Chapter - 5

Gardens in Mughal India
GARDENS IN MUGHAL INDIA

Hindustan, a land full of flora and fauna has attracted to the Mughals. When Babur came to India (1526) he saw a number of forests, mountains, deserts, rivers, animals, trees and plants, etc. He was very much impressed with the natural beauty of this country. Similarly Babur found that it is a country of various seasons, e.g., rainy, winter, springs and summer, etc. These seasons and the climate of Hindustan was favourable for the forests and gardens. So Babur and other Mughals laid out many gardens for various, i.e., for the beautification of the palaces, for the purpose of rest and as well as for the environmental purposes. The idea of these gardens was very much influenced from Persian pattern and based on paradise. Most of the gardens were laid by the Mughal rulers, officials and nobles. But Indian love of gardens in fact began centuries earlier. It is evinced from the Hindu epics, particularly descriptions related to the royal palaces, temples, which were built near springs and running water. Artificial water courses, terraces, and partrecces were yet to come but beautiful natural gardens of indigenous trees of the forest and river banks are described at the sites of temples and pilgrim shrines. Illustrations of such forest scenes are included in manuscripts produced for Hindu patrons who remained relatively independent of Mughal rule. These illustrations are in Indian style, almost untouched by Islamic and Mughal influences.

The spread of Islam extended to India from the 13th century, and the Ganges plain was dominated by Islamic rulers who, almost certainly for the

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2 Ibid., p. 515.
first time introduced the *chahar-bagh* (four path gardens) system taken from Iran. In the 16th and 17th centuries this plan reintroduced by Babur, was expanded in Mughal gardens. Early 16th century illustrations produced at the studios of the so called sultanate rulers, who had introduced, traditions of book production from Iran exhibit strong Persian characteristics of style, while depicting plants, trees, and flowers alien to Iran but abundant in India, such as the Banyan, *pipal*, mango, plantain, and lotus, etc.\(^5\)

Gardens were an integral part of Mughal life and culture and constituted an important part of the city planning. The Mughal garden (the *chahar-bagh*) was introduced in India by Babur were generally laid out on a grid pattern and generally followed a pattern: a square or a rectangular area divided into four quadrants (or multiples there of) by two axes comprising the water channels and pathways (the *Khiyabans*). Depending on the area to be enclosed, the quadrant could be divided and sub-divided 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 *baradari* (4 pavilions with three pillared opening on each side).\(^6\)

These gardens could either be laid out as orchards (*bustain*) 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 the emperors; (c) *Khawabgah* or house gardens; and (d) funerary gardens.\(^7\) It is also important to note that these gardens were generally situated on the

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\(^5\) Ibid., p. 46.
outskirts of the towns; some were also laid out inside the city proper. Thus when Babur conquered Agra he ordered the construction of a large number of gardens around the city. Most of these gardens, viz., Aram Bagh, Bagh-i-Hasht-Bihisht, Bagh-i-Dahra, Bagh-i-Zahara, the two latter being for his daughters, and these were built on the periphery of the city and through them an attempt was made to transform the layout of the environment. Thus Pelsaert, writing about the city of Agra during the reign of Jahangir asserts that ‘the luxuriance of the groves all round makes it resemble a royal park rather than a city.’ Bernier who visited this city during the subsequent reign also has almost the same opinion when he remarks, ‘a large expanse of luxuriant gardens form a part of the city of Agra.’

These gardens were such an integral part of the Mughal culture and a toll of city planning and landscaping according to the sources they served for their enjoyment while in life, and even ‘after death’ as a setting for their tombs and mausoleums. Apart from all these, the gardens also provided the rulers a considerable space for the large assemblies of armed followers. For this we have such specific references from the reign of Jahangir. For example at one place Jahangir writes in his memoirs that, “I remained three days in the garden, and on the 27th Isfandiyar entered the city”.

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8 Ibid., p. 96.
9 Catherine B. Asher, Architecture of Mughal India, Cambridge, 1992, p.22
12 Pelsaert, op. cit., p. 5.
Babur was familiar with the gardens created by his ancestors at Samarkand and Herat which had been laid out by Timur's sons and grandsons. These gardens, designed in the chaha-bagh system, were the main influence on those he himself created, particularly at Kabul and later in India. He writes of nine gardens at Samarkand, including the Dilkusha (Heart's delight) with its avenue of white poplars leading to the Turquoise gate. During a visit to Heart in 1506, Babur mentions, amongst others, the white Garden and describes its summer house ('joy house') as a sweet like abode built in two storeys.\textsuperscript{14}

This shows Babur's abiding interests in the creation of gardens wherever he went. A true gardener throughout his life, whether traveling or at the time of the campaign, he observed the local flowers, plants and trees, made entries about them, as well as reported on the progress of his own gardens, in the diaries he kept so assiduously.\textsuperscript{15}

Babur came to Agra soon after the battle of Panipat in May 1526. It was the hottest season and he was much tortured by scorching heat, hot winds (known locally as loo) and dust. He took recourse to the provision of running water and gardening which could cool down the atmosphere and give relief, as much as they could provide a beautiful landscape.\textsuperscript{16} Babur writes, "one of the great defects of Hindustan being its lack of running water, it kept coming to my mind that waters should be made to flow by means of wheels erected wherever I might settle down, also that grounds should be laid out in an orderly and symmetrical way. With this object in view we crossed the Jun-water (river

\textsuperscript{14} Titley, op.cit., p. 47.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 47.
\textsuperscript{16} Nath, op. cit., p. 86.
Jamuna) to look at garden grounds for few days after entering Agra. Those grounds were so bad and unattractive that we traversed them with a hundred disgusts and repulsions. So ugly and displeasing were they that the idea of making a *chahar-bagh* in them passed from wind, but needs must! As there was no other land near Agra that same ground was taken in hand a few days later. The beginning was made with the large well from which water comes for the Hot-bath, and also with the piece of ground where the tamarind tree and the octagonal tank are. After that came the large tank with its enclosure, after that the tank and ‗talar‘ (probably *dalan*) in front of the outer residence; after that the private house with its garden and various dwellings, after plots of garden were seen laid out with order and symmetry, with suitable borders and parterres in every corner, and in every border rose and narcissus in perfect arrangements".  

As a matter of fact, Babur was in search of a hillside spring around which he could lay symmetrical terraced gardens with water softly rippling from one terrace to the other in a series of water falls. Instead of the hillside, he came across the level ground on the bank of the river Jamuna at Agra where he intended to lay garden. Babur inherited this idea of a terraced garden from Persian tradition. Garden craft was a favourite art in Persia and the references can be traced systematically as far back as to the Sasanian period even if we set aside the fabulous hanging gardens of Babylon and terraced gardens of Persepolis. Gardening received greatest impetus in the Muslim period. Caliphs immensely favoured it.  

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17 Baburnama, op.cit., p. 531  
18 Nath, op. cit., p. 87  
19 Ibid., p. 87
The Persian garden almost as a rule was enclosed. The plan of this garden was worked out in a regular arrangement of four squares often subdivided into smaller plots, with a lily pond (or lotus pool) or pleasure pavilion in the centre. This was called the char-bagh or Chahar-bagh (four quartered) plan. Four shallow canals run at right angles from the central pool to the middle of the four sides. Flower parterres and cypress-avenues bordered these canals. The Persians adored the cypress and plane (Chenar) trees. The cypress was the most evergreen tree and was an ancient symbol of immortality and it frequently occurs in Persian art. Plane is liked for its cool and refreshing shade.20

Persian garden, as pointed out earlier is essentially a terraced garden—a garden in descending stages, with the life giving water as one of the principal adornments as well as the very life and soul, the raison d’etre of the garden itself. In terraced gardens the central channel would be so arranged that the water would fall gently from level to level or else race down cascades and waterfalls, activating a series of fountains on the way. Water was manipulated beautifully in canals, jets of water, waterfalls, cascades, ponds and lakes. Canals and tanks were so constructed as to keep the water brining to the level of the paths on either side. Each terrace had a char-bagh or four quartered plan with paved paths, flower beds, cypress-avenues and other ornamental features.21

While the gardens of Samarkand also reflect the impact of the Persian tradition. The architects who planned these gardens came, almost invariably,
from Iran. River Zar-Afsan and numerous other channels and streams supplied ample water in and around Samarqand for gardening. Babur was fully conversant with these traditions of gardening. He conquered Samarqand a number of times and he has mentioned its beautiful gardens, e.g., the Perfect Garden, Heart Delighting Garden, Garden of the plain, chahar-bagh of Dervish Muhammad, Terkhan and others, in his memoirs. Similarly the gardens which he founded at Kabul were Bagh-i-Banafsha (Garden of violets), Bagh-i-Padshahi (the Imperial Garden) and Bagh-i-Chenar (The Garden of Plane trees), Bagh-i-Wafa (The Garden of fidelity), etc. (plate 53)

At Agra, he devoted much time in laying gardens and setting water devices, than reorganizing his revenues and the administrative system which, in fact, needed greater attention. To call him 'The Prince of Gardens' would not, therefore, be an exaggeration. The cypress represented eternity to the Mughals and bordered the walks and water channels of their gardens. Orange and citron were also favoured for these borders, pomegranates, almonds, and date palms were in the plots. The fruit were not mixed, for different species required varying amounts of water and care. Beneath the groves of trees, masses of spring-flowering plants iris, daffodils and narcissus were preferred. In some later gardens, flowerbeds were occasionally planted with a single variety massed in a pattern that created a mosaic-like effect. Many hybridized roses were cultivated, and jasmine was a favourite, especially in the strongly scented moonlight gardens.

22 Ibid., p. 88
23 Ibid., p. 89
24 Ibid., p. 90
The Mughal emperors had a great fondness for fruits for some it was practically an obsession- and they spared no efforts to ensure that fresh fruit was brought to them from all parts of their empire. They introduced many new varieties to India; fruit trees from northern valleys—even those beyond Kabul were transplanted to the perched plains. Babur himself wrote in his memoirs: “The people of Hind who had never seen grounds planned so symmetrically and thus laid out, called the side of the Jun where (our) residences were, Kabul”.27

Gardeners and men with special skills such as in grafting trees, were brought from Persia and the north to tend these gardens and train local workers. In his memoirs, Babur recalls his pleasure when a Gardner from Balkh (now in Afghanistan) successfully raised melons in his Agra garden. Always experimenting with plants and introducing new cutting, Babur has earlier planted vines there, which he felt bore very good grapes.28

Not just interested in the fruits, Babur also collected unusual flowers as he writes, “Rahim-dad has planted a great number of flowers in his garden (Baghcha), many being beautiful red oleanders. In these places the oleander flower is peach; those of Gwalior are beautiful, deep red. I took some of them to Agra and had them planted in gardens there.”29

Babur’s favourite garden was the one that he created at Kabul, known as the Bagh-i-Wafa (Garden-of-Fidelity). He writes, “In 914 A.H. (1508-09 AD) I laid out the four quarter garden, known as the Bagh-i-Wafa on a rising ground,

26 Ibid., p. 101
27 Baburnama, op.cit., p. 532
28 Moynihan, op. cit., p. 103.
29 Baburnama, op. cit., p. 610.
facing south.... There oranges, citrons and pomegranates grow in abundance....I had plantains brought and planted there; they did very well. The year before, I had Sugarcane planted there; it also did well. The garden lies high, has running water close at hand, and a wild winter climate. In the south west of it there is a reservoir 10 by 10, round which are orange trees and a few pomegranates, the whole encircled by a trefoil meadow. This is the best part of the garden, a most beautiful garden sight when the oranges take colour. Truly that garden is admirably situated.\(^{30}\) The late 16th century artist depicting the garden has followed Babur's description very carefully, illustrating the plants mentioned and the water flowing into the channels that form the *chahar-bagh*.

The illustrated manuscript of this garden is preserved in National Museum, New Delhi (f. 270). It is titled as "*Bagh-i-Wafa*" garden layed by Babur in Adinapur". On the top of the painting Koh-safed, the snow covered mountain and a Persian wheel for lifting water. Below is the *Char-bagh* divided into four plots in which oranges are growing in bulk. A plantain and two cypresses grow in one of the plots. A keora plant is in plot on the top right. In the reservoir in the centre a pair of ducks is gamboling. A solitary gardener is digging the soil in the plot to the left.\(^{31}\) (plate 54) Another garden laid by Babur, also near Kabul, was at Istalife, one of the villages in the fertile fruit growing area near the Paghwan mountains. Babur writes, "Masses of grapes ripen in their vineyards and they grow every sort of fruit in at abundance.... There is a pleasant halting place outside it, under great planes, green, shady and beautiful. A one will stream, having trees on both banks, flows constantly

\(^{30}\) Ibid., p. 208
\(^{31}\) M.S. Randhawa, *Paintings of Baburnama*, National Museum, New Delhi, 1983, pl.15

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through the middle of the garden', formerly its course was zig-zag and irregular; I had it made straight and orderly; so the place become very beautiful..... A group of planes gives pleasant shade above it; Holm oak (quercus bilut) grows in masses on the slope at its sides, these two out lands (Biluchistan) excepted, no Holm oak grown in the mountains of western Kabul – and the Judas tree (arghawan) is much cultivated in front of it, that is towards the level ground, cultivated there and nowhere else...... The yellow arghawan grows plentifully there also, the red and the yellow flowering at the same time.32

In all, he created ten gardens in and around Kabul, in addition to the one he designed for his future burial ground. This tomb garden was restored and extended by his great grandson, Shah Jahan who commented in his chronicles on the magnificence of some plane trees originally planted at Kabul by Babur.

Eventually Babur designed his first garden in India at Agra, reputedly the Aram bagh or (now Ram bagh), still there today but considerably altered. The probability however is that the real site is that of the Ram bagh, originally the Aram bagh or ‘Garden of Rest’ also known as the Nur Afshan garden. It is almost certainly the earliest Mughal garden to survive in recognizable form.33 It is situated on the left (eastern) bank of river Jamuna, between the Buland-Bagh and the Chini Ka Rauza. Babur gave this garden the pleasing name of ‘Bagh-i-Gulafshan’ (The flower-scattered Garden).34 It could indeed be described as ‘orderly and symmetrical’. The basic pattern is one of geometrically laid-out

32 Baburnama, op. cit., pp. 216-17
33 Crowe, op. cit., p. 63.
34 Nath, op.cit, p. 91.
walks, with platforms raised well above ground level from which to view the
garden. A terrace follows the east bank of the Jamuna, and on it are the remains
of two substantial buildings while the water channels throughout are seen in
their earliest and purest form, mere runnels to irrigate the roots of trees. Babur’s description of the first garden he laid out on the banks of the Jamuna
river is a classic of the transformation of an unfavourable site. The lack of
water channels and of gardens initially deterred Babur when he surveyed
possible sites near Agra. He was so discouraged that he abandoned his original
idea of making a chahar bagh there, only to change his mind when nothing
better than the ground “So bad and unattractive we traversed them with a
hundred disgusts and repulsions”. Babur planted various plants, trees and flowers in this garden.
Furthermore, Babur imported plants into India, and a melon grower from Balkh
(then in Iran), a city renowned for melons. Babur has mentioned in his
Memoirs about the beauty of flora and fauna of Hindustan. The plants and the
trees which he saw motivated him to create these pleasant gardens in
Hindustan. He listed and described trees and plants such as mango, banana,
oranges, myrobalan, jackfruit, monkeyjack, oleander, hibiscus, banyan, pipal
and many others. The fruit has two pleasant qualities, one that it peels easily,
the other that it has neither stone nor fibre”). This became a reason which
created ful-interest for the creation of gardens in the mind of Babur. These fruit
trees are depicted in an Illustrated Imperial Mughal manuscripts (Or .3714, f.
4040). 

Crowe, op.cit., pp. 64-65.
Titley, op. cit., p. 52.
Ibid., p.33.
The garden was evidently well maintained during his Jahangir's reign, who writes, "On this day I went round to see the Garden of Gul-i-Afshan which is on the banks of the Jamuna on the way rain fell heavily and filled the meads with freshness and greenness, pineapples had arrived at projection, and I made a thorough inspection. Of the buildings that overlooked the river, none that I saw were without the charm of verdener and flowing water".  

Another Mughal Paradise Garden, such as the Lotus garden at Dholpur, thirty-five miles south of Agra, was within a day trip of the capital or fort, and were enjoyed in much the same manner as western rulers enjoyed their country houses or retreats. That any of these secular paradise Gardens have survived the vicissitudes of the time is due in good part to the excellence of their planning and construction.39

Babur died at the end of 1530 and was buried in his garden at Kabul. He was succeeded by Humayun who did not inherit his love of gardens. Humayun died in 1556 as the result of an accident before he had designed his own tomb or chosen a site for it. It was a tradition that the choice of a site, the tomb itself and the design of the gardens surrounding it, were usually begun by the future occupant in his own lifetime. Humayun's widow Haji Begum built the complex at Delhi and it was completed in 1573. Humayun's tomb is a remarkable example of that contrast of red sandstone and white marble which was to become a vogue of the time. The gardens surrounding it are one of the very few Mughal gardens to survive in the original Persia-inspired chahar bagh form and they laid out in a series of chahar bagh plans.40 The partresses are

38 Tuzuk, op. cit., p.143
39 Moynihan, op. cit., p. 100
40 Titley, op. cit., p. 54.
divided in by wide paths which have narrow water channels running down the
centre. They are arranged on low terraces to provide gravity for a steady flow
of water. Later Mughal garden landscape designers developed the water
channels on a far larger scale until they resembled canals. They were also
constructed on different levels but with deeper terracing, the water flowing
from level to level down chutes, cascades and waterfalls.41

Akbar, the greatest of the Mughal emperors, succeeded Humayun 1556
when he was only 13, and reigned until his death in 1605. He was a man of
wide interests, although garden landscaping was not such an outstanding
passion as it had been for Babur. However, he appreciated Babur’s skill and
paid tribute to him, noting that he had enhanced India by landscape gardening,
wide avenues and falling water. It is due to Akbar’s patronage of the arts and of
book production that manuscripts copied from the late 16th century at his atelier
included the memoirs of Babur which were illustrated with miniatures of
superb quality by the imperial artists. Miniatures that include Mughal gardens
as subjects or as backgrounds provide invaluable insights for besides the
layout, they also include details such as plants and trees, oxen working the
water wheels to draw water from wells, gardeners: tools and they clay contains
for keeping tree roots watered.42

Chronicles kept by Akbar’s officials of the events of his daily life and of
State affairs included numerous inventories as well as lists of indigenous trees,
plants and flowers with description of their characteristics. Akbar had gardens
laid out around the buildings of his new city, Fatehpur Sikri and the Fort at

41 Ibid., p. 54.
42 Ibid., p. 54
Agra. The former, a city of palaces and gardens, was built at the shrine of Sheikh Salim. Akbar was the first Mughal who entered the Kashmir valley. He conquered Kashmir in 1586, in all, Akbar visited Kashmir three times. He seems especially to have enjoyed the autumn colour and the Saffron fields, and visited the spring at Achabal. He was entranced by the setting of Lake Dal, with its back drop of mountains, and by the wild flowers which carpeted the meadows in spring. He built a palace, at Srinagar, *Nasim bagh*, which was surrounded by gardens. This was the first in the long series of beautiful terraced gardens of the Mughals in the valley. The garden rose just over the Dal lake and with its usual avenues, pathways, tanks, cascades and other water-devices, it must have been a novel composition in its original form. Akbar’s tomb at Sikandara, on the plains near Agra, was begun in his own life time and completed by his son, Jahangir. It was surrounded by gardens laid out in the *chahar bagh* style, each section divided into four parts divided by raised paths, everyone with a central water channel. Fountains, tanks and water falls were supplied by wells and water flowed into tanks which were used for irrigating the fruit trees, flower beds, and avenues. The most important thing was that Akbar liked blackbucks very much which he kept during his time. The tradition of keeping blackbuck inside the lawns of Akbar’s tomb a Sikandara is still maintained. The size of this tomb and garden is shown in a huge 19th century drawing which indicates the extent of the gardens, and their country yards, channels, pools, fountains and trees. A magnificent tree in a clay irrigation

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43 Ibid., p. 54  
44 Crowe, op. cit., p. 80  
45 Nath, op. cit, Vol. II, p. 275
container used to keep its roots watered, from the poems of Nizam. Jahangir was also greatly interested in gardens and it was during his and his successor’s reign that the Mughal garden developed to perfection and some of the world famous gardens were laid out. Jahangir gave special attention to gardens in the valley south of Srinagar. He loved the natural streams and springs, and so added to them canals, fountains and buildings to create terraced gardens.

Garden constituted in fact, an integral part of the Mughal life and culture, whenever they traveled and Jahangir traveled a lot, they lived in camps but when they reached towns, they preferred to stay in gardens amidst pleasing surroundings. Jahangir was a naturalist and he immensely loved the beautiful things of nature, both fauna and flora which, at times, he commissioned his artist to paint. He repaired, renovated and sometimes renamed the old gardens which were scattered throughout the Empire and also founded new ones and built garden pavilion in them.

The gardens of the reign of Jahangir can be divided in four distinct classes (a) tomb gardens (b) palace gardens (c) plain gardens (d) terraced gardens. The gardens of Kashmir, Bagh-i-Nur Afshan of Agra and the Jahanara garden of Kabul belong to this group.

Like Babur, Jahangir was attracted by the splendor of the mountains and the charms of the lakes, landscaping of gardens and love of flowers. Kashmir was to remain the area he loved most from the time he accompanied Akbar

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46 Titley, op. cit., p. 36.
49 Ibid., p. 231
there. He traveled to Kabul, to see Babur's gardens there, and saw no less
then seven in one day, and he was supported in his interest by his wife, Nur
Jahan, and his brother-in-law Asaf Khan. As both of them, designed beautiful
garden there. The long period, they spent in Kashmir the magnificent gardens
Shalimar, Nishat, Vernag, Achaval were created. In addition, a series of palaces
and buildings with gardens were built at the various stopping places, including
Sialkot and Rajauri on the road from Agra to Kashmir, as the emperors would
be accompanied by a large entourage of courtiers, soldiers and servants, as well
as members of their own families. He writes in his memoirs: "If one were to
take to praise Kashmir, whole books would have to be written. He observed
and noted everything and found the water melons and pears of the best kind,
the garlic good. He rated the fish inferior and the wine sour. The pomegranates
not worth much, the guavas middling but the apricots cooled rival Kabul's.
According to Jahangir cherry and apricot trees were brought to Kashmir from
Kabul by Akbar. Not unexpectedly, when he rebuilt Akbar's fort garden he
included cherry trees. When four of these trees produced a crop of 1,500
delicious cherries, he gave them whimsical names and "strictly ordered the
officials of Kashmir to plant Shah-alu (cherry) trees in all the gardens."

In the cool altitude of Kashmir, 5200 feet, apples and plums were
substituted for the usual orange and citron trees bordering the paths. White,

50 Moynihan, op. cit., p. 121
51 Crowe, op. cit, p. 93.
52 Titley, op. cit, p. 1.
53 Tuzuk, op. cit, Vol. 11, p. 143
54 Moynihan, op. cit, p. 121.
55 Tuzuk, op. cit, p. 162
purple and mauve iris was a favourite floral combination and lilac the favourite shrub.\(^56\)

Jahangir continually rhapsodized about the valley: Kashmir is a garden of eternal spring.... A delightful flowerbed and a heart expanding heritage for dervishes. Its pleasant meads and enchanting cascades are beyond all description. There are running streams and fountains beyond count. Wherever the eye reaches there are verdure and running water."\(^57\) He writes about 'mead after mead of flowers. Sweet smelling plants of narcissus, violet and strange flowers.'\(^58\) Included among the latter was the crown imperial lily which was unfamiliar to Jahangir and which, subsequently, was often included amongst the flower paintings decorating the borders of album and manuscript pages. 'The flowers of Kashmir are beyond counting and calculation.'\(^59\) At another place he describes the beauty of the salting and lists some of the flowers and fruit. In the spring the hill and plains are filled with blossoms. Tulips everywhere, almond and peach, chambili (white jasmine) and valve jasmine, apricots, lilies, pears, apples, guavas, grapes pomegranates, water melons, mulberry, cherries.'\(^60\)

The most promising garden of Kashmir is Shalimar, it was laid out by Jahangir and perfected by Shah Jahan. Bernier, who thought it the most beautiful of all the gardens, he writes, "The most admirable of all these gardens is that of the King, which is called Chahlimar, from the lake, one enters into it by a great canal, bordered with great green Turfs. This canal is above five

\(^{56}\) Moynihan, op. cit, p. 122
\(^{57}\) Tuzuk, op.cit., p. 143.
\(^{58}\) Ibid., p. 144
\(^{59}\) Ibid., p. 145
\(^{60}\) Ibid., Vol. I, p. 185
hundred common paces long, and runs twixt two large allies of poplars: It leadgth to a great cabinet in the midst of the garden...... There are also from space to space, great rounds of water serving for store house, whence many Jets of water, variously figured, do spring up: And this canal ends at another, great cabinet which is almost like the first.\textsuperscript{61} Shalimar was the most secluded and celebrated of Dal Lake gardens.

Another garden is Achabal a remote garden built by Jahangir at the southern end of the valley, shaded by beautiful old \textit{chenars}. The water gushes from a spring with such force and cascades into the pools with such power that it creates a very lively atmosphere in the garden originally, an underground channel was necessary to carry off the excess water; In Achabal the water changes character on the same plane by moving from pool to canal to pool; the usual design is varied because the pools are longer than the connecting watercourse.\textsuperscript{62}

When Jahangir encamped at the fountain of Achabal. He obsevered the water on this spring is more plentiful than that of the other (Vernag) and it has a fine water fall. Around it lofty plane trees and graceful white poplars, bringing their heads together, have made enchanting places to sit in. 'As far as one could see, in a beautiful garden, \textit{Jafari} (\textit{Tagetes patula}) flowers had bloomed. So that one might say it was a peace of paradise.\textsuperscript{63}

The garden at Vernag, about 40 miles south of Kashmir is notable for the large pool fed by springs of the purest water. Jahangir found it full of fishes

\textsuperscript{61} Bernier, op. cit. p. 135
\textsuperscript{62} Moynihan, op. cit., p. 127
\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Tuzuk}, op. cit., vol. II, p. 87
when visited in 1620-21. Jahangir writes, “On Wednesday, the 1st of Minar, marching from Achabal, I pitched camp near the fountain of Vernag.....When I was a prince I had given an order that they should erect a building at this spring suitable to the place. It was now completed.... Of the trimness of the canal and the verdure of the grass that grew below the fountain what can one write and various sorts of plants and sweet smelling herbs grew there in profusion, and among them was seen a stem (buta), which had exactly the appearance of the variegated tail of a peacock. It waved about in the ripple, and bore flowers here and there. In short, in the whole of Kashmir there is no sight of such beauty and enchanting character..... I gave an order that plane tree should be planted on both sides, of the banks of the canal above mentioned.”

Water flows under the arches of the surrounding arcade and eventually into the river Jhelum by way of a 12 feet wide canal. In Ottoman, Turkey lamps and candles were used in gardens to eminence the beauty of the flowers but in Mughal gardens in India they were placed behind water to create a sparkling effect as waterfalls flowed over them. Holders for lamps and candles were built into niches in the brick work and can still be seen in the 16th century Ram bagh gardens at Agra. While succeeding Mughal emperors employed them in niches of cascades, water falls and pavilions. Buildings round the pool at Vernag were introduced by Jahangir in 1609. It was at Vernag that Jahangir and Nur Jahan spent much of their time and it was his unfulfilled wish to be buried there.

Nishat Bagh the garden of Gladness, one of the non royal gardens on Lake Dal, is also the largest and most spectacular. It was a far more ambitious

64 Ibid., p. 92
65 Titley, Op. cit, p. 58
66 Crowe, op. cit, p. 113.
scheme than Vemag. Entered from below, it provides a superb vista, its outstanding feature being a central canal constructed on a series of terraces down which water flows from one level to the next by means of cascades and water falls into the lake below. Rows of fountains are placed down the centre of each pool on every level. The central terraced pools are flanked by flower beds and the whole garden surrounded by shady plane trees. On some levels a dais or seat was constructed over the water just above the chute. The cascade bordered by flower gardens at Nishat.  

The garden was built in 1640, and was used for only fifty years before being abandoned. It was called Pari Mahal, or Fairy House, by the local people, who were afraid to visit the site because they believed it to be haunted and because they feared snakes on the mountainside.

The ruin of Pari Mahal is romantically outlined against the sky from the garden of Chasma Shahi, a small garden built in 1632-1633. In the main pavilion, there is a rare treatment of water, beneath the open watercourse, which flows through the pavilion, runs a second channel, water from the top channel flows into a five feet square pool and some returns through the lower, hidden channel to the main watercourse; thus it recirculates. The overflow from the pool descends to the lower terrace by an exceptionally long, about eighteen feet, but narrows Chaddar.  

Shah Jahan, appears to have been more interested in architecture than horticulture, and added buildings to existing gardens including a black marble

67 Titley, op. cit., pl. 43.
68 Moynihan, op. cit, p. 128
pavilion in the Shalimar. Shah Jahan had a lifelong interest in the construction of superbly well ordered gardens many of these served as the setting for major structural works, for example the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal, better known today as the Taj Mahal. Palaces also incorporated gardens into their layout, other gardens, however, were developed independently of tombs and palaces. Magnificent buildings dating from his reign included palaces with extensive gardens at Delhi, Lahore and Agra as well as the most famous of all, the Taj Mahal. Following the Mughal tradition it stands in extensive grounds, although these gardens have been altered considerably over the years. The original plan of the garden was conventional, with fountains placed at intervals down the central channel and a large raised pool with a cusped and the trefoil border providing wonderful reflections of the building. Water channels at right angles to the main canal divide the garden into the traditional Chahar Bagh scheme. Begun in 1632, it was completed in 1648 and an unusual feature, is the positioning of the tomb buildings at the end of the gardens, thus providing an exquisite vista of channels, fountains and reflections unlike the long terraced central channel of the Nishat Bagh in Kashmir, which is made spectacular by its series of waterfalls and cascades, the Taj Mahal Channel relies on fountains supplied by a sophisticated system of water pipes. The flower beds were planted with roses, tulips, crown imperials, apples and guavas shady trees. Such as banyan, plane, cypress, jackfruit and pipal, and sweet scented shrubs including jasmine, champa, oleander and screw pine were widely grown. The flower theme continues in the decorations of semiprecious stones inlaid in the

69 Titley, op. cit, p. 61.
70 Asher, op. cit, p. 206.
marble of the tomb in the form of sprays, flowers and trees while the outer walls are decorated with flowers in bas-relief.\textsuperscript{71}

Laying to the north-west of ShahJahanabad, close by the Grand Trunk road near Badli Sarai, was once yet another great pleasure garden, comparable to those of the same name at Lahore, and Srinagar. It was laid out by one of Shah Jahan's favourite wives, A'Azzu-un-Nisa, and evidently the Shalimar Bagh in Kashmir had been her inspiration. Its remains are recorded in a plan showing a garden of considerable size, its main feature being a central canal about eighteen feet wide, which ran the full length of the garden. According to a contemporary historian, Muhammad Salih, it was originally even larger.\textsuperscript{72}

The upper terrace stood some nine feet above the lower, and at the change of level was a complex of tanks and buildings, with rows of pearl showering fountains', and marvelously adorned halls.\textsuperscript{73}

The Shalimar garden at Lahore was laid out by Ali Mardan Khan, on Shah Jahan's instructions. The first great undertaking had been the construction of a canal to bring the waters of the Ravi river up to the gardens in Lahore. By 1633 the canal was ready and Shah Jahan celebrated its completion by giving instructions for the creation of a garden on a grand scale, with tanks and fountains, a bath house and several pavilions. About 1642 the work was complete and he paid the garden a ceremonial visit, after consultations with his astrologers as to an auspicious date.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{71} Titley, op. cit, p. 61.
\textsuperscript{72} Crowe, op. cit. p. 143
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid, p. 148
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., p. 148
The concept introduced in the Nishat Bagh, of a pavilion at the far end of a long vista, viewed from below and dominated by a main water channel with waterfalls. Chutes and cascades were reversed during Aurangzeb’s reign. He succeeded in 1658 and like Shah Jahan, was mainly interested in architecture but unlike his predecessor, did not create large gardens to accompany his buildings. One who did, however, was his chief architect, Fiday Khan, who designed a superb garden at Pinjaur where he was governor. In contrast to the Nishat Bagh, the entrance was positioned above the highest terrace, and although planned in the usual way, with a central terraced canal, when it was viewed from above it made nothing like the impact of the Nishat Bagh vista seen from below. 

This way, Babur introduced the Persian garden traditions in India and introduced them as marvelously as he could. The garden craft as he founded in India was based on the fundamental principle, of planning of some pleasure pavilion, residential palace or tomb in harmonious relation to the water devices-canals, tanks, water chutes, and fountains-and in equally harmonious relation to the tree avenues and flower beds.

75 Titley, op. cit p. 62