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AN OUTLINE OF THE MUGHALS OF KASHMIR



Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Tantray S/o Ab.Majeed Tantray

ABSTRACT: -

During Mughal rule in Kashmir many mosques and gardens were built. Several bridges were also made. The art and crafts flourished and shawl was the major item of export. Many Series were built especially the Series on Historical Mughal Road Near hilly district Shopian.

KEY NOTES: Development Origin, and Administration.

INTRODUCTION :

Developments in Central Asia during the 15th and the early 16th centuries, led to a new Turkish incursion into India, this time in the shape of Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur.

The rapid rise and decline of the Mongols, and their mutual squabbles created the climate for emergence of a new Central Asian empire during the 14th Century. The founder of this empire, Timur, belonged to the Barlas clan of Turks who had been owners of land in Transoxiana, and had freely intermarried with the Mongols. Even Timur claimed descent from Chinggoz by virtue of his marrying a daughter of the Mongol Khan, Qazam Khan, who was a descendant of Chingiz, son, Chaghtai.

Babur's advance towards India: The dream of

conquering India had never been far from Babur's mind. While he was wandering in Transoxiana without a kingdom, his imagination had been fired by hearing tales about Timur's exploits in India, and he had decided to recover the areas in the Punjab ceded to Timur and held by his descendants for long. Babur says that from the time he conquered Kabul (1504), to his victory at Paniput

MUGHALS OF KASHMIR

Geographical situation and the setbacks that the Mughals received under Humayan than to its political or armed strength. Babur entered India at the invitation of Daulat Khan, Rana Sanga and others who were at loggerheads with the king of Delhi, Ibrahim Lodi, whose trouble was due largely to maladministration.

In the same way the Mughals took advantage of the internal disturbances in Kashmir. With the rising tempo of Shia and Sunni conflicts in the narrow precincts of the valley, the Mughals made early attempts to take advantage of the weak rule of Sultan Muhammad Shah (1517-28 AD). Babur's Army, under the command of Chak Beg and Ali Beg marched on Kashmir ostensibly to help a pretender to the throne of Kashmir, but really to bring it under his direct rule. It was repulsed by the redoubtable fighter Kazi Chak, who placed patriotism above personal interest and power politics. In 1531 during the reign of Humayan, Kamran marched to Kashmir.

The period covered by the Sultanate was, with the exception of the rule of Shihab-ud-din, Qutb-ud-din and Zain-ul-Abidin, in no way a happy time for the people. The government centralized in the person of the king, was weak and loose. With the end of the rule

of the dynasty of Shah Mir, the Chaks came into power. Their rule lasted for a brief period of 25 years, when the kingdom came under the hegemony of the imperial Mughals in 1586. That Kashmir could retain its separate existence in the face of the rising power of the Mughals was due more to its a solid front to the invaders. A fierce battle ensued between the Mughals and the Kashmir forces under Sultan Muhammad Shah. The Mughals had to retreat in disorder.¹

Akbar conquered Kashmir in 1586 A.D. During his time and the reign of the other Mughal Emperors, who succeeded him, the Valley was ruled by Governors appointed by them from time to time. Peace and order were restored to a large extent in the happy Valley during the Mughal occupation of the Country. Ahmad Shah Durrani invaded Kashmir and conquered her. Thus did the Country pass into the hands of the Afghans. Shocking tales of religious persecution, devastation and rapine during this period are still commonly told in every household in Kashmir. When the rulers of the Country are more interested in spoliation, plunder and extortion than in the well-being of the people, no section of the public can be unaffected by their misrule.²

“According to Walter R. Lawrence who mentions in his book which is entitled The Valley of Kashmir that the Mughals are not numerous in Kashmir, and have so intermarried with the ordinary Kashmiri Muslims that all trace of descent is lost. They came to Kashmir in the days of the early Muslim kings, and in Mughal times. Their names are Mir (a corruption of mirza), Beg, Bandi, Bach, and Ashaye.”³

AKBAR'S CONSOLIDATION IN KASHMIR

Akbar subdued Kashmir, and it, more, it is said by intrigue, than the force of his arms. Kashmir remained annexed to the house of Timur for the space of one hundred and sixty years. The handle to extend his influence was supplied by the Sunni-Shia conflict raging in Kashmir under the Chak Sultans. They presented petitions and appeals for aid to the Emperor at Agra, and Akbar entertained and received well the deputations of Kashmiris that waited on him from time to time. The Sultans received them well and offered them presents and agreed to give his own daughter in marriage to Akbar's son Salim. But Akbar who was enraged at the persecution of the Sunnis and the delay in the conquest of Kashmir, could not be appeased by even such a humble gesture. He refused the presents of Hussain Shah and his daughter. This insult is said to have shocked the Sultan to death.

Later in the reign of Hussain Shah's brother, Ali Shah Chak, the presents and Hussain Shah's daughter were accepted but only when the Sultan recognized Akbar as his overlord. The Mughals' attempts at conquest continued till the year 1586, when Bhagwan Dass and other generals were commanded by Akbar to march into Kashmir. Akbar did not personally march at the head of his Army, but sent his trusted men to accomplish the deed. Kashmir was then ruled by the ease-loving king Yusuf Shah Chak who being a weak ruler could not keep in check his warring nobles or suppress the Sunni-Shia conflicts of which the people were very much tired.

The Mughal general Bhagwan Dass appealed to Yusuf Shah Chak to come to terms. Yusuf Shah agreed and was invited to the Mughal camp. He went in good faith, was taken to the imperial

JAHANGIR'S REIGN OF KASHMIR

Jahangir was essentially a lover of nature and Kashmir, therefore appealed to him particularly. He paid eight visits to Kashmir two of which were in the company of his father and six during his own reign, viz 14th, 16th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st. ⁴ Like Babur, Jahangir was also very fond of the flora and fauna of the Country which he describes with the practiced eye of an expert. After describing some of the flowers of Kashmir, he says “The red rose the violet and the narcissus grow of themselves,” and adds I saw several sorts of red roses, one is specially sweet-scented, and another is a flower of the colour of sandal (light yellow) and with an exceedingly delicate scent. He also mentions black tulips. He asked the court painter Mansur, to paint some of these flowers. Jahangir gave a long list of birds, including those not found in Kashmir.⁵

Jahangir had a number of sojourns in Kashmir. The primary object was undoubtedly that of health or as the Irish poet Thomas Moore puts it in the Lalla Rookh, to fly “from power and pomp, and the trophies of War” But this also enabled the monarch to indulge in his love of nature, to feast his eyes and to quench his thirst for knowledge. Some of the florid passages in his memories Tuzk-i-Jahangiri, record the beauties of the Valley of Kashmir. Jahangir and his versatile queen visited Kashmir several times and spent the hot summer months in its

delightfully cool Valley and mountain meadows. His presence naturally prevented any abuse of power by the governors who administered the Kingdom. For Kashmiris Jahangir's reign is synonymous with justice and fair play. He would personally look into the grievances and demands of the people and pass suitable orders on the spot. Mirza Ali Akbar the last governor under Akbar's rule, continued to occupy the post for three years after Jahangir's accession to the throne.

Jahangir, the great lover of natural beauty as he was, could not but come under the spell of Kashmir. Wherever he found a hill coming down gently to a spring or a grove of chenars, or a beautiful lake, he utilized the place for planting a pleasure garden. He took to the systematic planting of the Char Chenari or a chenar tree planted at each of the ordinal points so as to produce shade at whichever point the sun may be. The massing of flowers, the construction of miniature pleasure houses entirely subservient to the garden design. And constructed right across the water channel through which the spring was drawn, was the chief plan of the garden adopted by him.

Shalimar and Nishat Bagh laid out on the slopes of the mountain coming down on the eastern bank of the charming Dal lake are perhaps the best gift from the Mughal to the people of Kashmir. The Shalimar garden was laid out by the emperor in the year 1619. The Nishat Bagh was laid out by Nur Jehan's brother Asaf Khan. The famous springs of Verinag and Achabal with their natural gushing waters were dressed up by the Mughals who gave fine artistic shape to these natural objects. In 1620 Jahangir got an octagonal tank of sculptured stones made round the spring at Verinag. Nur Jehan was similarly attracted by another spring, at Achabal, six miles from Anantnag. A beautiful garden with fruit trees and running fountains was laid out by her near the spring. The garden was called Begamabad and also Sahibabad.⁶

Jahangir was accompanied by his beautiful Queen Nur Jahan whose romantic spirit appears to have led her lord and Emperor into the most secluded and picturesque recesses of the Valley. Many of these pleasant retreats are to this day pointed out as the spots where the royal pair were wont to disport themselves in those days of regal abandon. The royal pair must have passed their time in festivities of every kind. In summer nights, the Dal lake must reflected brilliant illuminations and fantastic fireworks, and the air must have re-echoed to the sound of song and dance. Akbar, Jahangir and his Nur Jahan says Mrs. Stuart are far more vivid personalities in India than Elizabeth or the Stuart sovereigns are in England. To please his consort, Jahangir is said to have introduced the Chinar or the plane tree from Iran, her native Country. But this is wrong. The Kashmiri word *bawayn* shows the existence of the chinar in Kashmir before Jahangir, who himself refers to the girth and spreading shade of chairs with wonder.

He completed the construction of the celebrated Shalimar Gardens. The ruins of places at Manas-bal, Achabal and Verinag attest to Nur Jahan's taste in selecting picturesque sites.⁷

Shahjahan consolidation in Kashmir: After Jahangir, Shahjahan became the Emperor of India, he reigned upto 1658. He also paid several visits to the Valley and here he built several gardens, Mosques and Sarias. During Shah Jahan's rule several gardens and buildings were constructed in the Valley, chief among them are Chashma shahi and Pari Mahal. Shah Jahan's last visit to Kashmir was in 1651 A.D. After him Aurangzeb became the Emperor of India.⁸ Jahangir was succeeded by his son, Shah Jahan who ruled from 1627-1658. The emperor took a great interest in the welfare of Kashmir than his father. He paid several visits to the Valley and the beauty of Kashmir's lakes and Rivers, its Mountain meadows and springs fascinated him.

Itqad Khan the last governor of Jahangir continued to hold office for a further period of six years after the accession of Shah Jahan to the throne. Shah Jahan visited Kashmir twice during Zaffar Khan's governorship in 1634 and 1638. The Jama Masjid in Srinagar which was destroyed by fire twice and rebuilt first by Jahangir and later by Aurangzeb is a typical example of Indo-Saracenic style of architecture.⁹

Shah Jahan visited Kashmir four times during his reign at intervals of five years. The first visit took place in 1634, when Shah Jahan arrived in Srinagar on June 5. The enchanting beauty of this province hypnotized Shah Jahan, writes the author of history of Shahjahan of Delhi, and though he had no staff of painters with him to reproduce its natural beauty, he had a number of excellent writers at court who have described Kashmir in glowingly picturesque language which is poetic in spirit though prose in form. The descriptions of Kashmir written

by Mirza Aminai Qazvini and Jalal-ud-din versified narratives of Qudsi and kalim are instances.

Another visit was recorded in 1645. The last visit took place in 1651 which however, was cut short on account of floods and storms. And Shah Jahan returned to Lahore. It was at the time of Shah Jahan ,s first visit that the hindu raja of Bhimbar announced the adoption of Islam, and was given the title of raja-i-Daulatmand. ¹⁰

AURANGZEB'S RULE IN KASHMIR

After Shah Jahan Aurangzeb became emperor of India.He sent about 14 governors in the Valley one after the another, who built many mosques and gardens. Several bridges were also made Saif Khan built Safa kadal. ¹¹ The reign of Aurangzeb has been divided into two periods.

(a) 1658-1681 A.D, When the concentration was mainly toward northern India.

(b) 1682-17-7 A.D,During this time he remained in Decan. He went to South chasing his rebellious Son. ¹² Aurangzeb came to the throne of his father Shah Jahan in the year 1658. The war of succession in which Aurangzeb played a diplomatic and dominating role ended with the imprisonment by him of his father and defeat and death of his brothers. The mighty Mughal empire founded by Babur and consolidated by Akbar and his two successors, witnessed with the accession of Aurangzeb to the imperial throne, the beginning of its end, result no doubt of the emperor,s unwise policy of communal discrimination.Aurangzeb who assumed the title Abul-Muzaffar Mohinud-Din Muhammad Aurangzeb Bahadur Alamgir Badshah Ghazi after ascending the throne was the sixth of the fourteen children of the Shah Jahan. ¹³

CONCLUSION:-

Akbar conquered Kashmir in 1586 A.D.During his time and the reign of the other Mughal Emperors, who succeeded him; the Valley was ruled by Governors appointed by them from time to time. Peace and order were restored to a large extent in the happy Valley during the Mughal occupation of the Country. Jahangir was essentially a lover of nature and Kashmir, therefore appealed to him particularly. He paid eight Visits to Kashmir two of which were in the company of his father and six during his own reign, viz 14th, 16th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st. The emperor took a great interest in the welfare of Kashmir than his father. He paid several visits to the Valley and the beauty of Kashmir,s lakes and Rivers, its Mountain meadows and springs fascinated him. After Shah Jahan Aurangzeb became emperor of India.He sent about 14 governors in the Valley one after the another, who built many mosques and gardens. Several bridges were also made Saif Khan built Safa kadal.

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