasons only five items—water in transparent bottles, small video cameras, still cameras, mobile phones and small ladies' purses—are allowed inside the Taj Mahal.

Myths

Ever since its construction, the building has been the source of an admiration transcending culture and geography, and so personal and emotional responses have consistently eclipsed scholastic appraisals of the monument.

Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, one of the first European visitors to the Taj Mahal

A longstanding myth holds that Shah Jahan planned a mausoleum to be built in black marble as a Black Taj Mahal across the Yamuna river. The idea originates from fanciful writings of Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, a European traveller who visited Agra in 1665. It was suggested that Shah Jahan was overthrown by his son Aurangzeb before it could be built. Ruins of blackened marble across the river in Moonlight Garden, Mahtab Bagh, seemed to support this legend. However, excavations carried out in the 1990s found that they were discolored white stones that had turned black. A more credible theory for the origins of the black mausoleum was demonstrated in 2006 by archaeologists who reconstructed part of the pool in the Moonlight Garden. A dark reflection of the white mausoleum could clearly be seen, befitting Shah Jahan's obsession with symmetry and the positioning of the pool itself.

No evidence exists for claims that describe, often in horrific detail, the deaths, dismemberments and mutilations which Shah Jahan supposedly inflicted on various architects and craftsmen associated with the tomb. Some stories claim that those involved in construction signed contracts committing themselves to have no part in any similar design. Similar claims are made for many famous buildings. No evidence exists for claims that Lord William Bentinck, governor-general of India in the 1830s, supposedly planned to demolish the Taj Mahal and auction off the marble. Bentinck's biographer John Rosselli says that the story arose from Bentinck's fund-raising sale of discarded marble from Agra Fort.

Another myth suggests that beating the silhouette of the finial will cause water to come forth. To this day, officials find broken bangles surrounding the silhouette.

In 2000, India's Supreme Court dismissed P. N. Oak's petition to declare that a Hindu king built the Taj Mahal. Oak claimed that origins of the Taj (as well as the Stonehenge and the Vatican City), together with other historic structures in the country currently ascribed to Muslim sultans were created by Hindus. Oak is regarded as a crackpot by scholars for his Hinducentric views.

Replicas

There is a replica of Taj Mahal in the Window of the World theme park located in the western part of the city of Shenzhen in the People's Republic of China. Among the buildings modelled on the Taj Mahal are the Taj Mahal Bangladesh, the Bibi Ka Maqbara in Aurangabad, Maharashtra, the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, NJ and the Tripoli Shrine Temple in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Miniature Replica of Taj mahal in the Window of the World

Taj Mahal Bangladesh

Tripoli Shrine Temple

Bibi Ka Maqbara

Trump Taj Mahal

Gallery

Taj Mahal Gallery

The tomb framed by the gateway entrance

Great gate (Darwaza-i rauza), the main entrance to the tomb.

Typical postcard image

View from the river Yamuna

The Taj Mahal at dusk turns yellow

Taj Mahal.

The top of the Taj Mahal

Depiction of Taj Mahal by orientalist painter Edwin Lord Weeks. The Walters Art Museum.