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EMBODIED VISION

*Interpreting
the Architecture of
Fatehpur Sikri*

by Jaimini Mehta

ARCHITECTURE

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Embodied Vision delves into a series of representations Fatehpur Sikri has been subjected to and concludes that there is an inexorable tension at its core embodied in the constantly shifting axes, complex rhythms, raising or lowering of the ground planes, juxtapositions of mythical symbols and the conflicting pulls of traditions and human will. The space of Fatehpur Sikri is revealed to us through perception more than through geometry.

Professor Mehta's unconventional interpretation of the architecture of Fatehpur Sikri emanates from his exploration of the history of architectural representation and leads him to conclude that the tools of designing, representation and analysis, which we normally use today, did not exist in sixteenth-century India when Fatehpur Sikri was built. These drawings, which assume our "mind's eye" hovering above the city and taking in the whole of reality at once, have failed to represent the existential lived experience of inhabitation of architecture.

- **The book emphasises the importance of an 'embodied vision' in the conceptualising and development of architecture in tradition-bound and pre-rational societies.**
- **Professor Mehta counters with convincing arguments and extensive research the preconceived notion that Fatehpur Sikri does not have a plan and is built in a haphazard manner.**
- ***Embodied Vision* delves into a series of representations Fatehpur Sikri has been subjected to and concludes that its space is revealed more through perception than geometry.**



Jaimini Mehta is a practising architect and an independent academic based in Baroda, India. He studied architecture at M.S. University of Baroda and at University of Pennsylvania in the Louis Kahn Studio, and went on to work in the offices of Louis Kahn and Mitchell/Giurgola Associates in Philadelphia.

At present he is a Hon. Director of the Baroda-based Centre for the Study of Urbanism and Architecture, which he instituted in 2006. He was an Adjunct Professor at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute at Troy, NY and at CEPT University in Ahmedabad, India. He has also worked as Head of the Schools of Architecture at Baroda and Goa.

