

An Analysis: Mughal Era as the Benison for the Amelioration of Kashmir

Arun Kumar

Medieval and Modern History Department, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, India

Abstract

Though Mughal reign in Kashmir was not strategically significant it will forever be known for the enduring heritage they rendered here, like gardens, arts, and crafts. Akbar visited Kashmir several times in a series and with every trip, his affection for the spot developed deeper, and Kashmir became the summer refuge of various Monarchs: Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, as well as Aurengzeb. Kashmir seemed to Jahangir to be a heaven where "priests foretold and authors sang." This paper discusses that how Mughal rule was benison for Kashmir and gives it so many things like art and craft, architecture, textiles and different trade routes, which is even now is the main source of Kashmir's revenue.

KEYWORDS: Mughal Rule in Kashmir, Art and craft, Architecture, Textile, Trade Routes.

I. Introduction

In terms of the Mughal Empire's past, it is nearly well known, and enough of ancient writings as well as other ancient texts develop the history of this time in Valley, which used to be an essential component of the mighty kingdom. However, there are many facets of the Mughal heritage that are yet to be discussed. Other than the historical past and garden development, the Mughal built style, ancient routes with connections, taverns, and coins with carvings had stayed mostly undiscovered. Gratitude to Iqbal Ahmad, a Kashmir-based archaeologist and writer, who has recorded the legacy connected with Mughal reign in Kashmir in some other report. Mughal Legacy in Kashmir is the name of his writing, which was released by Gulshan Publishers in Srinagar. According to Iqbal, the Mughals was the first one to develop stylish writing techniques and eventually spread the art across their kingdom. It is also the charm of the authors and calligraphers that is maybe no less impressive than the beautiful imperial buildings and garden structures designed by their architects. Writings created during the Mughal era throughout the whole realm are the best examples of calligraphy^[1]. The writing styles expressed on their coins and carved engravings are similarly impressive, as well as the calligraphy styles used for their large usages and several epigraphs had a tremendous impact on the monarchs who came after them and preceded their successors. The Mughal writing style and carvings can also be seen on Durrani era coinage including epigraphs. Mughals are thought to have encouraged 'Naskh' and 'Nastaliq' handwriting styles. The mighty Mughal emperors Akbar and Jahangir, according to Abul Fazal, encouraged the 'Nastaliq' or 'Round Persian' characters. " Suls, Naskh, Tanqi, Riqa, Muhaqqaq, Raihan, Taliq, and Suls, Naskh, Tanqi, Riqa, Muhaqqaq, Raihan, Taliq, and Suls, Naskh, Tanqi, Riqa, Muhaqqaq, Raihan, Taliq, and Suls, Naskh, Tanqi, Riqa, Muhaqq According to Diwan Kirpa Ram's Gulzari Kashmir in Arabic and Persian, the general scripts used in Kashmir were Kufi, Naskh, Makramat Suls, Riqa, and Raihan in Arabic and

Nastaliq Shikast, Gular, Nakhan Shikast, Aniz, and Shaifa in Persian." Mughals are considered to have encouraged their writing technique in the Round Persian character, considering different calligraphy types.

The said specimen can be seen on a variety of Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan bronze, silver, and gold coins, as well as on ancient Mughal Age carvings on the Verinag spring arcade as well as the Kohimaran Rampart doors^[2]. Numerous document versions held in state-owned and personal libraries are still published in the Naskh and Nastaliq types.

However one series of documents is also on show at the Dogra Art Museum in Jammu, whereas a miniature edition of the sacred Qur'an is on display in the manuscript collection of the SPS Museum in Srinagar. This document carries the stamp of Aurangzeb Alamgir on its closing side, and also some historians claim that such a version was composed by the Mughal rulers itself. Additionally, such establishments contain a sizable array of Mughal coins; the historical galleries of the museums often hold 2 distinct rock engravings. Another of the carvings, penned in Persian, dates from the reign of Jahangir, whereas the other, written in Arabic, dates from the reign of Aurangzeb. Such earlier books are historically significant since they offer details regarding Mughal architecture. Since these exquisite calligraphy patterns are maintained on well Mughal coinage including documents in such museums, the very few rock carvings from such an era have not been adequately accounted for and risk disappearance and decay^[3]. The bulk of Kashmiri carvings on tombstones have eroded to the extent of being unreadable. These proofs can be contained in the province's many ancient as well as centuries-old cemeteries. "The Mazar-e-Sulateen at Zaina Kadal, the Mazar-e-Khanqah Mullah, the Mazar-e-Bahudine Sahib, and the historical Mazar at Bijbehara, among others, have all but disappeared." Nevertheless, some Mughal engravings remain at Verinag, on the Kohimaran Rampart's walls, and in a few Mughal Era mosques and gardens. These epigraphs must be carefully accounted for and preserved to guarantee that such significant bits of our heritage are not lost. Iqbal Ahmad ends with the following observation: 'After the passing of decades, the ancient Mughal tradition in Kashmir remains unchanged. It remains a common title in Kashmir's hotel, restaurant, and bakery industries. Numerous hotels, pubs, and bakeries in Kashmir carry Mughal registered trademarks. For starters, in the towns and cities of Kashmir, there are Mughal Shahi Darbar, Mughal Darbar, Akbar Hotel, and Shah Jahan Cafeteria. Which shows undeniably that the Mughal tradition has not been irrelevant, at only in Kashmir?

II. Mughal Heritage

2.1 Art:

Due to Kashmir's prolonged past as well as a wealthy legacy of illuminated and articulated texts, Kashmiri paintings are a rare combination of different types. Miniature painting was brought to India in the 1600s by the Mughals, who carried another much artistic style from Persia. Humayun, the Mughal emperor, introduced designers from Persia who trained in miniature painting in order to spread the illustrious art style. On their side, such artists educated Indian artists who created paintings in a modern unique fashion influenced by the Mughals' imperial as well as intimate lifestyles. "For their portraits, miniature artists use canvas, ivory panels, wooden tablets, leather, marble, curtains, and walls." Minerals and fruits, as well as

valuable gems including genuine silver and gold, are used to create the shades. Color preparation and blending is a time-consuming operation. It may take several weeks, if not months, to achieve the expected effects^[4]. The tools must be very fine and are also crafted from squirrel fur to this very day. Historically, the portraits have been upper class, individualistic, and heavy in portraiture, portraying mainly luxurious court settings with imperial hunting adventures.

2.2 Architecture:

Not only did the Mughal monarchs foster a multicultural society in the area, but they also revived the area's ancient culture and art. Mosques, tombs, bridges, and inns were constructed by the Mughals. They developed their own coins and minted gold, silver, and copper coins. They revived the Spring of Verinag, which appears to be an important source of water for the river Veth (Jehleum). Furthermore they invented the technique of calligraphy for the purpose of writing their glorious inscriptions and manuscripts^[5]. Additionally, they revitalised other Kashmiri arts and crafts and encouraged the land's Kani-shawl industry. They were the first to conserve Kashmir's springs and adorn them with beautiful gardens.

The Mughal route that allowed the Mughal rulers to conquer Kashmir has not been thoroughly investigated. The engravings, coins, and inns uncovered remain unexplained and undocumented. The public, especially historians and learners of history and art history, must conduct additional research on this era to ensure that a sizable portion of our history is recorded as prosperous. Mughal past in Kashmir is continuously replicated in order to position incidents in chronological order.

2.3 Textile:

The Mughal Empire certainly improved the output of high-end textiles. His Ain-i-Akbari delves into interesting information about the royal wardrobe's classification system. They carried in Persian instructors to show them better procedures. The best ancient Indian textiles were frequently simple, as with the simple muslins lauded in the Roman world's cities. The garments portrayed in Hindu-Buddhist paintings and morality are usually simple and geometrically textured with checkers, stripes, or chevrons, with diagonal bands occasionally overlapping with ceremonies of hamsas (sacred geese) and stylized ribbons. Between both the 16th and 17th centuries, the Sabha Sr'ngara, a literary work written in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, lists up to 130 distinct styles of textiles^[6]. The weaver created 4 main cloth types: cotton, silk, woollen, and mixed. The first two were critical. There was scarcely a city or town in mediaeval India worth the name that did not produce fabric. The finest craftsmen in the city were requisitioned to supply the court's needs. Woollen fabrics were primarily produced in the northwestern regions near the Himalayas. Textiles played a major role at the Mughal court. Akbar founded royal workshops (karkhanas) modelled after the Safavid Persian court's workshops. The country was a large exporter of textiles to markets spanning from Europe to South East Asia. Bengal, Gujarat, and Kashmir manufactured native textiles for the court^[7]. During the rule of Aurangzeb, some of the most intricate textiles ever crafted were created over a fifty-year span from the late 17th to the early eighteenth centuries. It is difficult to grasp the sophistication of the weaving methods used to create patkas. The court also acquired textiles from a variety of other nations, but none of the imports could compete with the local output in terms of sheer elegance. The most beautiful

fabrics created in India were reserved for the court, and court demands for all forms of fabrics pushed producers to greater levels of ingenuity.

2.4 Trade Routes:

The road went via the Pir Panjal Pass, linking Kashmir to Gujarat. Due to its regular usage by Mughal emperors, it earned the moniker 'Mughal Road.' It took eleven or twelve days to move from Lahore to Bhimbar, and five days to travel from Bhimbar to Kashmir. All was shipped on elephants, ponies, mules, and porters' heads. Due to the difficulties of this road, it stayed closed throughout the winter months, from December to April. It passed mainly through the highest peaks; carts, waggons, and camels did not ride beyond this stage. From the beginning, this was the primary method of importing salt from Punjab mines into Kashmir^[8]. When the Pir Panjal and other passes were covered with snow, porters were the only mode of transport. On the pass's summit were two stone huts known as Chedikana and Rasikund, constructed by the Mughals to provide protection for visitors throughout storms.

Baramula-Pakhli Route connects Kashmir to Hazara, Rawalpindi, and, via Pakhli, Peshawar. Alberuni was well aware of it, identifying it as the best-known gateway to Kashmir. The distance between Baramulla and Srinagar was 15 kuroh by boat and 11-12 kuroh by land. "Even during the winter months, the road stayed nearly navigable, and ponies and pack horses, elephants, and even heavy armour were transported via this route." This road was utilized for business and trade, particularly in the transportation of light products. It is the journey's longest course, with many twisting pathways and ascents and descents. However, it did not receive nearly as much snow as the other routes^[9]. The path got no snowfall in contrast to the other roads. When the route was first referred to as the northern gate of Kashmir, vendors prospered here.

Central Asia-Kashmir passes through the Zojila Pass, connecting Kashmir to Ladakh, Baltistan, Tibet, and China, as well as the Central Asian areas of Badakhshan, Samarqand, Khotan, Bukhara, Kashghar, and Yarkand. Due to the lack of a shared border between Kashmir and Central Asia, commerce was undertaken indirectly via circuitous and complex mountain trade routes that passed via Ladakh and Chinese Turkistan on one side and Chitral and the Pamirs on the other. The Russians established trade ties with Kashmir in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This path was vital to Kashmir's woollen industry. This road was used to transport almost all of the shawl wool to the valley. It was crucial from an economic and strategic standpoint. The most serious shortcoming of the Mughal economic policy against Kashmir was the absence of a caravan sarai along this road, which was also spanned by swinging bridges. The route's travellers were forced to live their nights in camps under an open sky. There were raging torrents that could only be crossed through cords strung from rock to rock.

The road from Kashmir to Kashghar was another significant commercial road. It acted as a complement to the Central Asian Road, promoting exchange and commerce between Kashmir and Central Asia. Additionally, this route connected to Ladakh via Tognak, Nubra, and Leh. From north Kashmir, one might travel to Yarkand and then west to the Farghana valley and then to Tashkent or the Kazakh steppes. On this road, there was no passage for caravans, but trade in musk, silk, and other goods was carried out by porters. Engines and instruments were often used to

raise and lower the items. From Islamabad, the route could be reached via Desu, a kotal of Pir Panjal^[10]. The route stayed open for a longer period of time, but it was only accessible on foot; horseback travel was not allowed on this direction. The gap between Srinagar and Kishtawar was 60 kos, and from Kashmir, there were two routes to Kishtawar. Tieffenthaler describes this path as being commonly practised by traders in the late eighteenth century owing to the anarchic circumstances. By the same paths, the Mughals conquered Kish tawar. The trip took twenty days from the Saju Pass to the Ashkardu Pass, and each season culminated in a quarter of a league over ice.

Only during colonial journeys did the roads of Kashmir obtain state consideration. From Kashmir to Lahore, Bhimbar and Pakhli were the safest and most viable horseback roads. Thousands of workers were working to build and maintain these roads. Jahangir provided instructions to jagirdars to build sarais and mosques, as well as to dig wells along the roads^[11]. Between Bhinbar and Hirapur, a total of eleven sarai were constructed. Jahan Ara Begum even built a sarai in Sarai Sokhta.

III. Conclusion

Kashmir is among Asia's most famous tourist attractions. The number of visitors visiting the valley has fluctuated. Political unrest has had a negative impact on Kashmir tourism. Tourism is a well-organized sector with a diverse range of measurements, locations, and benefits that support vast portions of the society. The visitors, both international and national, all lead to the region's economic growth by creating work and resources for the local citizens. Srinagar, Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonamarg, Yusmarg, Daskum, and Kokernag are among the tourist resorts^[12]. Shalimar, Nishat, Chashma Shahi, Naseem Bagh, Nahru Park, and Achabal gardens are all ancient gardens. Jahangir was a nature lover, which is why Kashmir spoke to him the most. He visited Kashmir eight times, twice with his father Akbar and six times under his own rule. Shah Jahan's rule in India is exceptionally well-known for the progress of art and design. Magnificent building schemes were adopted, and he erected several monuments that now bear witness to the emperor's glory and splendour. Jizya and Bagar were abolished by him^[13]. He prohibited Mughal army personnel stationed in Kashmir from staying in private homes. He lacked Jahangir's fervent love for the mountains. The Mughals united the area with the rest of the kingdom, expanded agriculture and horticulture, and grew industry and trade. They constructed various magnificent gardens and monuments for the purpose of beautifying scenic spots, which boosted Kashmir's tourism industry tremendously. The Mughal period laid the foundation for European travellers. Jerome Xavier, Bendiet De Gopelsaert, Bernier, Desideri, and Father Fryre all made their way to the enchanted valley. They brought Kashmir's uniqueness to the European world through their accounts and writings, which aided in the growth and creation of the western tourist sector in the long run. Jahangir was accountable for the site's thorough choice and manipulation to meet the criteria of conventional fantasy gardens. The Mughals desired to construct a metaphor for heaven, not the actual thing, in order to establish their supremacy over their subjects. Gardens in Mughal India incorporated the architectural, symbolic, and practical requirements of both culture and state. Additionally, the gardens were a sign of effectively governed land, a way to demonstrate the ruler's victory by commemorating ceremony and achievements, and a resting place for monarchs and administrators^[14]. The Mughal reign was majestic and

the sun never set; the illumination of that era still illuminates the valley with its magnificent monuments. After capturing the valley, Mughal emperors used this route, which is known as the Mughals Route. It is the valley's first route, linking Kashmir to the rest of India. The government levied entrance fees on such gardens through the floricultural agency.

REFERENCE

- [1] Abul Fazal, The Ain-i-Akbari, trans.vol. ii-iii, Delhi, 1989, PP.349-50 Kapur, M.L., The history and Culture of Kashmir, Jammu, 1992, P.264.
- [2] Bamzai, P.N.K., Culture and political history of Kashmir, New Delhi, 1994, 430.
- [3] Shawl industry was already existing in valley during the time Zain ulAbidin(1420-70)
- [4] Sufi, G.M.D., Islamic Culture in Kashmir, New Delhi, 1996, PP.210-211.
- [5] Bamzai, P.N.K., Culture and political history of Kashmir, New Delhi, 1994, 408-409.
- [6] Sufi, G.M.D., Kashir being a history of Kashmir, New Delhi, 1996, Vol, II, P.520.
- [7] According to M.Dauvergne the history of Kashmiri Shawls dates back to the times of emperor Babur. The Mughal emperors wore on their turbans a jeweled ornament known as Jigha.Many Andijani weavers were brought into India and Kashmir by the Mughal emperors, because they were the trained masters of the Jigha design. The Jigha design is still prevalent both in Kashmir and Persia. This design was introduced during the time of Mughals both in Kashmir as well as in India.
- [8] Lawrence, The Valley of Kashmir, P.376.
- [9] Sufi, G.M.D., Islamic Culture in Kashmir, New Delhi, 1996, P.211.
- [10] Baradari having twelve doors is ordinarily a square or rectangular pavilion with three doorways on each of its four sides. It is generally a summer house in garden.
- [11] Achabal is almost 10 Kms. from Anantnag town. Sufi, G.M.D., Kashir being a history of Kashmir, New Delhi, 1996, Vol, II, PP.515-520-530-532-533-540.
- [12] Peer GH. Hasan, Tarikhi Hasan, P.160. 15. Sufi, G.M.D., Kashir being a history of Kashmir, New Delhi, 1996, Vol, II, P.252.
- [13] Sufi, G.M.D., Islamic Culture in Kashmir, New Delhi, 1996, PP.218-19-20.
- [14] Sinha Sachchidananda., Kashmir the playground of Asia, revised edition, Allahabad, 1943, PP.5-6.