

## Description of Shah Jahan

**M. Bernier, a Frenchman who visited Agra in 1663 during the reign of Shah Jahan, Mughal Emperor**

The king appeared sitting upon his throne, in the bottom of the great hall of the Am-kas, splendidly appareled. His vest was of white satin, flowered and raised with a very fine embroidery of gold and silk. His turban was of cloth-of-gold, having a fowl wrought upon it like a heron, whose foot was covered with diamonds of an extraordinary bigness and price, with a great oriental topaz, which may be said to be matchless, shining like a little sun. A collar of big pearls hung about his neck down to his stomach, after the manner that some of the heathens wear their great beads. His throne was supported by six pillars, or feet, said to be of massive gold, and set with rubies, emeralds and diamonds. I am not able to tell you aright either the number or the price of this heap of precious stones, because it is not permitted to come near enough to count them and to judge of their water and purity. Only this I can say: that the big diamonds are there in confusion, and that the throne is estimated to be worth four kouroures of roupies, if I remember well. I have said elsewhere that a roupie is almost equivalent to half a crown, a lecque to a hundred thousand roupies and a kourour to a hundred lecques, so that the throne is valued at forty millions of roupies, which are worth about sixty millions of French livres. That which I find upon it best devised are two peacocks covered with precious stones and pearls. Beneath this throne there appeared all the Omrahs, in splendid apparel, upon a raised ground covered with a canopy of purified gold, with great golden fringes and inclosed by a silver balistre. The pillars of the hall were hung with tapestries of purified gold, having the ground of gold; and for the roof of the hall there was nothing but great canopies of flowered satin, fastened with great red silken cords that had big tufts of silk mixed with threads of gold.

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