



Soltaniyeh & The Taj Mahal

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An Overview

The background image shows the interior of a highly decorated domed structure, likely a mosque or a palace. It features a series of pointed arches and a central dome, all covered in intricate carvings and patterns. The architecture is characterized by its detailed stonework and the use of light-colored materials, possibly marble or limestone. The overall aesthetic is one of classical Islamic or Persian architecture.

- **Historical background**
- **History of Soltaniyeh**
- **The Structure**
- **Influence on the Taj Mahal**
- **The Taj Mahal**
- **Q&A**
- **Games!**

Mongol Ilkhanates

- A khanate is Turkic-originated word used to describe a political entity ruled by a Khan.
- When Genghis Khan died, he divided his kingdom into 4 sections for each of his grandsons. After the death of Mongke Khan in 1259, a succession war broke out which eventually divided the empire into four separate Khantes.
- This is where the Ilkhanate originates from.

The Ilkhanate Empire 1256-1335





This 14th-century Persian manuscript shows Genghis Khan and three of his four sons. The youngest, Tolui, fathered Möngke and Hülegü; it was the death of Möngke in early 1260 that prompted the pullback of Hülegü's army, leaving a much smaller Mongol force to advance on Egypt.

Mongols Fighting

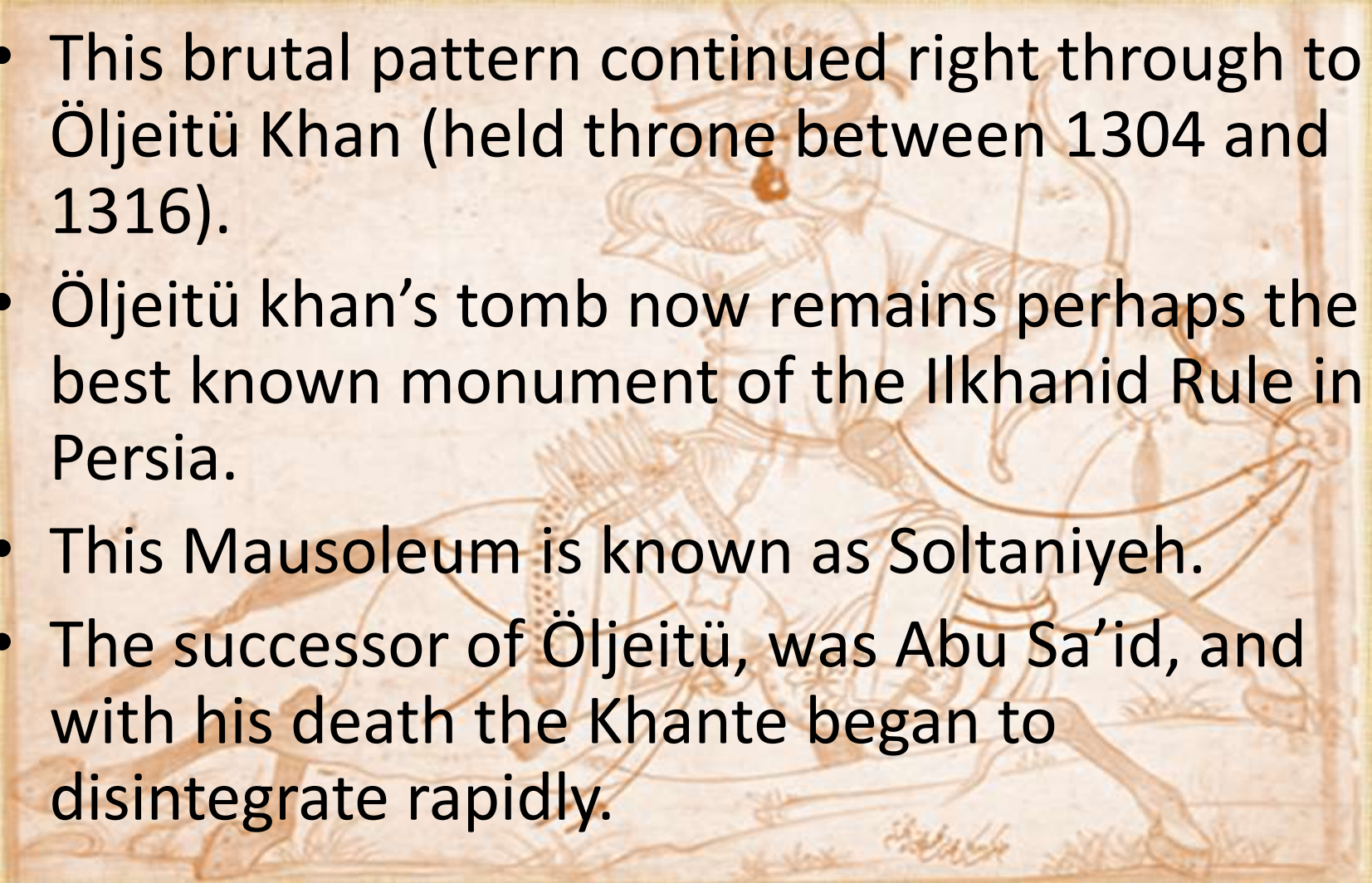


Ilkhanates Continued...

- The founder of the Ilkhanate dynasty was Hulegu Khan. From there on, successions took place for 80 years and eventually led to them to convert to Islam.
- Ghazan was the first khan to do so.
- Under the harsh reign of succeeding emperors, rivalry between the Christians, Buddhist, and Muslims continued.

Ilkhanates Continued...

- This brutal pattern continued right through to Öljeitü Khan (held throne between 1304 and 1316).
- Öljeitü khan's tomb now remains perhaps the best known monument of the Ilkhanid Rule in Persia.
- This Mausoleum is known as Soltaniyeh.
- The successor of Öljeitü, was Abu Sa'id, and with his death the Khante began to disintegrate rapidly.



So where is it located?



Zanzan Province

Soltaniyeh

- On the first of Muharram, the first day of the year 1306, Öljeitü ordered work to begin on the city of Soltaniyeh, which was designed to replace Tabriz as the capital.
- The site was an extensive plain near Qazvin which has been a favourite summer camp of the Ilkhans under the name of Qunghurolong.
- A citidal, 500 cubits, on a side and protected by a wall and sixteen towers of cute stone was soon finished.
- 500 Cubits: “So he measured...It had a wall around it, five hundred cubits long and five hundred cubits wide, to separate the holy from the common.” Ezekiel 42:20

Soltaniyeh Continued...

- Several mosques were erected, the principal one, which was built at Öljeitü's expense, was ornamented with marble and porcelain.
- A hospital and college were built and an elaborate royal residence in which the principal palace was a high pavilion or kiosk surrounded at a distance by twelve smaller ones.
- The entire ensemble was set in a marble paved court.

Soltaniyeh...

- Various courtiers added buildings on their own account and various other prime ministers, added palaces and public buildings or even entire quarters to the new city (one such quarter had one thousand houses all completely finished).
- Within the walls of the city, a great mausoleum was begun for Öljeitü.

Soltaniyeh

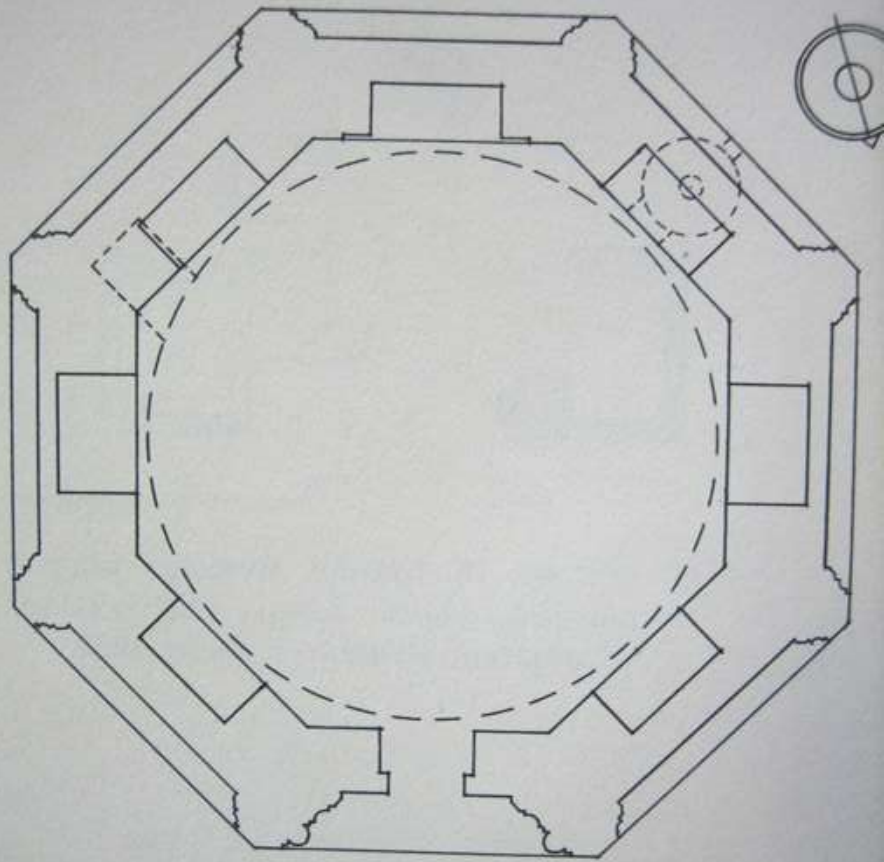


The Mausoleum

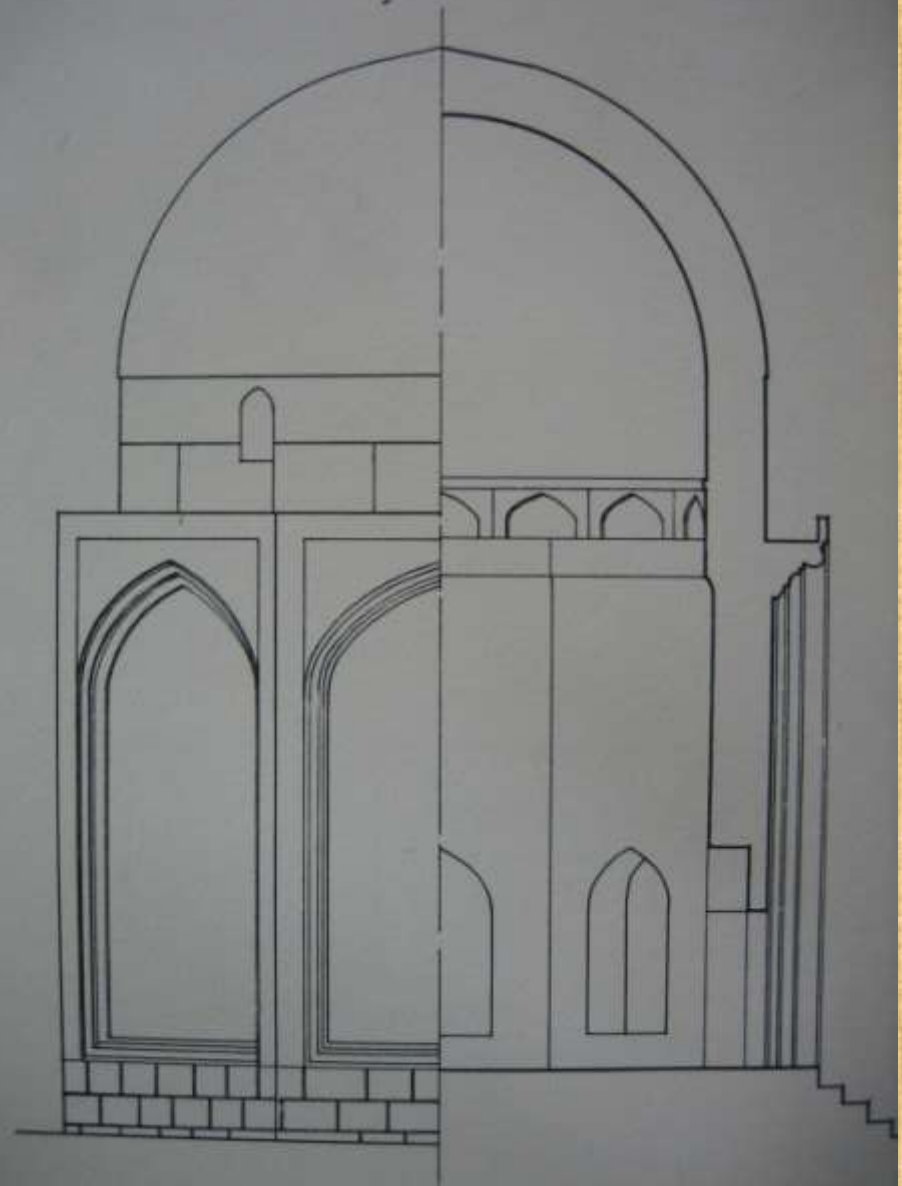
- Records state that it was an octagon sixty gaz (55 m) on each side with a cupola one hundred and twenty gaz (110 m) high.
- It was pierced by a number of windows each with a rich iron grill.
- The building had three doors of polished steel.
- The trellis around the actual tomb was of the same material and was brought from India.

The Mausoleum Continued...

- The octagonal building is crowned with a 50 m tall dome covered in turquoise-blue faience and surrounded by eight slender minarets.
- It is the earliest existing example of the double-shelled dome in Iran.
- The mausoleum's interior decoration is also outstanding and scholars such as A.U. Pope have described the building as 'anticipating the Taj Mahal'.



48. CAT. NO. 80. Sulṭāniya. Plan of the tomb
of Chelebi Oghlu





More Soltaniyeh...

- By the year 1313 the construction work at Soltaniyeh was completed. (the name means Imperial).
- The fundamental weakness of Sotlaniyeh as a site was that it was not at the intersection of established trade routes.
- Öljeitü seemed to be aware of this, and he tried in many ways to establish the city as a commercial centre.
- However, a few years after the city was established, rapid decline set in and in a hundred years time only debris marked its' location.
- The mausoleum alone continued to loom far above the level plain.



More Sotlaniyeh...

- This lofty monument was the visible symbol of the highest skill of hundreds of artisans.
- Once the structure and the city had been completed the scores of trained workmen dispersed throughout the kingdom.
- The mausoleum was more than a training ground for the artisans themselves, it was the final moment of formation of a Mongolian style of architecture.





Construction Projects Threatening Soltaniyeh Dome

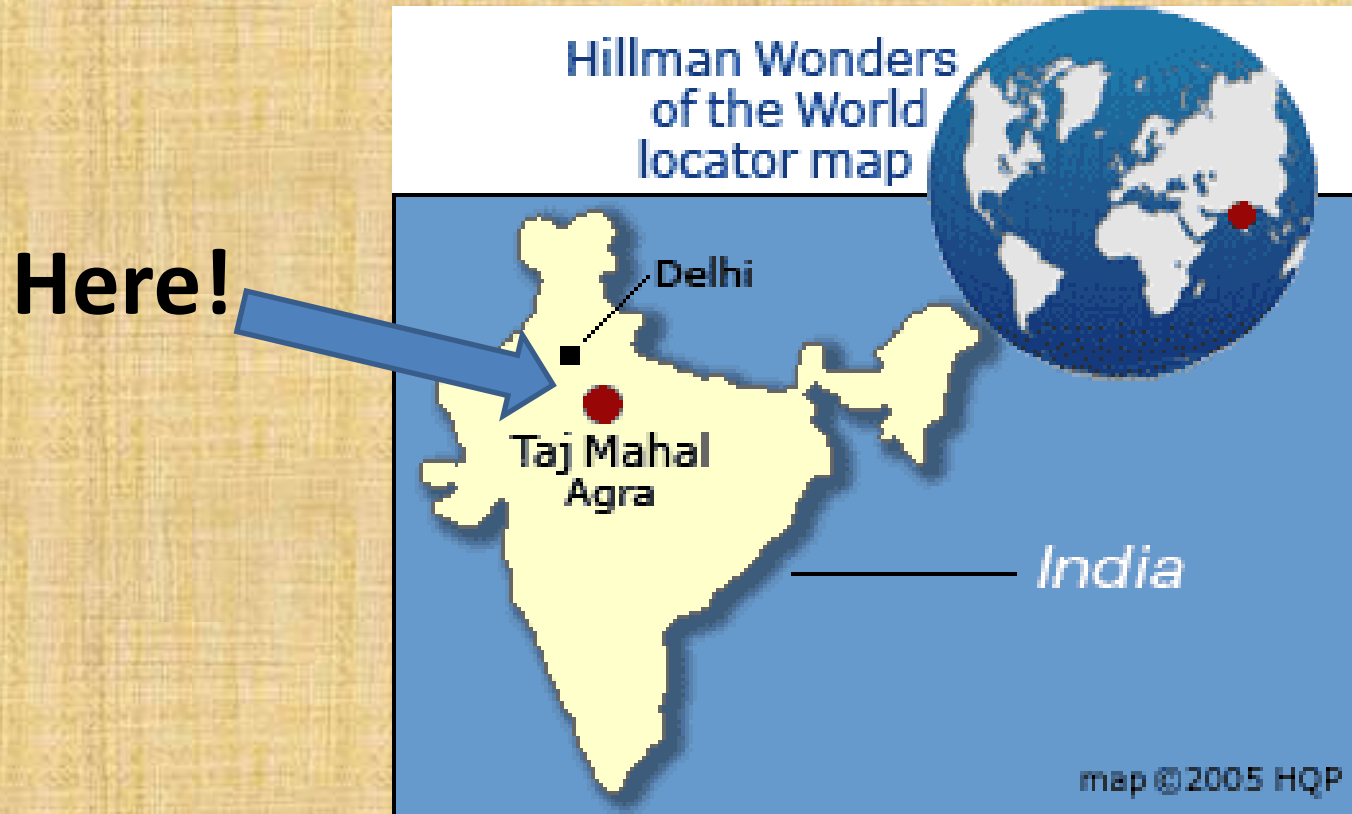
- Construction of 64 shops on the perimeter of the Soltaniyeh Dome is threatening the Ilkhanid monument, which has been registered on UNESCO's World Heritage List.
- The projects are being constructed in the Talebieh area, under which a part of the ruins of the historic city of Soltaniyeh and its congregational mosque are buried.
- Excavation for the foundations of the buildings, which recently led to the discovery of the ruins of the city, was halted by the Zanzan Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department

Influence of Soltaniyeh on the Taj Mahal





So where is it?



History of the Taj Mahal

- Located in Agra, India.
- Built by the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan.
- In memory of his favourite wife, Mumatz Mahal.
- It has been a UNESCO World heritage site since 1983.
- A combination of Persian, Ottoman, Indian, and Islamic architecture.

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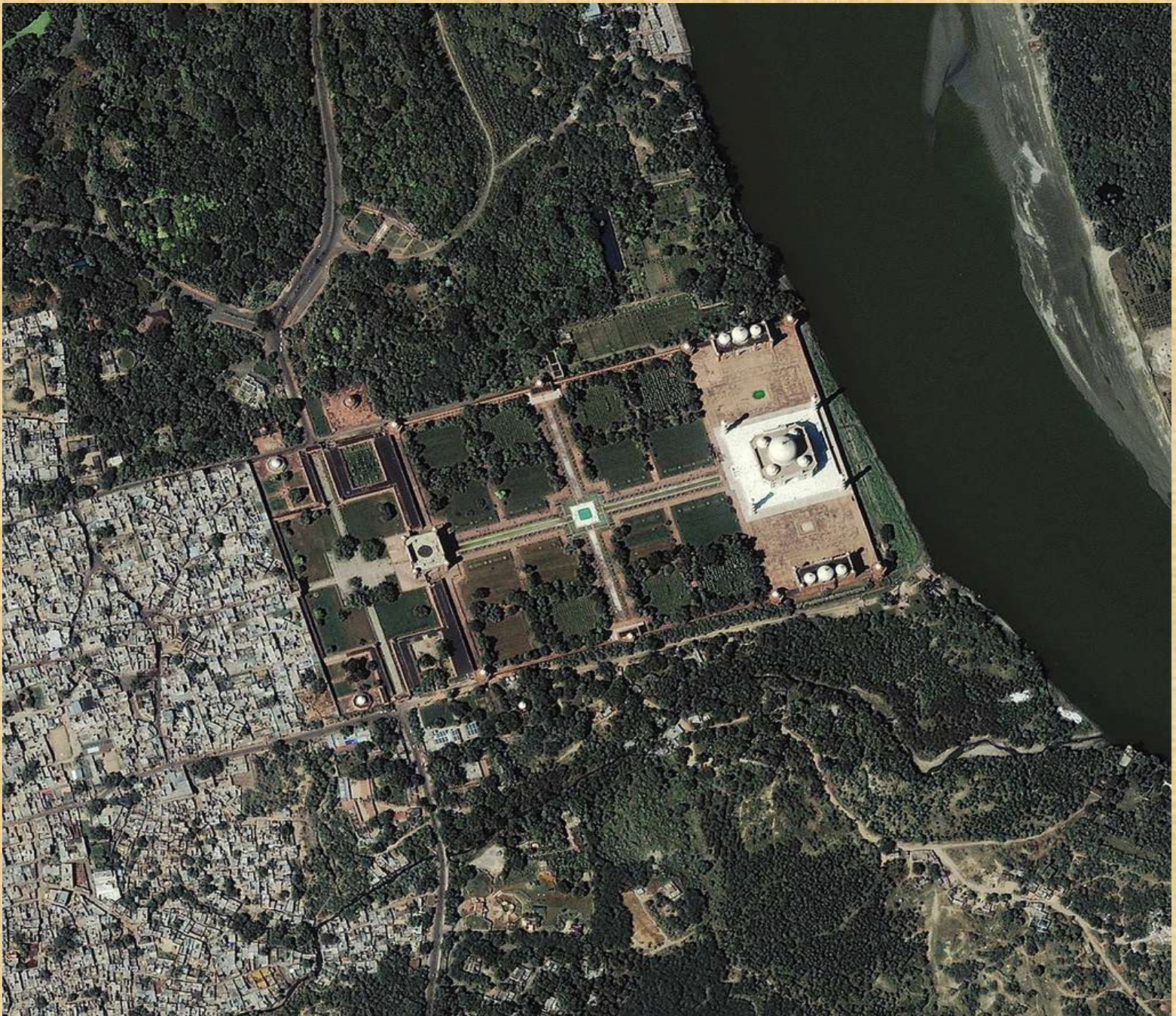


The Taj Mahal

- Mumtaz Mahal married Emperor Jahangir's third son Prince Khurram.
- After a bloody battle of royal succession, Prince Khurram became Shah Jahan.
- To Shah Jahan's dismay, she died during child birth.
- Shah Jahan decided to erect a memorial in honor of his queen.
- The monument was built on the gardens by the Yamuna river.

Construction of The Taj Mahal

- Construction began around 1632, and was completed around 1653.
- It took thousands of artisans and craftsmen to complete it.
- The principle architect of the monument was a Persian named Ustad Ahmad Lahauri.
- An area of roughly three acres was excavated and filled with dirt to reduce seepage and leveled at 50 meters above the river bank.

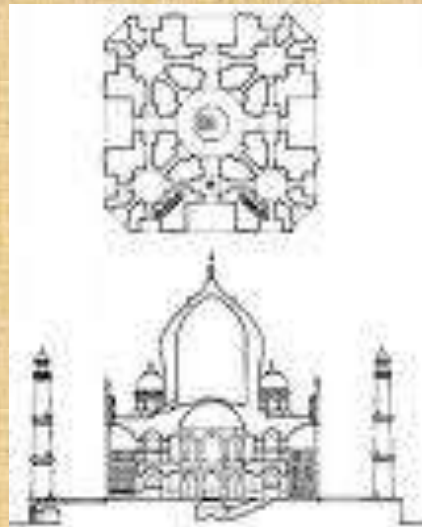


Taj Mahal...

- In the tomb area, wells were dug and filled with stone and rubble, as the footing of the tomb.
- Instead of lashed bamboo, workmen constructed a colossal brick scaffold that mirrored the tomb.
- The Taj Mahal was constructed using materials from all over India and Asia.
- Over 1000 Elephants were used to transport materials during the construction.

Construction...

- A labour force of 20,000 workers was recruited across northern India.
- Sculptors from Bukhara, calligraphers from Syria and Persia, and inlayers from southern India, and stone cutters from Baluchistan



The Taj Mahal: Exterior Decorations

- Among the finest to be found in Mughal architecture.
- As the surface area changes, a large pishtaq has more area than a smaller one, and the decorations are refined proportionally.
- Decorative elements created by applying paint or stucco or by stone inlayers or carvings.
- The calligraphy found in Taj Mahal are of florid thuluth script, created by Persian calligrapher Amanat Khan.

The Taj Mahal: Exterior Decorations



The Taj Mahal: Interior Decorations



The Taj Mahal: The Garden

- The complex is set around a 300 meter 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 flower beds.
- The charbagh garden, a design inspired by Persian gardens, was introduced to India by the first Mughal emperor Babur.
- It symbolizes four flowing rivers of paradise.



War and The Taj Mahal

- In 1947, the British government protected the Taj Mahal from German soldiers during the war.
- Also, during the war, in 1965, the Taj Mahal was damaged by the Indian government.
- More damage was done to the banks of the river Yamuna.



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The Taj Mahal Today

- It attracts from 2-4 million tourists annually.
- Most tourists visit during the cooler months of the year.



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TRIVIA TIME!!

- Get into 4 groups, (we will assign them).
- Fill out Trivia to the best of your knowledge, **WITHOUT** the use of your notes.
- Be the first to hand it in with the greatest number of questions correct...
- Winner takes the prize!
- Good luck!