After Shah Jahan, the fifth ruler of the Mughal dynasty was enthroned on 8 Jumada al-Thani 1037 (14 February 1628), he issued an order that halls for his public audiences should be constructed in all the great fortified palaces of the capitals of the Mughal Empire, in particular at Agra, Lahore, and, according to some sources, at Burhanpur. These halls were first built in wood (fig. 1) to replace a smaller tent hall that had been used for the purpose up to then. Before January 1637, the wooden halls (īwān-i chūbin) were in turn replaced by larger permanent versions, constructed "of red sandstone made white with marble plaster" (figs. 2, 3). Between 1639 and 1648 a corresponding stone hall was built in the emperor's new palace at Shahjahanabad (Delhi) (fig. 4).

All of these halls — and this applies also to their wooden precursors — are described by Shah Jahan's historians and poets as Iwan-i Dawlat Khana-i Khass-o-ʿAmm, or Hall of Public Audiences, and Iwan-i Chihil Sutun, or Forty-Pillared Hall. The Chihil Sutun or Iwan-i Dawlat Khana-i Khass-o-ʿAmm, today called Diwan-i ʿAmm, represents a new type in the palatial building program of the Mughals because, as the sources tell us, under the predecessors of Shah Jahan most of those who took part in the audience had to stand unprotected from sun and rain in front of the emperor's viewing window or jharoka (figs. 1, 5) in the open courtyard (saḥn-i khāṣṣ-o-ʿāmm) (a on fig. 6) where the audience was held. The emperor, we are told, ordered the construction of the halls out of concern for his nobles. In addition, the halls made it easier to maintain the proper hierarchy and etiquette of an audience, aspects of special interest to Shah Jahan. Under his rule, Mughal court life had become subject to a strict ceremonial centering on the emperor. The emperor's daily routine was established down to the most minute detail, an equally regulated architectural setting determined by uniformity and symmetry corresponded to these rigid ceremonial functions. During this daily routine the emperor moved within the palace from one place of audience to the other in what Oleg Grabar in a comparable context has termed a "ceremonial order of progressive remoteness."
ror would appear every day at sunrise to comply with the ancient requirement of Persian and Indian kingship to be accessible — at least visually — to all of his subjects. From the jharoka-i darshan he proceeded to the most public form of audience within the palace, which was held in the jharoka-i khāṣṣ-o-ʿāmm in the courtyard (ṣahān) of the khāṣṣ-o-ʿāmm (a on fig. 6). The appearance in the jharoka-i darshan took place only once, in the morning; the appearance in the jharoka-i khāṣṣ-o-ʿāmm was repeated in the afternoon. The public audience or bār-i ʿāmm was

"Fig. 2. Agra fort. Diwan-i ʿAmm, completed 1637."
also a state council, and its attendance was obligatory for every Mughal officeholder at the residence, whether amir or mānsabdar. The nobles and their retinues had to stand positioned according to their rank in front of the jharoka-i khāṣṣ-o-ʿamm (figs. 1, 5)\textsuperscript{12} from where the emperor dealt with the administration of the imperial household and the empire (which was treated like its extension) and other affairs of state.

The new audience halls were put up in front of the wall with the jharoka and were only accessible to holders of a certain rank, namely those “khāṣṣ-an” who had a mānsab above two hundred. The halls were open on three sides and to ensure restricted access, they were enclosed by a silver railing,\textsuperscript{13} the three doors of which were closely guarded. An additional space, fenced off by a red railing which surrounded the halls at some distance, was reserved for those with a mānsab below two hundred (fig. 3).\textsuperscript{14} The remaining area of the ʿahnd-i khāṣṣ-o-ʿamm was used by retainers and others without rank (a-b on fig. 6).

In addition to being the administrative center of the Mughal Empire the Diwan-i ʿAmm provided a stage for the great court festivals,\textsuperscript{15} in particular Nawruz (the Persian New Year) and julīs (the accession anniversary).\textsuperscript{16} It was also the setting for such state ceremonies as weighing the emperor on his solar and lunar birthdays (jashn-i wazn-i shamsī, jashn-i wazn-i qamar).\textsuperscript{17} When a royal prince’s wedding was held, the Diwan-i ʿAmm was sometimes called khālwat (“seclusion” or “retirement”), because on those occasions men had to evacuate the courtyard to allow the imperial women to use the Diwan-i ʿAmm as an exhibition hall where they arranged the dowry and the wedding presents for display during a public audience by the emperor to the court.\textsuperscript{18} The audience hall also played a part in the celebration of religious festivals such as the ʿId.\textsuperscript{19} The emperor feasted scholars and pious persons with a banquet there on the Milad (the Prophet’s birthday).\textsuperscript{20} During the whole month of Ramadan, fast-breaking meals (ifār) would be given in the audience hall to the deserving poor at imperial expense.\textsuperscript{21} The emperor also used it to receive foreign dignitaries and delegations (fig. 1).\textsuperscript{22} All in all, the Diwan-i ʿAmm was the center of court events and

---

**Fig. 4.** Delhi fort. Diwan-i ʿAmm, completed 1648.

**Fig. 5.** Lahore fort. Diwan-i ʿAmm, jharoka, second half of sixteenth or first quarter of seventeenth century.
Mughal rule where the power and pomp of the Grand Mughul were enacted.

Despite the fact that the construction of the new audience halls thus represented one of the strongest architectural statements of Shah Jahan, they have so far received little attention from architectural historians, and the scholarship that has been done relies almost entirely on textual sources or on archaeological data. With the exception of Gordon Sanderson, who published a plan of the Lahore hall and tried to interpret certain of its features through textual research, few attempts have been made to integrate the information contained in literary and visual sources with what can be derived from the architecture itself. The reason given by the court historians for the construction of the Diwan-i ʿAmm, namely, to protect the emperor’s khāṣṣ-ʿān from the vicissitudes of the weather, has also been taken at face value. By considering additional sources, I shall attempt to determine whether there was not more to the building of these halls than that, and, if so, how it was expressed in the form the halls were given.

The main work done so far on the halls by scholars like Nur Bakhsh, Muhammad Ashraf Husain, and Gordon Sanderson is based on textual evidence. All translated the descriptions of Shah Jahan’s most important historians, ʿAbd al-Hamid Lahori and Muhammad Salih Kanbo, and adduced reports of contemporary European eye witnesses. These literary sources tell us what the various functions of the halls were and something about their form, but not what would interest the modern architectural historian, namely, why a hypostyle audience hall was introduced in the palace architecture of the Mughals. Aside from panegyric comparisons and po-
ems written when a hall was completed, the sources have nothing to say about their architectural program. This should not surprise us because direct statements about the meaning of architecture, indeed of works of arts altogether, are not a special theme of Mughal writing. Art works of the Mughal period were not directly interpreted by contemporaries, and their meaning must now be sought by indirect paths. Contemporary interpretations are usually embedded in a more or less enciphered form in the courtly panegyric. The greatest problem here is to recognize which themes and concepts were merely literary conventions and which had an actual bearing on a work of art.

Shah Jahan's court historians, by designating the halls as Chihil Sutun, provide us with a clue for how they were perceived. Chihil Sutun is in the Mughal context a new notion. In Persia the term was used in the sense of halls with many, though not necessarily forty, columns. The Safavids who ruled over Persia at the same time as the Mughals used it in this way. The Safavids were the immediate neighbors of the Mughals and considered by them as their greatest rivals, against whom they also wanted to measure themselves on the level of the arts, so Persia was pivotal to the concept of Mughal rulership. It is well known that already their great ancestor Timur had tried to establish himself as a Turco-Mongolian warlord and conqueror in the Persian-Islamic tradition of rulership. His successors, the Timurids, oriented themselves even more strongly towards Persianate culture. Given this orientation of the Mughals towards Persia, one is tempted to relate the sudden appearance of Mughal audience halls designated with the Persian term chihil sutun to the hypostyle porticoes or tālārs of the reception pavilions of the Safavids, because they are formally and functionally related. In particular one feels inclined to make this connection because the first version of Shah Jahan's Chihil Sutuns was — like the Safavid tālārs — a hypostyle wooden construction open on three sides set before a masonry wall with a seat for the shah in the center. The problem, however, is that neither the date nor the
origin of the Safavid tālār has as yet been established with certainty; what appears to be the earliest example of a tālār building in Isfahan, the no longer extant Ayina Khana, seems not to have been built before 1629, which means it postdates the construction of Shah Jahan's first wooden Chihil Sutuns.  

The immediate namesake and functional equivalent of Shah Jahan's Chihil Sutuns, the reception pavilion in the palace of Isfahan, dates in its present form from 1647 (fig. 7). The shape of the earlier Safavid Chihil Sutuns is uncertain. The pavilion now known as Chihil Sutun, which is all that remains of Shah Tahmasp's palace at Qazvin (1544–54) has a masonry core surrounded by a double-storied pillared gallery. However, it is possible that the building — as the only survivor of the palace complex — inherited its name from a now lost audience building. The Qazvin Chihil Sutun, in turn, was perhaps derived from earlier prototypes in the palace of Shah Tahmasp at Tabriz (rebuilt in 1539). In addition we know of Chihil Sutuns from Timurid sources, but their shape is also uncertain. The best documented Timurid Chihil Sutun built by Ulugh Beg in the first half of the fifteenth century at Samarqand had stone columns arranged in two stories.

Among the sites known as Chihil Sutun in the early seventeenth century, however, there was one of particular historical significance which predates all the Chihil Sutuns discussed so far. In connection with audience halls it must have been pivotal for the Iran-inspired concept of rulership of the Mughals. This is Persepolis, the great ritual and representative center of the Achaemenid empire, the place where the ceremonies of the world-ruling Persian kings were held in multicolumned audience halls (fig. 8). Alexander the Great had destroyed Persepolis, but it had remained a symbolically highly charged place for any ruler who sought to associate himself with the Persian concept of sacred kingship. In Persia, this had already been true for the Sassanians who, incidentally, came from the region of Istakhr where Persepolis is situated. The tradition was continued by the Muslim rulers of Persia beginning with the Buyids (tenth century) who sought to establish their royalty, particularly with regard to the Abbasid caliphs at Baghdad, the spiritual rulers of Islam. The unbroken associations of Persepolis with the Iranian-Muslim tradition of kingship are evident from Arabic and Persian inscriptions of Muslim princes who visited Persepolis throughout the centuries. The inscriptions of these royal visitors were engraved mainly on the palace of Darius, the
Tachara. They have similar contents and at times even copy passages from each other, clearly to emphasize the aspect of continuity related to the place. Their themes reflect on the transitoriness of human achievement, in particular of worldly power and kingship, thoughts which were considered befitting for princes looking up monuments of the past. An example comes from Ibrahim Sultan, the son of Shahrulh, a relative of the Mughals and a highly ambitious Timurid governor of Fars. In the year 1423 he left the following verses on the palace of Darius:

Do you know any one of the old kings of Persia of the time of Faridun, Zahhak or Jam[shid]
Whose throne and empire did not perish and who was not ruined by the hand of destiny?
Did not the throne of Solomon — peace be upon him —
from morning to evening fly upon the wind?
Did you not see that finally it was gone with the wind?
Happy the one who departed, leaving behind knowledge and justice!
Beware! that you bring up the tree of generosity — no doubt you will then taste the fruits of fortune.
Written by Ibrahim Sultan bin Shahrulh in the year eight hundred twenty-six.

The verses tell us that in Islamic Iran Persepolis was not associated with its historical founders, the Achaemenids, but with the mythical rulers of Iran as they were popularized by Firdawsi's great epic of kings, the Shahnama, in particular with Jamshid. In Muslim Persia Persepolis was (and still is) not only known as Chihil Sutun or Chihil Minar but also as Takht-i Jamshid (Throne of Jamshid). The Arab tradition also claimed Persepolis, under the name of nearby Istakhr, by regarding it as a place of Solomon, who, in the Qur'an and in Muslim legends, appears as prophet king and ideal ruler of Islam. The Arab geographers of the Middle Ages from about the tenth century onwards like Istakhr, Muqaddasi, or Mas'udi described Persepolis as mal'ab (playground) and in particular as the masjid of Solomon. In popular Persian tradition Jamshid and Solomon were amalgamated into one and the same person. Davani, for instance, who writes in 1476 about Persepolis, says that it is known as Chihil Sutun and that it was founded by Jamshid whom tradition identifies with Solomon.

Both traditions, that of the ancient Persian kings and that of Solomon, were fundamental to the Mughals' concept of rulership. That the Great Mughals liked to appear as second Khusrus, as second Jamshids, and as second Solomons is transmitted through their courtly panegyric as well as through the arts created for them. Like other Muslim princes, too, the Mughals were particularly keen to compare themselves with Solomon. In the context of their palaces, the theme of the Solomonic prophet king became predominant from the time of Jahangir (r. 1605–28) onwards; of particular impact was the imagery relating to the concept of Solomon on his flying throne accompanied by his retinue of birds and winged spirits, angels or persis in human form and jinns in animal form. The Solomonic theme was also used for his son and successor, Shah Jahan.

Both themes, that of Persia and the Persian kings and that of Solomon, are also featured in the panegyric written upon the completion of the audience halls of Shah Jahan. Beside the more general allusions of Lahori who praises the heaven-reaching loftiness of the wooden Agra hall and its stone replacement, and the repeatedly quoted ruba'i of Abu Tabib Kalim who compares the columnar construction of the wooden Agra hall to a garden full of shade-giving cypresses, it is Muhammad Salih Kanbo who informs us which particular buildings and sites the Mughals associated with the audience halls. Kanbo relates both the wooden hall of Agra and the stone hall of Delhi, which he describes as bârgâhi(tawîn)-i chihil sütûn (forty-pillared state hall), diwân-kadâ-i 'âdâl-o-dâd (court house of equity and justice) and bârgâhi Sulaymânî (Solomonic hall) with several famous legendary and historical palaces of the past, in particular with the îwân-i Nûshûrwan, and, again, the bârgâhi Sulaymânî. Such passages should not be dismissed as superfluous eulogistic exercises, as past translators of historical Mughal texts have often done. Court panegyrics represent an indispensable source for establishing the meaning of a Mughal work of art.

When we look critically at Kanbo's eulogical comparisons which, because of their repeated use, appear to have had a special relevance for Shah Jahan's halls, we immediately recognize that the reference to the îwân-i Nûshûrwan belongs to a definite literary tradition alluding to "the global sovereignty claimed by the Sasanian King of Kings from his fabled palace at Ctesiphon." In Arabic and Persian literature the Iwân-i (Khusrav) Nushirwan, also called Taqi-i Kisra, was used proverbially to refer to any grand royal building. In the context of the audience halls of Shah Jahan the reference appears to have an additional terminological significance because it plays on the meaning of îwân, a word Shah Jahan's authors did not use for a monumental vaulted hall open at the front, but in the Central Asian sense of a pillared construction, similar to the way the Persians use the term chihil sütûn.
But what about the ḍargāḥ-i Sulaymān which is used in two ways, for Shah Jahan’s hall itself as well for something which Shah Jahan’s hall put to shame? Was this meant as a general reference to Solomon, or did it have a more specific significance? First of all ḍargāḥ in Mughal Persian has the precise architectural meaning of audience tent or audience hall; accordingly, Shah Jahan’s halls are also called ḍargāḥ-i chihil sultān. Second, by the time of Shah Jahan’s accession in 1628, after which the first wooden versions of the audience halls were constructed, Solomonic imagery had already made a strong impact upon the arts of the Mughal court; Jahangir had used it extensively in the decoration of his palaces. Consequently, in Mughal eulogies of a building, any reference to Solomonic imagery must be taken seriously, which means that it may well have a bearing on the actual architecture. This applies in particular to the audience halls, because the gathering of Shah Jahan’s courtiers in front of the emperor in the ḍharāka-i khāṣṣ-o aʿmām would evoke strong Solomonic associations among contemporaries. Qazvini, for instance, calls it majlis-i divān-i Sulaymān-i zamān, “the court assembly of the Solomon of the Age” (fig. 1). True, Kanbo does not tell us what exactly he had in mind when he calls Shah Jahan’s audience halls ḍargāḥ-i Sulaymānī or compares them favorably to the ḍargāḥ-i Sulaymān. However, in connection with the designation of the halls as Chihil Sutun, the name under which Persepolis was known, we are on safe ground in assuming that, in the whole chain of panegyrical comparisons, ḍargāḥ-i Sulaymānī was the one notion which advertised the symbolic and architectural program. The Shahjahani halls would therefore have
Fig. 10. The Diwan-i Amms of Agra, Lahore, and Delhi. Ground plans. (Drawing: R. A. Barraud)
been meant as a deliberate quotation of the most famous and most ancient Chihil Sutun of Persia, the audience halls of Persepolis, believed to have been founded by Solomon-Jamshid. This connection was intensified by the traditional association of Persepolis with the Nawruz; in a comparable way Shah Jahan’s Chihil Sutuns in the courtyards of khāṣṣ-aʿamm acquired their greatest splendor during the yearly Nawruz celebrations of the Mughal court.

How then could the Mughals have expressed this reference architecturally over such a great distance of time and space? Up to the seventeenth century the main thing that was known about the great audience halls of Persepolis was that they had many columns — namely chihil sūtūn — of which only a few were left standing (fig. 8). The way of referring to Persepolis with synonyms of “many-columned” can be traced as far back as the Sasanians, who designated it as “Sat Sutun” (of a hundred columns). Muslim writers such as Davani tell us that “in the time of the [old] Persian kings” (mulūk-i Ājam) Persepolis was called “Hazar Sutun” (of a thousand columns). The latter brings to mind the famous Hazar
Sutun of Muhammad b. Tughluq, a vast hall of public audience with wooden painted pillars built in 1343 in his palace at Jahanpanah-Delhi; it is likely that this already represented an allusion to Persepolis and that it influenced Shah Jahan.

In any case, in the seventeenth century Persepolis had Chihil Sutun as its proper name, and this "numerical title" contained the only formal information about Persepolis which the Mughal conceptualists had at their disposal when they wanted to allude architecturally to the famous site. So the Diwan-i Amms of Shah Jahan had to be chihil sutun, like the multicolunned halls of Persepolis, but what form would that numerical concept be given?

All three audience halls follow exactly the same scheme, but they are not all the same size. The biggest hall is that of Agra, those of Lahore and Delhi are smaller and close to each other in their dimensions (fig. 9). Each of the Diwan-i Amms shows the same flat-roofed hypostyle construction erected on a grid pattern (figs. 10, 11). The twenty-seven bays are demarcated by coved ceilings (chashma), set off by multilobed arches.

Fig. 12. Delhi-Nizamuddin. Chaunsath Khamba, tomb of Mirza Aziz Koka (d. 1623–24). Ground plan. (Drawing: R. A. Barraud)

Fig. 13. Srinagar. Pattar Masjid. 1629's. (Drawing: R. A. Barraud)

(taq-i marghuldar) and large twelve-sided "Shahjhanani" columns. The columns are paired on the outer sides which produces a quadruple formation in the corners. Each hall thus has forty-eight full columns and twelve half columns. If, however, each columnar unit is read as a single one, we get exactly forty supports, with ten on the longer side of the hall and four on the shorter sides. From this it becomes evident that the Mughals were careful to take the most important formal information about Persepolis they had at their disposal, namely its "numerical title" chihil sutun, as literally as possible. They interpreted it as "forty columns" and not in the Persian sense as "multi-columned." This shows that Shah Jahan's Chihil Sutuns were not merely intended as a Mughal version of the Safavid and Timurid Chihil Sutuns, but as a direct reference to what, in the last analysis, could well be the common prototype of all, namely Chihil Sutun–Persepolis. Whereas the Timurids and Safavids referred to it more loosely and perhaps less consciously with a hypostyle, columnar hall, the Mughals had the ambition to come up with what they took to be the most authentic reproduction of the original. As often happens, so here the periphery is more literal than the center, "more catholic than the Pope."

In medieval architecture, numbers were among the prominent elements that would determine the relationship between copy and original, a point stressed by Krautheimer in his pivotal study on the subject. He showed that medieval thinkers felt perfectly justified in relating buildings to one another so long as some of the outstanding elements seemed to be comparable. In addition to numbers, often only the name of a building was considered sufficient to arouse associations connected with the prototype. Since in the case of Chihil Sutun–Persepolis the name was actually a number, it offered itself as the determining factor for the Mughal copy.

In any case, Persepolis could not serve as a model for
the arrangement of these forty columns because of its ruined state. For models of the layout of the Diwan-i Āmm we do not have to look to Persia; its sources can be found closer to home, namely, within Mughal architecture itself. The overall scheme of a hall constructed over a grid pattern, in particular the deployment of paired pillars around the periphery, closely relates the audience hall to sepulchral hypostyle halls of Jahangir's period, such as the white marble mausoleum of Mirza Āziz Koka (d. 1623–24), better known as Chaunsath Khamba at Nizamuddin, Delhi (fig. 12). The Chaunsath Khamba, however, is square and has no fixed orientation. Shah Jahan's Diwan-i Āmms, on the other hand, have an oblong shape that generates three aisles along the longer side and nine naves along the shorter side. This plan has its closest parallel in the mosque known as Patthar Masjid at Srinagar (fig. 13), said to have been built by Jahangir's wife Nur Jahan. The traditional attribution of the mosque to this patroness of architecture is corroborated by the stylistic evidence which points to the
Qazvini describes the emperor holding court in the Diwan-i ʿAmm as qibla-i ḥaḍrat, the place to which people turn for the attainment of their wants.92

The close connection between audience hall and mosque was in the palace of Agra, which is the only place where the greater architectural context of a Diwan-i ʿAmm of Shah Jahan is preserved, reinforced by an additional architectural accent. When we look at the plan of the Agra fort, we notice that the hall sets the main accent for the eastern wing of the courtyard of public audiences (b on fig. 6). Hitherto unnoticed is that the central part of the western wing of the audience courtyard — that is, the section situated exactly opposite the audience hall — was given the shape of a mosque (c on fig. 6). The raised central part, which projects slightly from the plane of the courtyard wings represents the façade of the mosque, which has five domed bays flanked on each side by stairs leading up to the roof; in the center is a mihrab (figs. 14, 15).93 Since Shah Jahan had originally no congregational mosques built in his palaces (the Moti Masjid of the Agra fort was not constructed until towards the end of his reign; figs. 16, 17), it appears that the audience courtyard was also used as a mosque courtyard.94 The narrow arcaded galleries surrounding the sāhn-i ḥāṣṣ-ʿāmm corresponded in shape and designation to those of mosque courtyards of the period95 (cf. a on fig. 6 and fig. 16). It is significant that the jharōka of the audience hall in the east and the mihrab of the prayer hall in the west were set on the same axis (b and c on fig. 6). With regard to form and content, the whole arrangement conformed to the concept of qarīna (“counter image”) which was the governing principle of planning in Shahjahani architecture.96 Here it had to express that the jharōka marked the emperor’s own qibla as opposed to that of Mecca.97

The imperial qibla was the east because it related to the sun rulership of Shah Jahan; the jharōka-i ḥāṣṣ-ʿāmm where the emperor presented himself before his subjects was perceived as the “rising place of the sun of the sky of the empire and caliphate” (maṭlaʾ-ī khurshīd-i āsmān-i davlat wa khilāfat).98

The parallels between audience hall and mosque are all the more noteworthy, since Shah Jahan originally had no congregational mosques built in his palaces; the Moti Masjid of the Agra fort was not constructed until 1647–53 (figs. 16–17). It is of greatest interest in our context that the Moti Masjid belongs to a type reserved in Shahjahani architecture for mosques with a special imperial connotation, which can be traced back formally to the same source as the audience halls, namely, the Patthar Masjid at Srinagar (fig. 13). The design appears first in the

1620’s. The prayer hall of the Patthar Masjid is built in a more massive idiomatic than the Diwan-i ʿAmm halls, with cruciform piers instead of columns. Both buildings have a wider nave in the center, indicating the direction in which the hall should be read. In the case of the mosque it leads to the mihrab, the place towards which prayer is directed, in the case of the audience hall to the emperor’s place of appearance, the jharōka.

These parallels are by no means accidental: Shah Jahan’s eulogists extol the emperor as the qibla and mihrab of his subjects. Here is Abu Talib Kalim:

May his court always be revered,
May it be like the Kaʿba a qibla for the seven climates.99

And, more specifically, as if to illustrate our argument,
emperor's mosque at Ajmer, founded in fulfillment of a vow in 1628, just before his accession, and completed in 1636. The plan of this mosque type is, like that of the audience halls, based on a grid system of bays. But in contrast to the audience halls, the central nave of these mosques which leads to the mihrab is not wider than the naves flanking it. In the Moti Masjid of the Agra fort this idea is even pushed further in that the nave leading to the mihrab is minimized by a shift of axis. The main axis is here the one parallel to the qibla wall and not the one perpendicular to it. This is obvious from the treatment of the aisles. It is the central aisle parallel to the qibla wall which is wider and emphasized, in addition, by the insertion of three domes which alternate with the coved ceilings, used otherwise — as in the audience halls — as covering for the bays. On the outside, this orientation is highlighted by three outer domes set above the inner ones. From this it results that Shahjahani mosques with a special royal connotation had to cede their most highly charged symbolic feature, namely the wider central mihrab nave, to the palatial audience halls.

Probably unknowingly Shah Jahan's architects here reversed traditions that came from the formative period of mosque architecture. The wider mihrab nave in the earliest mosques of Islam, such as the Umayyad Mosque at Damascus (706), "emphasize[d] the area reserved to the prince, and imitated a palace throne room." These early connections between mosque and audience halls might not have been known to the Mughal court; certainly known, however, was that the pillared audience halls of Chihil Sutun—Persepolis were also described as masjid-i Sulaymân.100

Shah Jahan's claim to unite spiritual and political authority could not have been given a clearer architectural
expression. The Mughal emperor, as heir to the Persian kings and second Solomon, gave audiences in a pillared hall where he appeared (like a Hindu idol) in a jharoka, positioned in the hall like a mihrab, to symbolize that he was the qibla of his subjects and al-zill Allah, or the Shadow of God on Earth. In his last audience hall at Delhi, Shah Jahan's claim was reinforced in that the jharoka, which formally stands for the mihrab, was given the shape of a Solomonic throne, with a niche showing birds and lions in Florentine and Mughal pietre dure, topped by the image of the beast-charming Orpheus, who symbolizes the justice of Shah Jahan (fig. 18).\footnote{102}

In conclusion, we can state that the audience halls of Shah Jahan are particularly well suited to show that we can only arrive at a full understanding of a work of art or architecture when we not only juxtapose the textual with the archaeological evidence, but make one bear upon the other. The literary sources must not be taken at face value, but have to be interpreted in the light of the architectural evidence; the formal analysis, on the other hand, can only produce a satisfying result when it integrates the information provided by the texts. In this particular case, the critical approach of the art historian, in treatments of the Islamic architecture of the Indian Subcontinent traditionally less often adopted than that of the linguist or that of the archaeologist, is for once fully vindicated. It is the discipline's specific methods, such as formal analysis and comparison, that provide the key to the appreciation of Shah Jahan's Chihil Sutuns as an ingenious and creative historical reconstruction which transforms a vague numerical concept into the purposeful logic of a building, planned perfectly as a manifesto of the emperor's rule. But then, who after all would have ever believed in the first place that Shah Jahan's audience halls were merely constructed as a shelter against sun and rain?\footnote{103}

\textit{Institute of the History of Art}
\textit{University of Vienna}
\textit{Vienna, Austria}
NOTES

Author's note: This article has resulted from a project initiated in 1976 to survey the entire palace architecture of Shah Jahan (r. 1628–58). I wish to thank the Archaeological Survey of India, the Indian Army, and the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan, for permission to carry out this survey, and the Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung, Austria, the Jubiläumsfonds der österreichischen Nationalbank, and the Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Forschung, Austria, for their support of the project.

1. All historians of Shah Jahan report the construction of the new halls in similar words. See ʿAbd al-Ḥamid Lāhūrī, Bāḍshāh nāma, Pers. text ed. Kabīr al-Dīn Ahmad and ʿAbd al-Rahīm (Calcutta, 1866–72) (henceforth quoted as Lāhūrī), vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 221–23; trans. by Nur Bakhsh, "Historical Notes on the Lahore Fort and Its Buildings," Archaeological Survey of India: Annual Report (henceforth quoted as ASIAR) 1902–3, pp. 220–21; Muhammad Amin or Amīn-ī Qazvinī, Bāḍshāh nāma, Pers. ms, British Library (henceforth quoted as BL), Or. 173 (henceforth quoted as Qazvinī), fol. 162, unpublished typed transcript (1888), S. M. Yunus Jaffery, pp. 242–45; Muhammad Sālib Kānō, ʿAma-i Sālib or Shāh Jāhān nāma, rev. Pers. text ed. Wajīl Qarqashī based on Calcutta ed. (1912–46) by Ghulām Yāzdānī, 2nd ed. 4 vols. (Lahore, 1967–72) (henceforth quoted as Kānō), 1: 258–60. (Kānō, p. 258, says that such halls were put up "in most of the great cities of the provinces wherever a palace (davlat sarāʾā) has been built"); Ināyāt Khān, Shāh Jāhān Nāma, trans. A. R. Fuller, rev. and ed. Wayne E. Begley and Ziauddin A. Desai (New Delhi, 1990) (henceforth quoted as Ināyāt Khān), pp. 25–26. That a hall was also put up at Burhanpur is mentioned by Muhammad Sādiq Khān, Tawārikh-i Shāhjahānī, Pers. ms. BL, Or. 174, fol. 9(11), and by Muhammad Hāshim Khāfī Khān, Muntaqahāb al-Lubāb, Pers. text ed. Kabīr al-Dīn Ahmad (Calcutta, 1869–1925), vol. 1, p. 404. All authors quote a rubāʿī composed upon the completion of the Agra hall by Shah Jahan's court poet Abū Tāllīb Kalīm Kāshānī who compares the green columns of the hypostyle wooden construction to a garden full of cypresses:

This new edifice, which is under the same shadow as the Divine Throne (ʿarsh) [= is its neighbor in the highest stage of heaven],

Looftiness is a mere word with regard to the position of its plinth.

It is a garden whose every green pillar is a cypress;

And the reposing of high and low (khāyās-o-ʾāmm) is under its shadow.

2. This means that the texts describing the construction of the halls of Agra, Lahore, and Burhanpur cited in note 1 refer to this first wooden version and not to the extant bigger stone replacement. This is made clear by Lāhūrī (vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 235–36), who describes the replacement of the wooden hall of Agra by the stone hall. The dimensions given by the authors mentioned above refer thus to the wooden hall of Agra. It was 70 ʿašābāh by 22 ʿašāh which corresponds to 56.89 m. × 17.88 m., because the ʿašām employed in Shah Jahan's architecture had a length of 81.28 m. or 32 inches. The wooden construction was raised on forty pillars and, having been constructed by "architects like magicians (miʿnārān jādū ʾāhār) and carpenters like Azazar (najjārin-i ʿAzar kār) [Azazar was Abrahām's father, an idol-maker, Lāhūrī, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 221] in forty days," it was completed on 5 August 1628. Kānō gives a date corresponding to 28 August which seems to be an error. From the descriptions we can make out that the ceiling of the wooden Agra hall had various painted designs of flowers and plants and that its pillars were green, reminding the poet Kalīm of cypresses (see the rubāʿī quoted in n. 1 above). I have identified the Agra hall and its wooden counterpart of Lahore on several illustrations of the History of Shah Jahan, where they are depicted with green pillars partly painted red in the upper section, all covered with fine gold ornament; the red can appear on the capitals or brackets, as in "Shah Jahan honoring the religious orthodoxy at a banquet celebration of the Prophet's birthday (Milād), in the Hall of Public Audience at the Agra Fort on 16th September 1663," Washington D.C., Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art, nos. 42.17 and 18; color illus. in Stuart Cary Welch, Imperial Mughal Painting (London, 1978), pls. 31–32; or the upper part of the shaft may be painted red, as in "Shah Jahan receiving the Persian noble ʿAlī Mardān Khan in the Hall of Public Audience of the Lahore fort in 1638," attributed to Payag, Oxford, Bodleian Library (Album Ouely, Add. 173) and our fig. 1. "Shah Jahan receiving Prince Aurangzeb in the Hall of Public Audience of the Agra fort, on his return from the Deccan in 1657," by Payag, Windsor Pāshā nāma, fol. 214. Another variant is that of a red oblong impost block set above the capitals, "Shah Jahan receiving Prince Aurangzeb in the Hall of Public Audience of the Lahore fort in 1640," by Murad, Windsor Pāshā nāma, 217; all three paintings are illustrated in Ināyāt Khān, pls. 5, 23, 6. That most of these audience scenes are shown to take place in wooden halls at a time when they had already been replaced by stone halls is a further instance to indicate that depictions of architecture in Shahjahi painting do not always keep up with the latest development in the actual constructions; see Ebba Koch, Shah Jahan and Orpheus: The Pietre Dure Decoration and the Programme of the Throne in the Hall of Public Audiences at the Red Fort of Delhi (Graz, 1988), pp. 34, 46, n. 135.

3. The tent put up in front of the jharokha is khāyās-o-ʾāmm is described by Lāhūrī (vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 146) as īwān as parcha enclosed on three sides by a wooden railing (chihib mahjar) 50 ʿašā (40.64 m.) long and 15 ʿašā (12.19 m.) wide, with three entrances (darwāsā). It appears on illustrations of darbar scenes taking place before or soon after the accession of Shah Jahan. See, inter alia, "Khurram taking leave of Jhaṅgir at the Jharoka of Ajmer at the start of the Mewar campaign in 1613," by Balchand, Windsor Pāshā nāma, fol. 43, illustrated in color by Jeremiah P. Losty, The Art of the Book in India (London, 1982), pl. 32; or "Shah Jahan receiving his three eldest sons and Asaf Khan after his accession in 1628," by Bichitr, Windsor Pāshā nāma, fol. 50, illustrated in Peter A. Andrews, The Generous Heart or the Mass of Clouds: The Court Tents of Shah Jahan, Muqarnas 4 (1987): 149–65, fig. 5. Andrews discusses the tent arrangement put up in front of the jharokha on the evidence of painting only (see in particular p. 155); he does not seem to be aware of its description by Lāhūrī cited above. The tent hall put up in front of the jharoka in the palace was the functional counterpart of the one used in the imperial camp. According to François Bernier (Travels in the Mogul Empire: a.d. 1656–1668), trans. Archibald Constable [1891; rpt. New Delhi, 1972], pp. 359 ff) who gives a good description of
Aurangzeb’s camp in 1665, the program of the tents corresponded closely to the functional differentiation of palace buildings as it had received its final form under Shah Jahan. For the translation of temporary palatial structures into more durable materials in earlier Islamic periods, see Gülru Necipoğlu, “An Outline of Shifting Paradigms in the Palatial Architecture of the Pre-Modern Islamic World, in Pre-Modern Islamic Palaces, ed. Gülru Necipoğlu, in Ars Orientalis, 23 (1993), p. 8; for a more general discussion of the relation of tents and palaces as expressions of a peripatetic lifestyle of rulers, see most recently Bernard O’Kane, “From Tents to Pavilions: Royal Mobility and Persian Palace Design,” ibidem, pp. 245–64. I thank Gülru Necipoğlu for making this publication available to me while it was still in press.


6. I have kept to the traditional translation of this term; in the Mughal context it actually means “state hall (iswani-dawlat khāna) for the grandees of the empire (khāṣā) and the wider public (iswān),” or “state hall for high and low.” “Iwan” is used in the Mughal Persian of Shah Jahan’s period to describe pilastered construction of any dimension and plan; see Ebba Koch, “The Lost Colonnade of Shah Jahan’s Bath in the Red Fort of Agra,” Burlington Magazine vol. 124, no. 951 (June 1982): 331, n. 4.

7. Shah Jahan’s historians repeatedly draw attention to the fact that the halls were “one of the innovations and inventions” (az moḍā’at wa mustahdhakhat) of Shah Jahan. See Qazvini, fol. 137r, Jaffery, transcript, p. 206; cf. Lāhōrī, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 454.


10. Lāhōrī (vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 144–45; trans. Nur Bakhsh, n. 1 above, p. 188) tells us that this form of audience was introduced by Akbar. The Indian tradition put great emphasis on darshan, the viewing of the ruler like an image in a shrine from whose viewing blessing would arise. For darshan as a ritual specific to the Mughal court, see Catherine B. Asher, “Sub-Imperial Palaces: Power and Authority in Mughal India,” and Gülru Necipoğlu, “Frameing the Gaze in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Palaces,” both in Pre-Modern Islamic Palaces, in particular pp. 278–79, 310–14.

11. This practice was suggested by Babur who advised his son Humayun in a letter written in November 1528 to “summon thy younger brother and the begs twice daily to thy presence, not leaving their coming to choice; be the business what it may, take counsel and settle every word and act in agreement with those well wishers.” Zahir al-Dīn Muhammad Bābur, Bābur nāma, trans. A. S. Beveridge (1921; rpt. New Delhi, 1970), p. 627.

12. Nobody was allowed to talk or move unless requested by the emperor to do so. The person dealt with by the emperor would step forward in the center of the hall and (after 1637) upon receiving a favor would make four obeisances (chahār tasilms); see n. 96 below. See also Chandar Bhān Brahma, Chahār Chaman, Pers. ms. bound in BL. Add. 16 863, fols. 20v–22v. Since the function in the Diwan-i-Āmm could take up to 4 or 5 ghārt (one ghārt = 24 minutes), that is up to two hours, it was quite a trying experience, in particular for aged courtiers. They were, however, allowed to lean on ceremonial staves; see fig. 1.

13. ... a raling [mahjar] ... which the people of Hindustān call katarhā, “see Qazvini, fol. 137r, transcript Jaffery p. 206; cf. Kanbō, 1: 203.

14. Lāhōrī, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 222, discusses this division in his description of the construction of the wooden Chihīl Sutouns; Qazvini, fols. 137v ff., transcript Jaffery, pp. 206 ff. and Kanbō (1: 203–4) refer to it in the description of the daily routine of the emperor. Kanbō gives the dimensions of the red railing with 50 gaz by 15 gaz as the same as that of the railing of the tent which preceded the wooden halls as described by Lāhōrī, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 146 (see n. 3 above); perhaps he confuses them. According to all authors the space enclosed by the red railing was covered with awnings (saybān) of precious textiles. Like the wooden halls the red wooden railings were replaced by a permanent stone construction, but only on the Lahore fort survives to some extent: the present sandstone railing (73.70 m. x 32.60 m.) was reconstructed in the early twentieth century on the basis of available evidence. At the same time a marble railing corresponding to the inner silver railing was fitted into the existing sockets of the columns of the westmost front arcade of the hall (both railings are visible on fig. 5); see Gordon Sanderson, “The Diwan-i-Āmm, Lahore Fort,” ASAR, 1999–10; pp. 36–37, figs. 2, 3, pl. 10, a and b. This division of the diwan khāna-i-āmm into three areas by means of railings existed already in Jahangir’s time; in 1613 he introduced silver casings for the inner rails, the outer remained red; see Tūsuk, Pers. text ed. Sayyid Ahmad Kháñ (Aliar, 1864), p. 118; trans. Alexander Rogers, ed. Henry Beveridge, 2 vols. in one (1909–14; rpt. New Delhi, 1968), 1: 242; The Shahjahan arrangement of the railings conformed thus to that of Jahangir. In the Delhi hall, the last of the series, there was an additional gold railing around the jharokha; Blake (Shahjahana- bad, pp. 91–92, fig. 1) assumes that it was on the floor level of the hall; the texts, however, are not quite clear on this point, it could also have been fitted on the raised platform of the jha- roka. Blake is certainly not correct about the position of the silver railing (delineating the area for those above a mansab of two hundred) which he places within the audience hall.

15. For descriptions of these court ceremonies and festivals based on contemporary texts, see in particular Ansari, Social Life, pp.
110–24; Mubarak Ali, Court of Great Mughuls, pp. 29, 46–56 (n. 9 above); these works should, however, be used with some caution with regard to details. They also tend to overlook the changes taking place in the ceremonies over the years.

16. During the first ten years of Shah Jahan’s reign the anniversary of the accession (julâs) was celebrated at the same time as Nawruz, the first day of the Persian solar year when the sun enters the zodiacal sign of Aries in March. On this occasion the courtyard of khâs-o’âmîn was sumptuously decorated with tents, rugs, thrones, precious textiles from various regions and countries, and European paintings on cloth (porda-hâ-yi farang) ; see Peter Andrews, “Court Tents,” in particular pp. 151, 156–57; Ansari, Social Life, pp. 114–18; Mubarak Ali, Court of Great Mughuls, pp. 48–51.


18. This less-well-known use of the hall has been noted by Ansari, p. 87. It is reported for the weddings of Dara Shukoh and Shah Shuja in February–March 1633; see Lâhорî, vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 454–56, 462–63. At Shah Shuja’s wedding, also the hînâ-bâdandîn (bastansî hînâ) ceremony (which for Dara Shukoh had been held at the Diwân-i Khãs, p. 456) was conducted in the Diwân-i 5Amn hall (p. 461). Cf. Kanbô, 1: 437–39, 449; 6Inâyât Khân, pp. 91, 93.

19. A particularly grand celebration took place in the Diwân-i 5Amn in March 1635 when Nawruz, 1Id al-Fitr, and the inauguration of Shah Jahan’s new gem-studded throne (takht-i mu’assas) ; later known as the Peacock Throne) fell together; Lâhорî, vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 77 ff.; 6Inâyât Khân, pp. 147–48. See also Ansari, Social Life, pp. 121–23; Mubarak Ali, Court of Great Mughuls, p. 47.

20. See, for instance, 6Inâyât Khân, p. 118; Ansari, Social Life, pp. 123–24; Mubarak Ali, Court of Great Mughuls, p. 48. A splendid depiction of this type of ceremonial banquet which took place on 16 September 1633 in the Diwân-i 5Amn of the Agra fort can be found on two corresponding miniatures in the Freer Gallery, Washington D.C., nos. 42, 17 and 18. For references to illustrations, see n. 2 above.

21. 6Inâyât Khân, pp. 499, 530.

22. The ceremonies of the Diwân-i 5Amn were also accessible to Western observers at the Mughal court and thus featured prominently in their reports; see, e.g., François Bernier, Travels, pp. 260–65; and Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, Travels in India, trans. Valentine Ball, 2nd ed., William Crooke (1925; rpt. New Delhi, 1977), 1: 80–82, 301 ff.

23. See in particular NIR Baksh as quoted in nn. 1 and 4 above.

24. See in particular the ASIAR from the first decade of the twentieth century which describe the restoration work done in the area of the Diwân-i 5Amins after they had been evacuated by the military authorities. For more analytical discussions of the formal aspects of the halls, see, e.g., Oscar Reuther, Indische Paläste und Wohnhäuser (Berlin, 1925), pp. 48–49, 52–53, 59.


26. Most recently, brief discussions have been provided by Peter Andrews, “Mahall,” Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed. (henceforth cited as EI), 6: 1218–20; and by Catherine B. Asher, New Cambridge History of India, 1, 4, Architecture of Mughal India (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 179, 182–83, 194–96; the bibliographies of both works list publications on Shahjahaní palace architecture which include also brief treatments of the Diwân-i 5Amins. These authors ignore, however, the first wooden ver-


28. See nn. 1 and 4 above.


31. Within the range of this paper I cannot deal in greater detail with the extensive and highly informative descriptions which Shah Jahan’s authors provide of the court ceremonies and proceedings of the Diwân-i 5Amins.

32. I know of only one instance of the use of this term in a Mughal context prior to Shah Jahan’s reign. It refers to the murder of the son of the Mughal governor of Kabul in 1563 in a khangah [a pavilion or, according to Andrews, “Court Tents,” n. 3 above, p. 150, a trellis tent or yurt] put up in the courtyard (sahn) of the diwan khânsâ-î chihî sütûn.” See Abú’l Fâżl, Akbar-nâmâ, Pers. text ed. Ághâ Ahmad 5Ali and 5Abd al-Rahîm, 2 vols. (Calcutta, 1873–86), 2: 186; trans. Henry Beveridge, 3 vols. (1902–39; rpt. Delhi, 1979), 2: p. 288. The designation “Chihîl Sutun” for the lost Akbari tower-pavilion in the Allahabad fort (Koch, Mughal Architecture, p. 62) and for the (lost) pavilion in the Jaunpur fort (also from Akbar’s period and not from that of the Tughluqs, as claimed by John Burton Page in his article “Djawnpur”, EI, 2: 499, pt. 8) seem to have been attached to these buildings at a later date, because they do not feature in contemporary Mughal descriptions.


34. It was Humayun in particular who introduced Persian ideas into the Mughal court. See most recently Necipoğlu, “Framing the Gaze,” pp. 309 ff.

35. Different was that the Safavid taîlîr was conceived as a porch for the vaulted masonry part of a free-standing pavilion, whereas the Mughal hall was a building by itself, communicating only with the room(s) attached to the emperor’s jharoka in its back wall.

37. Sec, in addition to the literature cited in n. 36 above, Luftullah Honafar, "Kakh-i Chihil Sutun," Honar va Mardum 121 (November 1972): 3–31, who quotes an inscription and various other poetic chronograms yielding the date 1057 (1647) (pp. 6–11).

38. Wolfram Kleiss, "Der safavische Pavillon in Qazvin," Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran, n.s. 9 (1976): 253–61. The form of this Chihil Sutun hallies with the reconstruction of Ulugh Beg's Chihil Sutun at Samarqand by Galina A. Pougatchenkova (Chefs-d’œuvre d'architecture de l'Asie Centrale XIV–XV siècle, [Paris, 1981]), pp. 34, 37, fig. 21d. See also note 41 below.

39. A brief discussion of the palace of Shah Tahmasp at Qazvin and the problems raised by its Chihil Sutun is provided by Ihsan Ishaqī, "Naqshsh-bā-yi kakh-i Chihil Sutun-i Qazvin va kakh-hā-yi digar Safavi az khālah manzarā-yi 'Abdī Beg Shirāzī," Honar va Mardum 182 (2536/1977): 2–9. I thank Dr. S. M. Yunus Jaffery for drawing my attention to this publication. A French version of the same article is Ehsan Ercaghi, "Description contemporaine des peintures murales disparues des palais de Šāh Ṭahmāsp à Qazvin," Art et société dans le monde iranien, ed. C. Adle (Paris, 1980), pp. 117–26. Ihsan Ishaqī refers in particular to the contemporary descriptions of the building by 'Abdī Beg Shirāzī. Iskandar Beg Munshi, Šāhriār 'Alam Arā-yi Ābbāsī, Pers. text ed. Iraj Āfšār, 2 vols. (Tehran, 1350/1971), p. 115, mentions the building on the occasion of the reception of an Ottoman embassy at the court of Shah Tahmasp in 1558; the presents the envoys brought were displayed to the royal view "in front of the iwan of high foundations [of high pillars?] of the Chihil Sutun of the blessed palace" (dar bar-ā-bar iwan-i buland arkhān-i chihil sūtan-i dawlat khāna-i mubārak). My attention was drawn to this passage by a translated extract appended by Charles Stewart to his translation of Jawhar Āfšābchi, Tashkirt al-waqīqāt, or Private Memoirs of the Moghal Emperor Humayun, (1832; rpt. Delhi 1972), p. 124. Sussan Babaie has kindly searched the corresponding passage out in the Persian text.

40. The palace of Shah Tahmasp at Tabriz is described by Michele Membre who saw it in autumn 1539 (Relazione di Persia [1542], ed. Gianroberto Scarica (Naples, 1969), pp. 32 ff. Alexander Morton trans. Mission to the Lord Sophy of Persia (1539–1542): Michele Membre (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1993), pp. 29–30. Membre provides the most detailed information of the court, camp, and palaces of Shah Tahmasp known so far. Membre reports that the palace building where the Shah held his audiences had "four chambers, one behind the other, with their carpets and ante-chambers (quatro camere una dietro l'altra, con tappeti prospetti e ante porti), but he does not mention a Chihil Sutun or a tālār. If Shah Tahmasp's palace did contain such structures, they might connect with the vernacular architecture of the region. Here at Azerbaijan, the homeland of the Safavids, mosques dating from the first half of the sixteenth century testify to a regional tradition of wooden hypostyle halls made of elements similar to the Safavid tālām. See Parviz Varjavand, "Chihil Sutun-i Masjīd-i Mullā Rustam, Marāgheh," Barassīhā-yi Tārīkhī 61 (6) (Feb.–March 1976): 13–34. Comparable in particular are the elements of the post-and-beam construction such as the slender shafts of the supports and their elongated muqarnas capitals.

41. Besides Ulugh Beg's Chihil Sutun we know also of a Chihil Sutun in the Baghi Zaghian in the Herat of Sultan Husayn Bayqara (d. 1486); see Terry Allen, A Catalogue of the Toponyms and Monuments of Timurid Herat (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), p. 214; see also O'Kane, "From Tents to Pavilions," p. 250. Ulugh Beg's Chihil Sutun, a pavilion in the center of the Baghi Maydan, is mainly known to us through its description by Babur, Babur namā (n. 11 above), p. 80. Babur emphasizes the stone supports of the construction, thereby implying that it was superior to the vernacular wooden Central Asian loggia, called, at some point, like the Mughal halls, tālār. For the latter point, see Koch, "Lost Colonnade," p. 331 n. 4, and Pougatchenkova, Chefs-d'œuvre, p. 37. The early Mughals also used the term tālār for wooden constructions; when he was in India in 1528 Babur saw a wooden tālār built by Rahim Dad in his garden at Gwalior (Babur namā, p. 60). Babur's companion Zayn Khan (Tabaqat-i Baburi, trans. and intro. S. Hasan Askari, annot. B. P. Ambastha [Delhi, 1982], p. 157), mentions "coloured and decorated tālāns" in Babur's garden at Agra. Since the Central Asian wooden iwans are made of elements similar to the tālān of the Safavids it is possible that there was a direct influence. In a residential context the Central Asian iwan most commonly took the shape of a one-aisle porch, often with an L-shaped plan, which was attached to the Masonry part of a building. This juxtaposition, as well as the shape of the supports, relates it closely to the tālār buildings of the Safavids; different is that the tālān were much larger multi-pillared constructions, for which in Central Asia as in Azerbaijan there is only evidence today in vernacular mosque architecture, such as the Jami Masjīd in Khiva, rebuilt in the eighteenth century but preserving wooden columns of its earlier construction dating back to the tenth century. See L. Mankovskaya, Khiva (Tashkent, 1982), pp. 47, 257, pls. 109–12. The Central Asian wooden supports certainly influenced Mughal columnar forms, for which see Ebba Koch, "The Baluster Column — A European Motif in Mughal Architecture and Its Meaning," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 45 (1982), in particular pp. 254–55, 262.

42. Persepolis was already called Chihil Minar or Chil Minar by Persian historians of the fourteenth century. See M. Streek and G. C. Miles, "Istakhri," EI3, 4: 229, with further literature. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Persepolis was so widely known under this designation that the leading architect of Austrian Baroque, Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, described his engraved view of Persepolis (probably made in 1688) for the first manuscript version of his Entwurf einer historischen Architektur (presented to Emperor Charles VI in 1712) in the caption as "Tschelhelmijn"; see Georg Kunoth, Die historische Architektur Fischers von Erlach (Düsseldorf, 1956), pp. 120–24, pl. 102.

43. A possible connection between the multi-pillared halls of the Achaemenids and the tālāns of the Safavids and Diwan-i ʿAmms of the Mughals has been supposed by past scholarship, but so far there was no attempt to show how such a connection could have been established (see nn. 68 and 89 below).

44. It seems that this applies also to the Hapsburg rulers of the Holy Roman Empire. According to a letter fragment attributed to Kunoth (Historische Architektur, n. 42 above, pp. 120 ff., pl. 101) to Fischer, the latter had planned "to build the new royal palace at Schönbrunn on a hill in the same way as it is reported of the royal castle at Persepolis or Tschelhelmijn, so that His Majesty [Charles VI] — like Cyrus overlooking his empire — can


48. This aspect of princely comportment is discussed in greater detail in Ebba Koch, “The Delhi of the Mughals prior to Shahjahanabad as Reflectcd in the Patterns of Imperial Visits,” *Art and Culture: Felicitation Volume in Honour of Professor S. Nural Hasan*, ed. Ahsan Jannat Qaisar and Som Prakash Verma (Jaipur, 1993), pp. 4, 6, 8, 16–18, 11, 26, 46, 49.


54. “Khusraw” is in Mughal Persian used in the sense of “(Persian) king.”


58. Quoted in n. 1 above.

59. ... in muskhātī sab’-i shīdād wa diwānkhādā-i ‘adī-i-dād ki riḵash bāmdag-i Sulayman wa ‘iwan-i Nushirvān ast...,” Kanbō, 1: 258–59; 3: 33. Annemie Schimmel has kindly pointed out to me that sab’-shīdād is a reference to the seven firmaments as mentioned in the Qur’an, sura 78:12, associated with the spheres of the seven planets. In addition, Kanbō adduces also the qaṣr-shāyār (palace of the Byzantine emperor or of the Ottomans Sultan) and the Persian mountain Bistun for his etymological comparisons.


61. “With regard to this iwan, it was constructed at Madā’in [Ctesiphon] by [Khusraw I] Anusharwān [ruled 531–79] or rather, according to certain sources, by Abāwīz [Khusraw II Parwiz, r. 591–628]. It is one of the extraordinary buildings and one of the most beautiful monuments which the Persian kings have left behind. One refers to it proverbially as to an example of magnificence and stability,” Abū Manṣūr ʿAbd al-Malik ... al-Thālabī, *Gharar ukhbār mulūk al-far wa siyāsah, or Histoire des rois des Perses*, my English translation from the French text, and Arabic ed. H. Zotenber (Paris, 1900), p. 614, as quoted in my *Shah Jahan and Orpheus*, pp. 14, 38 n. 23, where I also discuss the use of this metaphor and its architectural realization in the palace architecture of Shah Jahan.

62. See nn. 6, 41 above. For the various meanings of the term, see Oleg Grabar, “Iwan,” *EI*, 4: 287–89; Nasser Rabbat (“Maniluk Throne Halls: Qubba or Iwan,” *Pre-Modern Islamic Palaces*, pp. 197–214) has drawn attention to the fact that in western Muslim countries throughout the medieval period the term iwān was used for audience halls of any type, while retaining the strong royal connotations accorded to it in early Islamic times.

63. See n. 33.


65. Kanbō, 1: 258.

66. See n. 55 above.

67. Qazvini, fol. 162v, Jaffery transcript, p. 242. These Solomonian connotations were emphasized by the imagery used in the decoration of the *jarākha*. Prominent here was the motif of the peaceful assembly of beasts of prey and their natural victims to symbolize the Solomonic justice of Shah Jahan. It appears in most of the representations of Shah Jahan’s *jarākha;* see my *Shah Jahan and Orpheus*, in particular p. 34; see also below and fig. 1.

68. On the basis of formal and functional similarities this connection has already been made by Gordon Sanderson, “Shah

69. That Persepolis as Chihil Sutun was as strongly connected to Solomon in the seventeenth century as in the earlier periods is reported by Engelbert Kaempfer (*Amoenitatum Exoticarum* [Lemgo, 1712], pp. 302ff., 326) who says that it was believed to have been the seat of Solomon and the model of the Solomonic temple: “Eius religia a prisco splendore ruenda hodie appello. Tiskil minas. Sedem faisse in illo palatio priscorum Regum. credi a multis, faisse quoque Solomonis benedicti & ex quadam Canani paragraphe apparare, quod typum Solomonis templi expresserit.”

70. This is true also for the Islamic period. Davarni, (*Arz namà*, pp. 41–42, trans. Melikian-Chirvani, “Royaume de Salomon” n. 53 above, p. 81) reports that it was believed that Jamshid Solomon celebrated Nawruz at Persepolis–Chihil Sutun.

71. See n. 16 above.

72. None of the Mughal emperors had a first-hand knowledge of Persepolis. Contrary to a common belief perpetuated in the most recent literature, Humayun did not visit the site during his Persian exile. The assumption was the result of an error of Charles Stewart in his translation of Jawhar’s memoirs (n. 59 above, pp. 66, 67, 71). Stewart took the Takhît-Sulayman of Jawhar’s text, where Humayun hunted with Shah Tahmasp in 1544, for Persepolis, while jawhar actually spoke of the Takhît-Sulayman southeast of Lake Urmia in northwestern Iran. See Sukumar Ray, *Humayun in Peria* (Calcutta, 1948), p. 30 n. 3. However, the fact that Stewart identified the Takhît-Sulayman with Persepolis shows how strongly the site was still connected with Solomon in the early nineteenth century.

73. The actual form of the Persian halls was only reconstructed on the basis of the excavations and archaeological research of the twentieth century; see E. F. Schmidt, *Persepolis*, 3 vols. (Chicago, 1953–1970); Friedrich Krefter, *Persepolis Rekonstruktionen*, *Teheraner Forschungen*, vol. 3 (Berlin, 1971).


76. Briefly discussed on the basis of contemporary texts by Anthony Welch and Howard Crane, “The Tughluq: Master Builders of the Delhi Sultanate,” in *Muslim Architecture* (1983): 148. The Hazar Sutun at Jahajpanah was, as one of the famous sites of Delhi, visited by Timur’s ladies in 1998 (H. M. Elliot and John Dowson, *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians*, vol. 3 [rpt. Lahore, 1976], pp. 445, 503).

77. In India, references to the columned halls of the Achaemenids had such early antecedents as the halls in the palaces of the Mauryans at Pataliputra (4th century B.C.), the Patna of today. This was already noted by Percy Brown, “Monuments of the Mughul Period,” p. 556. For a recent summary of this connection (which integrates the results of Percy Brown, *Monuments of the Mughul Period*,” p. 556. For a recent summary of this connection (which integrates the results of the excavations at Kumrahar, Patna, published in 1955–56), see Christopher Tadgell, *The History of Architecture in India* (London 1990), pp. 16–18, and figs. 17, 19, p. 309, nn. 9–11. These halls were never entirely forgotten, and it seems that this memory prepared the way for the Tughluq and Shahjahani allusions to Persepolis.

78. The fact that the Hazar Sutun of Muhammad b. Tughluq was constructed of wood and painted reminds one of the first wooden Chihil Sutuns of Shah Jahan. That the memory of the Tughluq audience hall was still alive in the Mughal period is borne out by Abu’l Fazl who, in his description of Sultanate Delhi, upgrades it to “a lofty hall (buluand iwâni) with a thousand columns of white marble (hâzûr sütûn az sang-i rukhâm),” *A’râ-r Akbâr*, vol. 1, Pers. text. ed. H. Blochmann (Calcutta, 1872), p. 513; trans. vol. 2, H. S. Jarrett, 2nd rev. ed. Jadunath Sarkar (1948–49; rpt. New Delhi, 1978), p. 284. The way Abu’l Fazl represented the Tughluq hall may have influenced Shah Jahan’s decision to have his halls redone in stone “made marble white with plaster.”


80. This analysis was only made possible after I had prepared detailed plans and elevations of all three halls of Agra, Delhi, and Lahore. The scale drawings published here were done by Richard A. Barraud between 1982 and 1992 on the basis of measurements taken by both of us. I also thank Ikram Chaghatai for helping me measure the Lahore hall in December 1991. Before that a fairly accurate plan had only been published by Gordon Sanderson of the Lahore Diwan-i 5Amm, “Diwan-i 5Amm, Lahore,” fig. 1. Otherwise only small, inaccurate sketch plans had been published of the halls; see, e.g., Reuther, *Indische Paläste*, pls. 40, 60, 74. For the Delhi hall there are unpublished drawings in the Safdar Jang Office, Delhi, of the Archaeological Survey of India: Red Fort, Delhi, 1/1 (plan, dated 1961), 1/2 (elevation dated 1933), 1/3 (cross section, dated 1933). No drawings were available of the Agra hall.

81. When we convert Shah Jahan’s *gaz* to 81.28 cm. or 32 inches, the measurements of the Agra hall tally almost exactly with those given in the Mughal texts (76 *gaz* × 25.5 *gaz* = 61.77 *m.* × 20.72 *m.*, as against the measured 61.48 *m.* × 20.72 *m.*; the height of the hall including the base is 11.55 *m.*). The Mughal measurements given here and in the following are extracted from the descriptions of Shah Jahan’s authors quoted in n. 1 above.

82. The measurements of the Lahore hall are 54.05 *m.* × 18.32 *m.* × 10.57 *m.; no dimensions of this hall are given in the texts. We do not know when the first wooden hall of Lahore, which was to be built “in the same manner” (*ba hamin a’inn*) as the Agra hall (Lahori, 1.1, p. 225; see also the other texts cited in n. 1 above), was replaced by the permanent stone construction. In its present state the Lahore hall is the result of its reconstruction in the first decade of the twentieth century; see Sanderson, “Diwan-i 5Amm, Lahore Fort.” Only the pillars and the *jharoka* and its flanking galleries in the back wall are original.

83. The measurements of the Delhi hall show some deviation from the figures given in the texts (67 *gaz* × 24.4 *gaz* = 54.45 *m.* × 19.50 *m.* as against the measured 54.66 *m.* × 18.41 *m.*; the height of the hall is 12.66 *m.*); see the descriptions of Kanbî and Wârit as quoted in n. 5 above. The Lahore ed. of Kanbî, used by me, misread the length of the hall; it has “twenty-seven” (bist-o-haft) instead of “sixty-seven” (shast-o-haft). This grid is based on the *gaz* of 81.28 cm. or 32 inches. The halls were planned using gaz units and break ups of the *gaz*. Limitation of space forbids me to dwell on this aspect here.

85. The terms *chashmafor* “bay” and *fay-i-marghuldar* (arches with
curs" or "curled arches") for "multilobed arches" are used consistently by Wārith, Badshah nāma, in his descriptions of Shahjahani buildings; see, e.g., fol. 390v. They thus represent an important addition to the glossary of Mughal architectural terms, for which see Ebba Koch, *Mughal Architecture*, pp. 137–42.

86. For a definition of this column type, see my *Mughal Architecture*, pp. 109, 138.

87. Although there is no guidance on the part of the Mughal writers, one could, of course, enter into all kinds of interesting speculations about the meaning of the figure forty in an arrangement of four times ten. For the importance of the number forty in Islamic thinking, see Annemarie Schimmel, *The Mystery of Numbers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), in particular pp. 245–53, and p. 294 for further literature.

88. Before I found out about the correct reading of the halls I interpreted *chihāl* in the sense of "multi-columned"; see my *Mughal Architecture*, p. 109, n. 38.

89. This aspect needs further investigation. The inclination is to make such a connection because all medieval Chihil Sutuns known so far were reception halls. A comparable phenomenon in European medieval architecture would be the copies engendered over the centuries by the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem (see n. 90 below). A general connection of the Safavid Chihil Sutuns or *talām* with the halls of Persepolis has been made repeatedly in the literature; they have been seen as belonging to "one of the most ancient of Persian architectural traditions... in an indirect royal line with the Halls of a Hundred Columns of Persepolis... and Susa" (Pope, *Safavid Period*, n. 36 above, p. 1192); this indebtedness has, however, not been universally accepted (Hillenbrand, "Safavid Architecture," p. 797). I have not yet been able to check the results of Susan Babaie's work to see if the Safavid connection is also borne out by the textual sources, as I suggest it for the Mughal halls. That the Safavids related themselves to the royal site of Persepolis is borne out by their visits to it; Shah Tahmasp left an inscription on the walls of the Tachara (see Melkian Chirvani, "Le Roiamne de Solomon," n. 38). Moreover, two column bases which had been removed from Persepolis were put up at one of the gates to the female quarters of the palace of Isfahan. See Jean Chardin, *Voyages*, 7: 338. The tradition was revived by the Qajars (1779–1924) who also left inscriptions at Persepolis (Melkian-Chirvani, n. 38) and consciously referred in their artistic enterprises to Achaemenid and Sassanian art. See Judith A. Lerner, "Three Achaemenid 'Fakes': A Re-evaluation in the Light of 19th-Century Iranian Architectural Sculpture," *Expedition* 22 (1980): 5–16 (I thank Layla Diba for referring me to this article); eadem, "A Rock Relief of Fath 'Ali Shah in Shiraz," *Ars Orientalis* 21 (1991): 31–40.


92. Qazvini, fol. 138v, Jaffery transcript, p. 207. Similarly, Kanbo (3: 33; trans. Sanderson, "Shah Jahan’s Fort, Delhi," n. 116) describes the ḥashāra in the Diwan-i 'Aam hall of Delhi as "place of the peoples’ prostration as well as for the relief of their needs." Similar metaphors had already been used for Akbar; see Brand and Lowry, "Urban Structures," p. 33; they had, however, not been given such a clear architectural expression.

93. I was only able to identify the mosque when I measured the courtyard wings. In front of it one can still make out a terrace with a sunken pool for ablutions. The mosque does not appear on any of the plans of the Agra fort published so far.

94. It seems to have been used for prayer by "‘āmm" only. Within the palace, the emperor appears to have prayed in congregation only with his khas-ān, and this only in the evening; this *namāz-i 3ham... ba-yāmāt* took place in the Dawlat Khanā-i Khass or the Hall of Private Audiences and its courtyard (see Lāhūrī, vol. I, pt. 1, p. 152; cf. Qazvini, fols. 141v and 9v, Jaffery transcript, pp. 211–12). The use of the Diwan-i 'Amm at Fatehpur Sikri for prayer is reported for Akbar by Bada'ī; the relevant passages have been assembled by Brand and Lowry, *Fatehpur-Sikri Sourcebook*, pp. 95–98. Since Akbar's pavilion was placed in the center of the courtyard on the qibla side, it might have suggested the metaphor of Akbar as qibla of the state; see Lowry, "Urban Structures," p. 33.

95. Both are termed *tiwān-hā* in the contemporary descriptions; see, e.g., Kambô, 3: 33 (Diwan-i 'Amm, Delhi); p. 134, last line (Moti Masjid, Agra).

96. Koch, *Mughal Architecture*, pp. 93, 141. However, Shah Jahan did not want to overdo things and refrained from extending *garina* to ritual comportment. In January 1637, when he inaugurated the stone version of the Agra hall with the *jashn* (celebration) of his weighing for his 45th solar birthday, he abolished the *zāmin-bāz* (kneeling down so as to touch the ground with the back of the hand placed on the forehead) for his courtiers because it looked almost like the *sīkā* (kneeling down so as to touch the ground with the forehead), which he had already abolished at his accession and introduced the *cha-hār-taslim* (four obeisances) instead; see 3īnāyat Khan, trans. Fuller, pp. 18, 203. The ceremonial gestures are explained by Ansari, *Social Life*, pp. 98–99.

97. In this way the Shahjahani concept differed from that of Akbar (see n. 94 above).

98. Chandar Bhān Brahman, *Chahār Chamān* (n. 12 above), fol. 20r; cf. Wārith, fol. 390v, Jaffery transcript p. 50. Similarly, the
Jharōkha-i darshan was conceived as "the rising place of the sun of the caliphate" (mašīaʾ ʿāfāk-i khilāfāt). Here the emperor appeared as an earthly sun opposite that of the sky. I am now engaged in a study of the sun rulership of the Mughals. Brief comments on the phenomenon have been made by Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India*, p. 186; and Necipoğlu, "Framing the Gaze," pp. 311, 313, 314.

99. For illustration and plan, see Koch, *Mughal Architecture*, p. 120, figs. 143, 144.


101. That Muslim observers designated the hypostyle halls of Persepolis as mosques indicates that they were well aware of the formal similarities between the type of the hypostyle mosque and the Persian halls; that such an awareness existed in the formative period of mosque architecture is questioned by Grabar, *Art and Architecture of Islam*, p. 36.


103. Even the court historians who had to voice this official view circumvented imperial censorship by adding that the halls were also built to increase "the grandeur of the glorious court (shahsāh-i bārgāh-i jāla")" (Qazvini, fol. 162?, Jaffery transcript, p. 242), and that through them "the face of the heavenly court also gained an immeasurable ornament" (Lāhūrī, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 222).