



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Arts

HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF VERINAG GARDEN.

KEY WORDS:

Ishfaq Khurshid Dar

Glocal University Mirzapur Uttar-pradesh

Dr Syed Sadaf*

Glocal University Mirzapur Uttar-pradesh *Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

Mughal emperor akbar conquered kashmir in 1586 from a local kashmiri ruler Yousef shah chak. Mughals built many beautiful and attractive gardens and monuments in kashmir. Mughal Gardens are famous for their beauty and for their Engineering works. The Verinag Garden is one of the best specimen of Mughal Gardens. Verinag Garden is the only Mughal Garden in Kashmir which is not based on the Islamic Char-bagh style.

INTRODUCTION;

It was built by Jahangir in 1620 C.E . it was the favourite Garden of Jahangir. Jahangir mentioned the celebration of wine party in this Garden. This Garden is in present Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir. Verinag is the Name of the Place where this Garden is located. When moving from Jammu to Srinagar via. Banihal pass Verinag Garden comes first.

ROYAL GARDEN OF VERINAG;

The Mughal Gardens of Kashmir are found around a hillside or centring round a spring. Verinag is a beautiful Mughal Garden in south Kashmir, it was the favourite Garden of Mughal Emperor Jahangir, according to Tuzk-i-Jahangiri it was his last wish to die in Verinag. Verinag Garden in Kashmir is the only Mughal garden in Kashmir, which is not designed like the Islamic Char-bagh Garden. All the finest Mughal gardens or their ruins are found in beautiful situations, centring round a hillside spring, like the gardens of Achibal and Verinag. Verinag is an ancient Hindu holy place where they believe it is the head of all springs. According to the author of Ain-I-Akbari, Abul-Falaz said that there are lots of stone temples in the east of the Garden.

Verinag Garden is located in the present Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir. It is 26.5 Km away from the main Anantnag market. Verinag comes first when we travel from the Jammu to Srinagar via National Highway 44. Verinag is a little bit away from the famous Jawahar tunnel of Kashmir. Verinag is a rectangular Garden about 1511 feet by 361 feet big. Verinag Garden is located in the foot-hills of Peer-Panjal Mountain Range. Verinag is actually the name of the spring present in the Verinag Garden. The spring of Verinag Garden never dried till now, Persian chronicles show construction date of the garden as 1619-20.

In this Garden an octagonal shaped stone basin was built by Jahangir in the year 1620 with an arcade around this octagonal shaped stone basin. This basin is designed to form the centre of the palace, there are twenty four arched recesses still found over the roof of this basin. There are small stairways in the basin, these lead to the rooms present above the basin. There are 24 stones of the cornice, these stones show the beauty of the engineering skills. The Verinag spring which centres the garden is the basic source of River Jehlum. There is a main canal in the Verinag Garden, which flows through the middle of the Garden. This main canal is about twelve feet wide, and is crossed by a second watercourse running immediately under the building.

The spring of Verinag and its monuments are officially recognised as a Monument of national importance by the Archaeological Survey of India.

The Verinag is one of the most beautiful Gardens of Mughal India. The entrances to the garden lie at the both ends of the canal. The spring of Verinag was actually a shapeless and an irregular spring. The water of this spring comes out from the different sides which spread in an unsystematic way and formed a little marsh. For the collection of water and to ensure that all water should be collected in a tank Emperor Jahangir brought carvers from Iran for building the round sculptured stones around a tank of octagonal shape, from a stone plate of the Garden it is mentioned Emperor Jahangir built the Garden and its octagonal tank in the year 1620 i.e 1029 Hijri. Presently the water of the spring looks crystal blue and in this crystal blue water, large varieties of fishes are found.

Emperor Jahangir's son Shah-Jahan built a beautiful garden next to Verinag spring. He also built cascades, artificial channels and a Hammam in the east side of the Garden, these things beautified the Garden and make it more attractive and comfortable.

Verinag Garden is also located on the steep hill-side, with the water source on its top, running from its top side to the bottom side. The pressured water flowing from the high side to the bottom side helps the engineers in making the fountains work by passing pressured water through them. These fountains work without any using any water motor or any other electronic motor. Mughal engineers used a single central axis, they reduced the double symmetry, which was used in most of the Mughal Gardens in Kashmir. A footpath leads the entrance to this Garden and the spring present in it. From the upper side of the garden a canal of 540 feet in length, 12 feet in width and 6 in depth leads the water towards the gate of the garden and finally in the Jehlum river.

The Garden of Verinag has its roots deep in the History. According to Hindu religion this place is a residence of Nilanaga, who is the head of all springs, by this fact the spring was known to many as Nila-kunda, which means a spring where Nilanaga resides. Nila was the son of famous Kashmiri saint Kashapa or Kashapreshi, and also the writer of the ancient book Nilmat-purani. In Nilmat-purana, Nila describes that Kashmir was actually a large lake known as Lake of Parvati (Goddess Parvati) or Satisaara (word Satisaara also means a large lake). According to a common legend, Lord Vishnu at first faced his plough to this direction (during the battle with the Demon-Jalodbhava) from there Goddess Parvati drained in the form of water and formed a river called as Jehlum or Vitasta. It happened by the stroke of Hindu God Shiva. Today Vitasta is called as Jehlum, whose original source is still Verinag spring.

This spring is actually a source of River Jehlum or River Jehlum starts from the Verinag spring. During the Ancient Hindu times it was known as Nila-nag, a spring dedicated to the

snake-deity. The Ancient book of Nilmatapurana mentions that Hindu goddess Parvati had obtained an order by her Husband (Shiva) to incarnate in the valley of Kashmir in the form of a River known as Vistasta (modern Jehlum) for the purification of land which has been sinned by Pisachas, about whom (Pisachas) Hindu text Mahabharata mentioned that these are Flesh eating Demons, they belong to the family of either Krodh (meaning Anger) or they are Daksha's daughter Pisaca. Paisaci is the language of these Demons. Another legend says they belong to the Family of Kashapa or Kashap-reshi and Krodhavansa. The Nilmatapurana also mentions that Kashmir was inhabited by Pisachas and Nagas. For the Purification of the land Lord Shiva strike the Earth, and the goddess Parvati comes out in the form of water. This is the place where Verinag spring is coming out.

Like other Mughal gardens Verinag garden was used for many functions. Tuzk-i-Jahangiri mentioned that, "In his 15th regnal year, Jahangir organized a wine party (Bazm-i-Pyala) with his private attendants (Bandaha-i-khas) at the spring garden of Verinag Kashmir"¹⁰. Verinag garden was the favourite Garden of Jahangir, according to Stuart Williams, "It was here in the Dilkusha Bagh that Jahangir was buried, in spite of his dying request to be taken back to Verinag, the favourite Kashmir spring where he and Nur-Jahan had spent so many happy summers."¹¹

About the Verinag garden Abul-fazl said, "It is a pool measuring a Jarib, which tosses in foam with an astonishing roar, and its depth is immeasurable, and is surrounded by a stone embankment."¹²

CONCLUSION;

Verinag Garden was built outside a spring known as Verinag spring. According to Hindu religion this place residence of head snake. Verinag is one of the beautiful Mughal Gardens of Kashmir, Verinag was the Favourite Garden of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir. Verinag is the only Garden in Kashmir which is not based on the Persian Islamic style. Verinag is a Hindu place of pilgrimage from the ancient times. Abul-Fazl has mentioned that in the east of the Verinag Garden there are number of stone temples. Like other Mughal gardens Verinag garden was used for many wine parties, dance parties, marriage festivals etc. The Garden of Verinag is an ancient place of Hindu worship. According to Hindu religion this place is a residence of Nila-naag, who is the head of all springs, by this fact the spring was known to many as Nila-kunda, which means a spring where Nila reside. Nila is the son of the famous saint Kashp-reshi.

REFERENCES

1. Gardens of the great Mughals...strout w..p130
2. Heidi A. Walcher, 'Between Paradise and Political Capital: The Semiotics of Safavid Isfahan, in Yale Forestry and Environmental Studies Bulletin, (1998), vol. 103, p. 333. For the details on the symbolic interpretations of Iranian gardens which inspired the Mughals, see Hanaway 'Paradise on Earth: the terrestrial garden in Persian literature' and Ralph-Pinder Wilson 'Persian garden: Bagh and Chahar Bagh', in MacDougall and Ettinghausen (eds.), The Islamic Garden.
3. William strout gardens of the great Mughals p130
4. Archaeological survey of India.
5. valley of Kashmir p22
6. inscribed on the stone plate in the Verinag garden
7. Nur-al-Din Mohammad Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, trans. A. Rogers, (Lahore: Aziz Publishers, 1974), 51.
8. Tuzuk, pp- 34-35, -292, -298- 313; Bernier., pp.413-14; Sylvia Crow et. al. pp. 11-12; Jan Haenraets, (ed.), Mughal-Gardens-of Kashmir: (Towards-UNESCO-World Heritage Nomination), (Kashmir, 2013), p. 15.
9. Gardens of the great Mughals p130
10. The valley of Kashmir ...walter lawrence p22
11. Gardens of the great Mughals 133
12. Gardens of the Mughals p186