Chapter- II
Riverfront and Other Gardens
CHAPTER 2
RIVERFRONT AND OTHER GARDENS

Gardens were an integral part of the Mughal life and culture and constituted an important part of city planning. The Chahārbāgh or the four-quartered garden, which ultimately came to be identified as a typical Mughal garden was initially introduced in India. Some of the earliest of Babur’s garden projects were launched at the newly emerging Mughal city of Agra. We have already seen that the garden in its Chahārbāgh variety emerged under Babur and his successors as an important instrument of urban design.

Babur, coming from Central Asia, had naturally inherited the ideals of this garden from the Timurid tradition. The Persian and Timurid gardens were generally enclosed within a boundary wall pierced with gates. The plan of this type of gardens was worked out in a regular arrangement of four squares often subdivided into smaller plots with a pool or tank of water with lilies or a pleasure-pavilion in the centre. Four shallow water channels ran at right angles

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from the central pool to the middle of the four cardinal sides. Flower-parterres and cypress avenues bordered there channels.\(^2\)

Further, due to the typical topography of the region, the Persian and Timurid gardens were generally terraced with flowing water as the principal adornment and the \textit{raison d’etre}. Water was manipulated beautifully in channels, \textit{jets déau}, water falls and cascades. The water-courses were paved with bright blue tiles.\(^3\) A number of these \textit{chahārbāgh} gardens were layed out at Samarqand which had been held by Babur twice before he conquered India. Gardens like \textit{Bagh-i Dilkusha}, \textit{Bagh-i Shimal} and \textit{Bagh-i Nau} had been founded by Timur (1338-1405) himself.

These Timurid gardens were marked by their vast enclosure within high walls, splendid monumental portals, quartered divisions, choice of a natural slope and the use of the main water-axis, vineyards, and the location of a structure- a palace or a pavilion – at the centre of each section.\(^4\)

Being fully conversant with the plan and layout of these gardens at Samarqand, Babur in 1508 patterned his \textit{Bagh-i Wafa} at Kabul and then in 1526-1527 went on to construct his initial gardens at Panipat, Sikri and ultimately Agra. It has been argued that these endeavours were nothing but ‘an appropriation of land and royal emblems of territorial control’.\(^5\)

\(^2\) See for example Donald N. Wilber, \textit{Persian Gardens and Garden Pavilions}, op. cit, p. 76
\(^3\) A. U. Pope, \textit{An Introduction to Persian Art}, London, op. cit, pp. 207-8
\(^5\) James L. Wescoat, Jr., “Picturing an Early Mughal Garden”, \textit{Asian Art II}, no. 4, Fall, 1989, pp. 59-79; \textit{idem}, “Gardens versus Citadels: The Territorial Context of Early Mughal
The gardens (the *chahārbāghs*) as introduced in India by Babur, thus, were generally laid out on a grid pattern and followed a pattern: a square or a rectangular area divided into four quadrants (or multiples thereof) by two axes comprising the water-channels and pathways (the *khiyābāns*) (Plan 2.1). Depending on the area to be enclosed, the quadrant could be divided and subdivided to create the same module on different scales. At the points of intersections, water-tanks (*hauz*) and platforms were built. In the centre was either a large *hauz* or a *bārādāri* (a pavilion with triple-pillared opening on each side). This typical form of *chaharbagh* was generally preferred for Tomb gardens. The second form of this garden was the waterfront garden comprising of a riverfront structure usually on a raised platform (*kursi*) below which was the main garden with *khiyabans* dividing the whole into quadrants (Plan 2.2). The terraced garden (Plan 2.3) was not generally resorted to due to the topography of the Mughal territories in India.

These gardens could either be laid out as orchards (*bustan*), or flower gardens (*gulistan*). From the point of view of their purpose they could be further categorized as (a) Pleasure gardens; (b) Temporary camping ground of

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the emperors;\(^8\) (c) \(\text{khānabāgh}\) or house gardens;\(^9\) and / or (d) funerary
gardens.\(^10\)

It is also interesting to note that most of these gardens, the \(\text{chahārbāghs}\)
(as against the \(\text{khānabāghs}\)) were generally situated on the outskirts of the
towns: some were however also laid-out within the city proper. This was, for
example the case not only at Shahjahanabad but also at the port-town of
Surat.\(^11\) This tradition probably started in India at Agra where the story of
\(\text{chahārbāghs}\) truly started with the construction of \(\text{Hasht Bihisht}\) on the banks
of the river in 1526.\(^12\) From its reference in the \(\text{Baburnama}\) and other
contemporary sources it is apparent that this garden was layed out on the left
bank of the Yamuna almost opposite the fort. (\textbf{Plate 2.1}) In order to convey the
significance of this garden, Ahmad Yadgar writing during the reign of Akbar
informs us:

\(^8\) For example at one place in his Memoirs, Jahangir notes: ‘I remained three days in the
garden, and on 27\(^{th}\) Isfandiyar entered the city’, \textit{Tuzuk-i Jahangiri}, ed. Saiyid Ahmad,
Ghaziipur & Aligarh, 1863-64, p. 114

\(^9\) For the remains of \(\text{khānabagh}\) attached to the nobles structures at Fathpur Sikri, distt. Agra,
see S. Ali Nadeem Rezavi, “Exploring Mughal Gardens at Fathpur Sikri”, \textit{PIHC}, Bangalore
session, 1998.

\(^10\) Catherine B. Asher, “Babur and Timurid Chārbagh: Use and meaning”, Mughal
\textit{Architecture of Mughal India}, Cambridge, 1992, p. 37

\(^11\) Stephen Blake, \textit{Shahjahanabad: The Sovereign City in Mughal India, 1639-1739,}
Cambridge, 1991; Hiromu Nagashima, “On a map of Surat (a Mughal Port Town) Drawn in
the Former half of the 18\(^{th}\) Century”, \textit{Nagasaki Prefectural University Journal}, Vol. 40, no.
2, September 2006, pp. 89-112

\(^12\) \textit{Baburnama}, op. cit, p. 531; Gulbadan Bano Begum, \textit{Humayun Nama}, ed. A.S. Beveridge,
p. 43
“...And in the second Regnal Year of His Majesty (Babur) foundations of an un-paralleled and unique garden were laid on the banks of the river Jun [Yamuna]. The plan with walkways (tarh bandi-i khiyaban) [for the garden lay-out] appeared for the first time in India. Before this [Hasht Bihisht Bagh] this plan with walkways was not to be found anywhere in India...”

It was not only the ‘Hasht Bihisht’ but also a ‘garden of the private apartments’ which was also constructed by Babur at this time. A number of Babur’s accomplices and nobles are also said to have ‘procured lands on the (left) bank of the river, made regular and elegant gardens and tanks.’

These were the initial attempts towards the Mughal city of Agra under Babur. All the gardens were on the banks of river Yamuna. This laying out of riverfront gardens at Agra (Plate 2.2) introduced a new type of urban planning in India. This tradition of developing Agra as a riverfront city was faithfully carried forwards during the subsequent reigns of Akbar, Jahangir and Shahjahan. In 1558 when Akbar re-established his court at Agra and made this city his capital orders were issued to the nobility not only to build their mansions ‘on either side’ of

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13 Ahmad Yadgar, Tārīkh-I Shāhī or Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1936, ed Hidayat Husain, pp. 120-21
14 Baburnama, op. cit, p. 531
15 Baburnama, op. cit, pp. 531-32
the river but also lay out ‘charming gardens’.

It was this tradition of performing the river bank that Agra got its typical shape. Pelsaert, writing during the reign of Jahangir tells us the narrow breadth of the city was due to the fact that ‘every one has tried to be close to the river bank, and consequently the waterfront is occupied’ by the costly palaces and gardens. He goes on to add that this ‘luxuriance of the groves all round makes it resemble a royal park rather than a city.’ He goes on to list thirty three gardens at Agra.

Thevenot too when he visited Agra mentions ‘twenty five or thirty’ riverfront gardens and their walls which ‘contribute much to the rendering the Town as long as it is’. To Bernier, who visited Agra in 1659, the defects of urban planning like narrow and haphazard roads were ironed out by ‘luxuriant and green foliage’ which also ameliorated the inconveniences caused by the hot and extreme climate of the country. The relationship between the city and the gardens during the reign of Shahjahan is best brought about by Muhammad Salih Kanboh in the following words:

> “On either side of that sea full of pleasantness [Yamuna], buildings and gardens of paradisiacal space on placed together in such a handsome close way that from the charming entertainment of each of them the right of the beholder gathers the flowers of bounty of the

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18 Pelsaert, op. cit, pp. 2, 5
19 Thevenot, Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri, ed. S. Sen, New Delhi, 1949, pp. 47-48
20 Francois Bernier, Travels in Mughal Empire (A.D. 1656-68), tr. A. Constable, 1972, p. 285
month of *Urdi Bihisht* [spring]. Because of the riverfront buildings and the flower gardens in front [on the landward side], it appears that garden is linked to garden and garden plot (*chaman*) to garden plot, [and thus] the desire to stroll in the garden of Paradise is completely erased from the page of memory….. In particular, the spacious buildings and wonderful pavilions of the princes of exalted origin and other amirs…. give a display of the garden of *Rizwan* [the gate-keeper of Paradise] and the palaces of the garden of Paradise.”

Much insightful information on the gardens of Agra is supplied to us by the map of Agra drawn sometime in 1720’s on the orders of Sawai Jai Singh now preserved at the City Palace Museum, Jaipur (*Map IA*). As has been pointed out in the previous chapter, this map depicts the various gardens of Agra along with their names written in *devanagari* script. [See *Map IA*] These gardens have been shown in schematic form and go to corroborate the information on the city of Agra as given by contemporary sources discussed above. On may visualise the scheme and lay out of the gardens as they may have existed from the time of the city’s inception under Akbar down to the reign of Shahjahan, when it formally ceased to be the capital of Mughal Empire.

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22 Map of Agra, Cat. No. 126, Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, Jaipur.
The map was ordered to be made at a time when Sawai Jai Singh was appointed as the governor of Agra.\textsuperscript{23} The task of making this map was assigned to his deputy Rai Shiv Das.\textsuperscript{24} Further, the authenticity of the information contained in this map is attested by confirmations coming from the nineteenth century account of Munshi Sil Chand: a number of gardens depicted in the eighteenth century map are shown extant in the later account.\textsuperscript{25}

Sixteen gardens are depicted on this map adorning the left bank of the river in the side on which Babur reportedly initiated his riverfront scheme of the city. Starting from the north (Map II) these gardens are:

1. \textit{Bagh-i Shah Nawaz Khan}
2. \textit{Buland Bagh} (Plate 2.3)
3. \textit{Bagh-i Nur Afshan} (Plan 2.4 & Plate 2.4)
4. \textit{Bagh-i Jahanara} (Plan 2.5 & Plate 2.5)
5. \textit{Bagh}
6. \textit{Rauza Afzal Khan} (within a \textit{Bāgh}) (Plan 2.6 & Plate 2.6)
7. \textit{Bagh-i Khwaja Muhamad Zakariya} (Plan 2.7)
8. \textit{Bagh-i Sultan Parvaiz}
9. \textit{Bagh-i Itimaduddaula} (within a \textit{Bāgh}) (Plan 2.8)

\textsuperscript{23} Sawai Jai Singh was appointed as the governor of Agra in 1722. See V. S. Bhatnagar, \textit{Life and Times of Sawai Jai Singh, 1688-1743}, Delhi, 1974, pp. 190-92


\textsuperscript{25} See \textit{Tafrih-ul ʿimārat}, Sil Chand, BL, MS. 10L. 2450. Cf. Ebba Koch, \textit{The Complete Taj}, op. cit, p. 34
10. Bagh –i Musavi Khan Sadr

11. Bagh-i Patishahi

12. Moti Bagh-i Patishahi (Plate 2.7)

13. Bagh-i Patishahi

14. Lal Bagh Patishahi

15. Doosrau (second) Chaharbagh-i Patishahi

16. Chaharbagh-i Patishahi

17. Bagh-i Mahtab Patishahi (Plate 2.8)

Amongst these at least three have been attributed to the reign of Babur, and five each to the reign of Jahangir & Shahjahan. Some probably date to the later Mughal period. However in the light of the documentary evidence cited above, the sites of the Shahjahani and later Mughal gardens were those which had been built over the remains of the gardens of the previous era.

As mentioned earlier, the earliest garden built by Babur at Agra was the Hasht Bihist.\(^{26}\) Ebba Koch identifies this garden with the remains of garden no. 16 (of which only a few wells remain, the whole land now being used as agricultural land) which is nomenclated as Chaharbagh-i Patishahi. She however, does not cite any evidence as a support for her identification.

Traditionally, the site of Bāgh-i Nur Afshan (no. 3 on the map, see Plan 2.4) has been identified with Aram Bagh, a garden where Bubur’s body after his death was temporarily buried before being transferred to Kabul. Whether it was so and whether it was the site of a garden built during the period of Babur,

\(^{26}\) Baburnama, op. cit, p. 531; Khwandamir, Humayun Nama, op. cit, pp. 69-70
we do not know. It is the site of a garden built by Nur Jahan Begum during the reign of Jahangir. According to her its architecture clearly ‘dates from Jahangir’s time and testifies to the patronage of Nur Jahan as an outstanding garden builder.’

Gulbadan Bano Begum mentions a garden known as Bāgh-i Gul Afshan founded by her father where Mirza Kamran stayed during his visit to Agra. He is also said to have paid a visit to the ‘tomb’ of Babur: was it within this very garden which then was given the name of “Arām Bāgh” (or was it initially known as Bagh-i ‘iram – the garden of paradise?).

Modern explorations and excavations have revealed that although finally built during the reign of Shahjahan, the Mahtab Bāgh was originally laid out by Babur. Excavations carried out during 1979-80 revealed an octagonal tank of burnt bricks (Plate 2.9) and the foundations of the enclosure walls of rectangular garden (Plan 2.9). This octagonal tank was found decorated with foliated edges similar to the ones found at Bāgh-i Nilefar constructed by Babur at Dholpur. Further explorations conducted during the year 1993-94 exposed further evidence for the existence of a garden. Excavations revealed the

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27 Ebba Koch, The Complete Taj, op. cit, p. 37
29 Gulbadan Bano Begum, op.cit., p. 43
fragments of spring fountains made of marble, terracotta pipes and the drains. Further, all these architectural fragments suggested the Shahjahani style of architecture.31

All these evidences go to debunk the theory of the ‘Black Taj’ or a second Taj for Shahjahan. It is interesting to note that the Jaipur City Palace Museum city-plan of Agra made on the orders of Sawai Jai Singh in or around 1720 marks a garden nomenclated as ‘Another Imperial Garden’ (*dusrau bāgh-i pātsahi*) at the place where the excavations have been carried out. According to this map, this garden was a culmination of a series of gardens which started with the Aram Bagh in the North.

The excavations in the area carried out in 1994-95 finally brought out the whole garden and its lay-out.32

Like a typical Mughal garden, the *Mahtab Bāgh* was conceived on a *chahārbāgh* pattern with water-channels and walkways (*khiyabans*) dividing the whole into multiples of four, and the whole surrounded within a walled enclosure (Plan 2.10).

In the eastern periphery, a series of quadrants each of 4.25m X 4.25m were excavated, (Plate 2.10) which revealed a structure of 25.75m (North-South) X 4.80m (East-West) built of *lakhauri* bricks and lime-mortar. Although the structure above the plinth level is completely disappeared, yet, the plan suggested that it might have been a *bangla* or *baradari* which consisted of an oblong central hall verandah (traditionally having three arched-openings in

front and back), measuring 8.25m (North-South) X 4.80m (East-West), flanked by a small chamber on either side, each measuring 3.45m (North-South) X 4.80m (East-West). The thickness of wall at this level measured 1.25m. The *bangla* or *baradari* is located on the mid-length of eastern boundary wall. A small area in the front of this structure yielded traces of brick pavement overlaid with lime-mortar. The paved ground is found connected with a small platform at a slightly lower level which was ascended through steps on the northern side. The traces of three steps were encountered on this stairway which was constructed with *lakhauri* brick-work and veneered with red sandstone.

The northern periphery of the site, close to the village Kachhpura, had suffered due to the robbing of building material as well as rubble, for spreading on the floors of cattle-pen in the past. The excavation revealed structural remains measured approximately 14.20m (East-West) along the boundary wall and 1.8m in width towards south, projected from the northern side or the boundary wall. The wall remains in the portion had been robbed to a considerable depth and now only its foundation has survived in varying heights. The traces of stone *kerbs* in the projected portion indicate the existence of a gateway in the middle portion of northern boundary wall (Plate 2.11).

In the central area, the excavation revealed the existence of a masonry tank. (Plate 2.12) Its traces indicate that the tank was externally square. Internally, the tank is almost intact, displaying a marvelous design in execution. The interior of the tank is basically a square with chamfered corner at the
bottom. The chamfered portion is superimposed with moulded decoration of cusped design. Each of the cardinal sides measures 6.90m in complete length but excluding the chamfered portion on both sides, it is 3.90m. The chamfered face is 2.10m in length. The traces of a circular pit in the centre of the tank suggest that there was a single fountain in the centre of the tank. The tank was built with *lakhauri* brick work and has a finely plastered surface. The embankment platform of the tank extended about 5m from inner face on all cardinal sides. The tank is 1.65m deep from the top level of embankment. The available evidence shows that the embankment platform was only 1.5m high from its foundation. However, deep digging in this area revealed an array of wall alignments forming some cell-like arrangements. It is probable that these underlying wall alignments were the remains of some earlier edifice, however, it is assumed that it was a box-foundation provided to the tank. The tank contained an outlet built of terracotta-pipe running through the platform and in the remaining length it is built of brick-work and covered with red sandstone slabs.\(^{33}\)

The southern periphery of the site is dominated by a large octagonal pool (*Plate 2.13*) as revealed by the previous as well as present excavation. In the present excavation, ninety quadrants have been exposed which revealed the detailed picture of the pool and associated edifices. Each side of the octagonal pool measured 17.45 m at the inner face and its total interior area amounts to 1469.79 sq. m. This pool or tank consists of *pucca* bottom, elaborate

embankment, a fountain system and outlets and pavilions on the southern side. On the bottom floor of the pool twenty-five circular pits were traced in particular geometrical pattern. The scooping of two pits ascertained that the pits were meant for fountain spouts and its devices. The fountain was linked with each other by underground pipeline made of glazed terracotta pipes for uniform supply of water. The spouts were made of marble. The pool comprises a very wide embankment wall rising to two terraces. The first terrace bears a plain face while the second terrace has ornate cusped mouldings. The width of the embankment wall is 11.80 m. Originally, the embankment was 4.30 m while an additional wall having width of 7.40 m was raised in the second phase. From the top surface of this embankment, the depth upto the bottom of the tank was 1.19 m. It was noticed that the interior face of the embankment was raised in two terraces. The first terrace was 50 cm high with plain face. On plan, this terrace was 85 cm wide; the second terrace begins at this receding end. It is 69 cm high and the face is broken into cusps. On plan, each side of the octagonal tank was arranged with sixteen pentafoiled arched forms upto a height of 56 cm (Plate 2.14). On plan, this arched portion was extended to a width of 88 cm. To the back the arched portion, a stone kerb of 13 cm (height) by 50 cm (width) with moulded front edge formed a running border all around. This stone border extended towards back by a platform of 5.07 m width all around with plastered surface (this plan of pavilion attached to embankment platform and consisted of a central dalan flanked by a closed chamber on either side, was found extending all along the length of the one side of the octagon. At the bottom of
the tank, finds of the number of pit marks and fragments of marble. The plan of
the embankment wall displays that there was an earth core between the inner
and the outer, while casings of brick-work were 4.56 m and 1.93 m
respectively. The middle core of earth is 5.40 m. The walled embankment was
provided with the bangla or baradari pavilions on southern and northern sides.
The bangla on southern side is traceable on plan only and shows a central
verandah flanked by a chamber on either side. The northern counterpart was
also in a similar plan. Though its building material has been robbed ruthlessly,
some stone kerbs and the collapsed-arches found in situ position, provide a
panorama of the erstwhile graceful pavilion. This bangla or baradari was also
adorned with a beautiful cascade. The excavation revealed that a channel is
running across the verandah opening into a small rectangular tank (9.95 m X
5.55 m X 0.36 m) located just behind the embankment wall. A stone-slab (1.85
m X 0.75 m) carved with twenty-seven alcoves (9 X 3 rows) was found to the
back of the embankment-wall on the route of waterfall (Plate 2.15). It was
noticed that to drain out the water from the octagonal pool there were four
outlets at the bottom level. But the surplus water was channelized through the
northern arm of the pool and was cascaded into the rectangular tank. This type
of cascade is typical of the Mughal style. As per the tradition, the alcoves were
lighted with candle lamps to present the glittering view. The rectangular lower
tank has drain-outlet at the bottom level, connected with underground covered
channel leading towards north. Besides, three slits, each on the three sides to
spread the surplus water on the ground, were also found.
The remains of a circular well constructed with *lakhauri* bricks and lime-mortar, located between the central tank and octagonal pool were also brought to light. The important antiquities from the site include Chinese and glazed Mughal pottery, pieces of copper spouts of fountains and huge quantity of fragment of terracotta pipes and blue glazed tiles.\(^3\)

The tank has foliated edge in lime similar in design to the rock-cut lotus garden of Babur at Dholpur. This shows that the site was originally laid out by Babur and was maintained by later Mughal emperors. There is no evidence of having a raised plinth similar to that of the *Taj Mahal*. However, the possibility of Shahjahan’s intention to have a simple tomb over his grave in *Mahtab Bagh* cannot be ruled out.

The architectural fragments similar to those of the southern pavilion were also found on the northern side of the tank, thereby suggesting the existence of a similar pavilion on the northern side as well.

A look at the plan (Plan 2.7) of this garden however suggests a remarkable change from the gardens of the earlier regimes.

In this garden, as at the *Taj*, the element which was usually reserved for the centre is shifted to the periphery: the central tank of this garden is unusually small, whereas a corner is reserved for a prominent and well decorated octagonal tank. Was this then a conscious attempt towards an affinity with the *Taj*, the mausoleum of the Empress, on the other bank of the river? Was this

\(^3\) *Indian Archaeology 1979-80 - A Review*, ed. Debala Mitra, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, 1983, p. 74
then the *Hasht Bihisht* of Babur which was later built over by Shahjahan when
the Taj Mahal was constructed on the opposite bank? To me it appears so.

It is also interesting to note that none of these riverfront gardens can be
definitely dated to the period of Akbar when the city of Akbar infact came to
its own. Just like the buildings in fort, probably his gardens too were taken up
and re-laid during the reigns of Jahangir and Shahjahan. We and already
mentioned the probable conversions and re-laying of the Baburi gardens during
the reign of Jahangir (the Aram Bagh / *Bāgh-i Nur Afshan*) and Shahjahan (the
*Hasht Bihisht / Mahtab Bāgh*).

From the reign of Jahangir, the *Buland Bāgh* (no. 2), *Bāgh-i Nur Afshan*
(no.3), *Bāgh-i Sultan Parvaiz* (no 8), the garden around the tomb of Itimad ud
Daulah (no.9) and the *Moti Bāgh-i Patishahi* are depicted on this City Palace
Museum map. The *Buland Bāgh* has been identified as the garden of Sarbuland
Khan, a noble of Jahangir on the basis of an octagonal multi-storied tower
known as *Battis Khamba* which reflects typical Jahangiri architectural features
and designs. ³⁵ The gardens of Sultan Parvaiz (No. 8) and *Moti Bāgh-i Patishahi*
have both been mentioned by Pelsaert when he visited Agra during the reign of
Jahangir. ³⁶ However Peter Mundy writes that the later (which he mentions as
‘Mootee ca baag’ was built by ‘Noore mohol, that is Nur Jahan Bagum. ³⁷

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³⁶ Pelsaert, op. cit, p.5. The garden of Sultan Parvaiz is also mentioned by Raja Ram, op. cit, p.16
³⁷ Peter Mundy, *Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, ed. R.C. Temple,
Koch cites a miniature from the Windsor Castle *Padshohname* which according to her depicts this garden pavilion which has strong resemblance with Nurjahan Begum’s pavilion at *Bagh-i Nur Afshan*. Was it again, on earlier site taken up by Nurjahan Begum to build her garden?

Another garden depicted on this map where provenance is disputed is the *Bagh-i Khwaja Zakariya* (no.7). Both the map (*Map IA & II*) and Raja Ram attribute this garden to Khwaja Mohammad Zakariya who is said to have been a noble under Jahangir. According to Sil Chand on the other hand the garden belonged to Hakim Alimuddin Wazir Khan, a physician and grandee under Shahjahan.

During the reign of Jahangir, there was one Khwaja Zakariya, the son of Khwaja Bakhshi who in 1605-6 was holding the minor rank of 500 zat. We do not hear of him again: the sources also do not reveal whether he was ever posted in or around Agra. Then there was one Khwaja Muhammad Muqim Harvi, entitled Wazir Khan under Jahangir. He held a *mansab* of 2,500/1,000 at the time of his death in 1619-20. He started his career under Jahangir in 1605-6 as a *Wazir* and then went on to hold the post of the *Diwân* of Bengal Twice. He did have the requisite clout to own a riverfront garden at Agra adjacent to

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39 Raja Ram, op. cit, p.16

40 Sil Chand, Cf. Ebba Koch, *The Complete Taj*, op. cit, p.45

41 See M. Athar Ali, *The Apparatus of Empire: Awards of Ranks, Offices and Titles to the Mughal Nobility (1574-1658)*, OUP, Delhi, 1985, J126

42 Ibid, J3, J28, J221 and J959
the garden of Sultan Parvaiz, but then we have no evidence of his having been posted at Agra.

Thus the assertion of Sil Chand to the fact that this garden was laid by the famous physician and noble Hakim Alimuddin Wazir Khan appears to be tenable Hakim Alimuddin started his career under Shahjahan as a Wazir and a mansab of 5000/3000 in 1627-28.\textsuperscript{43}

Within a year he was promoted as the Subadar of Agra and a mansab of 5000/4000.\textsuperscript{44} He enjoyed this post till 1631-32 when he was appointed as the Subadar of Punjab, a post he enjoyed till 1639-40.\textsuperscript{45} The next year he was again brought back as Subadar to Agra, which by now had been renamed as Akbarabād. He died there soon after.\textsuperscript{46} The highest rank in his career was in 1634-35 when he was promoted to 5000/5000 (3000 x 2-3h).\textsuperscript{47} But then in 1637-38 he was demoted to 5000/5000 (1000 x 2-3h),\textsuperscript{48} a rank which he held till his death.

A river side baradari hiding a tahkhana or subterraneous chambers below and two octagonal bastions marking the two ends of the garden are still extant (Plate 2.16). They reveal typical architectural features of Shahjahan period: the multi-foliated arches and the rectangular pillars. This garden thus probably was added during the reign of Shahjahan.

\textsuperscript{43} M. Athar Ali, Apparatus of Empire, op. cit, S18, S67
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid, S325, S4222, S667
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid, S698, S2340
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid, S2599, S2653
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid, S951
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid, S1521
The gardens from the reign of Shahjahan include the Bāgh-i Shahnawaz Khan, (no.1) Bāgh-i Jahanara, (no. 4) the garden around the tomb of Afzal Khan (no. 6) and the Bāgh-i Musavi Khan Sadr.

As depicted on the map, the Bāgh-i Shahnawaz Khan is quite modest in size. But then we know that the garden of Mirza Badi uz Zaman Shahnawaz Khan Safavi had been the venue of Aurangzeb’s wedding.49 In its original form it must have been much grander than what is covered through the map.

The Bāgh-i Jahanara (no. 4): according to Abu Talib Kalim, a poet-laureate of Shahjahan’s court was founded by Mumtaz Mahal. After death it became the property of her daughter Jahanara Begum, in whose same it became famous.50 Nothing much survives from this imperial garden except some traces and an octagonal side-bastion, which is a triple storeyed structure surmounted with a Chhatri (Plate 2. 17). The surface decorations on its two lower floors reveal that this structure was constructed early in Shahjahan’s reign when the Jahangiri architectural features were still popular. On both these floors we get Chinikhana motifs. The Chhatri at the top however contains the multi-foliated arches popular under Shahjahan.

Presently most of these gardens of the left bank of the river have disappeared (Map III). The Mahtab Bāgh has recently been excavated and the gardens of Itimad-ud Daulah, and the Bāgh-i Nur Afshan (the Aram Bagh) are the only other gardens which survive in full. The riverfront pavilions and

50 Abu Talib Kalim, Diwan-i Kalim, ed. Partan Bayzai, Tehran, 1957
remains of some of the bastions adorning the gardens between Aram Bagh and Itimad ud Daulah survive. Traces of all the gardens between the Mahtab Bāgh and Itimad ud Daulah (i.e. nos. 10-16) have almost totally disappeared. The gardens around the tombs of Itimadud Daula and Akbar at the suburbs of Sikandra, as against all the other garden, are typical chahārbāghs.

Coming to the right bank of the river, the City Palace Museum map depicts only four gardens, viz.:

1. Bāgh Khan –i Alam (no. 21). (Plan 2.11)
2. Bāgh-i Rai Shiv Das (no. 42).
3. Bāgh–i Hakim Kazim Ali (no. 43)
4. The garden around the Rauza Jafar Khan (no. 44) (Plan 2.12)

The other structures depicted on this side flanking the fort are the havelis of the nobility and a mosque (no. 35).

Out of these four, one (the Bāgh-i Khan-i Alam) belongs to the reign of Jahangir and one (i.e. garden around the Rauza Ja’far Khan) to the period of Shahjahan. The Bagh Rai Shiv Das belongs to the eighteenth Century, being the garden of the author of the map, while the last, the Bāgh-i Hakim Kazim Ali cannot be safely dated. Probably it too belongs to the eighteenth century. Out of these the Tomb of Ja’far Khan, like the tombs of Itimadud Daula and Akbar, is surrounded with the traditional and typical chahārbāgh plan.

A few other gardens can also be traced in the city of Agra. Examples can be given to the Suraj Bhan ka Bāgh, portions of which survive, near the Tomb
of Akbar in the suburbs of Mughal Agra. Another large garden once spread beside the Tomb of Firuz Khan to the south of the city near the modern Agra-Gwalior road. Although very few medieval gardens survive to day yet it can safely be assumed that they were once the key to the urban planning. They gave Agra its typical character which distinguished it from the other contemporary cities. If Fathpur Sikri was known for its meticulous planning, Shahjahanabad for its wide and well organized road networks, Agra was distinguished by its riverfront gardens: in fact they were the very face and spirit of the city. Writing as early as Akbar’s Agra father Monserrate had concluded:

“...It has the advantage over almost all other cities of that region in respect of its mild climate, of its fertile soil, of its great river, of its beautiful gardens…”51

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51 Monserrate, op. cit, p. 35
Map II
Plan 2.1: Chaharbagh (four-quartered garden)

Plan 2.2: Waterfront Garden
Plan 2.3: Terraced Garden

Plan 2.4: Bagh-i Nur Afshan (Aram Bagh)
Plan 2.5: Bagh-i Jahanara

Plan 2.6: Rauza Afzal Khan (Chini-ka-Rauza)
Plan 2.7: *Bagh-i* Khwaja Muhammad Zakariya

Plan 2.8: *Bagh* & Tomb of Itimat-ud Daulah
Plan 2.9: Octagonal Tank and foundation of enclosure Wall

Plan 2.10: Bagh Mahtab
Plan 2.11: Bagh Khan-i Alam

Plan 2.12: Rauza Jafar Khan
Plan 2.13: Mumtazabad