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THE MUGHAL WATERFRONT GARDEN

Gardens belong to the better-studied areas of Mughal patronage. The context, function, and meaning of early Mughal gardens in particular have recently moved to the center of scholarly interest;[1] their formal aspects have received far less attention, and their typology and the relation between form and function have not as yet been sufficiently considered. Formal analysis will, however, be the major source from which one can expect to draw conclusions when one addresses the theory and design of gardens, the theme of this publication, in a Mughal context. The Mughals were not much inclined to theorize; they expressed their concepts much better in forms than in words.

Babur, the first Mughal (he ruled in India from 1526 to 1530), is credited with having introduced into Hindustan — the Indo-Gangetic plain — the Timurid form of the *chahārbāgh* or *chārbāgh*. A *chārbāgh* is generally taken to be the Persianate walled-in garden divided by intersecting walkways, ideally but not necessarily, into four compartments (fig. 1A and B).[2] However, no garden of this description survives which can be attributed with certainty to Babur or one of his followers.[3] Contemporary accounts provide limited information because they focus on plantation and individual features rather than on the overall garden plan. The growing interest in the Mughals as heirs to Timurid traditions has made the poverty of our understanding of early-Mughal garden form all the more unfortunate. A little more light is brought into the matter by Ahmad Yadgar who, in the 1570's, wrote a history of the Afghan dynasties of India and their struggles against the invading Mughals, Babur and Humayun.[4] Ahmad Yadgar tells us that a *tarh-bandī-yi khiyābān* "plan with walkway(s)" was the most salient, and — in a Hindustani context — revolutionary feature of Babur's first garden at Agra.[5] The whole passage reads. "And in the second year of his reign [in India] Hażrat Gitī Sitānī [i.e., Babur] laid out a garden without equal on the bank of the river Jamna. And it was the first example of the plan with walkway(s) in Hindustan. Before that the plan with walkway(s) was not used in Hindustan. . . . And on the pattern of this garden Mirza Kamran [Babur's son] made another garden at Lahore."[6] This characterization — helpful as it is — still leaves room for a range of possibilities. Did Babur's primordial *chārbāgh*, named the Bagh-i Hasht Bihisht, have a single walkway, or did it show two or more intersecting walkways? The latter version is suggested by the evidence provided by all Mughal gardens surviving in the plains of Hindustan. But here again arise questions: Did Babur's first *chārbāgh* show the intersection of walkways in the center which would imply the canonical four-part form (fig. 1A)? did it have several intersections along one axis which would produce an overall rectangular plan (fig. 1B)? or did it merely have a feature with intersecting walkways integrated somewhere in its design, as *pars pro toto* so to say (fig. 1C)? The last solution is suggested by the remains of Babur's only surviving garden, the Bagh-i Nilufar. Carved between 1527 and 1529 out of the rocky plateau of Dholpur[7] on what seems to have been a rather irregular plan,[8] the extravagant Lotus garden appears to have had more in common with contemporary Mannerist gardens of Italy than with a *chārbāgh* of the Persianate tradition. But this is what Babur called it,[9] and he perhaps applied the term because of the cross-axial feature of the pool and its four channels, or because of another four-part feature which has not survived.

Babur himself fails to inform us of the overall design of his gardens. Although he repeatedly draws attention to the fact that they were symmetrically planned and well laid out — features he considered new and noteworthy in a Hindustani context[10] — Babur was obviously less preoccupied with the plan of his gardens than with another aspect, namely their supply of running water.[11] In his pre-Indian gardens, such as the Bagh-i Wafa, newly founded in 1508–9 near Jalalabad in present-day Afghanistan,[12] or the garden at Istalif near Kabul refashioned by Babur in 1519,[13] there would be a spring or a small stream on a hillside which would determine the layout of the whole garden.[14]

After the conquest of Kashmir, the Mughals could easily transfer this concept into the celebrated landscape of the valley, but the gardens they established on the Indo-Gangetic plain had to be conceived with another kind of available water source in mind, namely a large river.[15]

Consequently Babur and his followers laid out their first gardens at Agra on the banks of the river Yamuna or Jamna, announcing thereby a new era in the evolution of the city (figs. 2–5). The riverfront site was not only to become a major factor in the urban planning of the Mughals, but it was also to have a decisive impact on the design of Mughal gardens of the plains. I have touched on these two points before,[16] but I should like again to make them the subject of my investigation in the light of new findings.

The riverfront garden scheme at Agra seems to have been adopted to a certain extent for the new residential quarters of the Mughals at Lahore, as the garden Mirza Kamran built there on the pattern of Babur's first garden at Agra[17] testifies.[18] By the time of Akbar (r. 1556–1605) we have evidence for a similar urban development at Delhi. The Jesuit father Montserrate described Mughal Delhi in 1581 as having many lovely gardens and residential suburban quarters filled with a rich profusion of fruit (trees) and flowers on both sides of the Jamna which, at that time, flowed close to the city on the east.[19]

More weight, however, was given to the development of Agra as a riverbank city because in 1558 Akbar had moved the imperial headquarters from Delhi to Agra, and it had again become the main capital of the Mughal Empire, or, in the words of Akbar's historian Abu'l Fazl, the "abode of the Caliphate and center of the Sultanate" (*dār al-khilāfat wa markaz al-sultanat*). Abu'l Fazl further tells us that "abodes (*manāzil*) were distributed to the grandees . . . on either side [of the river] the servants of fortune's threshold [i.e., the court] erected pleasant houses and made charming gardens" (*az do jānib . . . manāzil-i dilgushāy wa busātīn dilkash tartīb dādand*).[20] From Abu'l Fazl's description it is evident that Akbar's Agra already appeared very much as it is shown on the early-eighteenth-century map in the Jaipur City Palace Museum.[21] The Mughal city consisted of bands of gardens lining both sides of the river Jamna (figs. 2–5).

Mughal Agra certainly continued to develop as a riverbank garden city in Jahangir's time. The Dutch eyewitness Pelsaert tells us that "the breadth of the city is by no means so great as the length, because everyone has tried to be close to the riverbank, and consequently the waterfront is occupied by the costly palaces of all the famous lords, which make it appear very gay and magnificent."[22] Pelsaert, who saw the city in the 1620's, lists thirty-three gardens with their names; about a third of them were created or remodeled during Jahangir's reign.

From this period also date the earliest preserved Mughal riverfront gardens which can be securely identified and dated. These include the Ram Bagh built, or rebuilt, by Nur Jahan as Bagh-i Nur Afshan in 1621[23] and the Zahara Bagh, a distorted form of Bagh-i Jahanara, built in the late 1620's by Mumtaz Mahal (figs 5–6) The garden belonged later to Shah Jahan's favorite daughter Jahanara, who had inherited it from her mother.[24] In seventeenth-century Mughal India to bequeath a large, architecturally planned garden to one's children was an imperial prerogative, only exceptionally extended to a member of the imperial family and the nobility. Muslim nobles in particular were limited in their rights to own inheritable property, bequeath it to their heirs, or to endow *awqaf*. Gardens generally reverted to the crown unless their owners had converted them into tomb gardens.

The Ram Bagh (Bagh-i Nur Afshan) (fig. 6) and the Zahara Bagh (Bagh-i Jahanara) are the earliest preserved examples of a garden design which eventually became typical of riverfront Agra. In this garden form the main buildings were not placed in the center of the garden, but were set on a terrace (*kursī*) built along the riverbank. On the landward side of the terrace was the garden, a *chārbāgh* subdivided into (four) garden plots by intersecting paved walkways or *khiyābāns* which may contain water channels The buildings on the riverfront terrace were framed by the corner towers of the enclosure wall of the garden. This arrangement provided the main garden pavilions with the climatic advantages as well as the view of the river and presented a carefully composed front to those who saw it from a boat or across the river (figs. 5, 8, 18, 19). The riverfront group could be viewed from both sides: from the inside the buildings presented an equally satisfying backdrop for the garden (figs. 9, 11).

In the Ram Bagh the main group of riverfront buildings consists of two oblong pavilions forming the wings of an open courtyard on a terrace with a sunken pool in the middle; the whole ensemble is placed in the southern riverfront of the garden (fig 6). Since the pavilion wings face the river on their shorter sides, the courtyard is open to the river (as well as to the landward side) and the ensemble does not present a pronounced façade towards the river.[25] More typical of the scheme are the versions where a single large pavilion on its terrace is placed in the center of the frontage flanked by subsidiary wings or smaller structures. This scheme appeared in the Zahara Bagh,[26] but — like all other residential gardens of Agra — it is not very well preserved. Therefore a garden from Shah Jahan's hunting palace at Bari (completed in 1637), so far unpublished, will have to serve as a blueprint for the type.[27]

The small isolated garden, today called Dhobi Mahal, is one of several walled-in complexes laid out on the shores of a lake, which there takes the place of the river (figs. 7–9). The enclosure is rectangular (ca. 48m.× 34m., without gate) and surrounded on three of its sides by a wall; the fourth side on the waterfront is taken up by the wing with the garden building. The waterfront wing consists of a raised terrace (*kursī*) with the main pavilion in the center flanked by symmetrically arranged pillared wings; in front of the main pavilion is a sunken pool (*ḥauż*). The terrace arrangement is combined with a lower garden in the shape of an oblong four-part *chārbāgh* with a pool (*ḥauż*) at the intersection of its paved walkways (*khiyābāns*) which contain shallow channels. This oblong *chārbāgh* is a purely residental form and does not appear in the funerary gardens of the Mughals.[28] The garden was also surrounded by a paved walkway.

When I first identified this garden form I assumed that it was invented by the Mughals to adapt the centrally planned *chārbāgh* to their favorite waterfront sites.[29] However, it is also possible that this type of Mughal garden was inspired by a Timurid model. No Timurid garden of this type survives, but a closely related form is known through its description in the Persian manual on agriculture and horticulture, the *Irshād al-zirā'a*, written by Qasim ibn Yusuf Abu Nasri in Herat in 1515. Maria Subtelny has shown that the source of Qasim ibn Yusuf's information and inspiration was Mirak-i Sayyid Ghiyath, a renowned garden builder in late-Timurid Herat and the father of the architect of Humayun's tomb.[30] After Herat had been taken by the Uzbeks (1507) and the Safavids (1510) the persecution of the Qizilbāshis forced him to leave his homeland. Mirak came to India, perhaps together with the author of the *Irshād*, and is mentioned by Babur in 1529 as working on his constructions at Agra and Dholpur.[31] The *Irshād al-zirā'a*, which thus represents primary evidence for how late-Timurid traditions could have been handed down to Mughal India, devotes a whole chapter to the layout of the Timurid *chārbāgh*.

Various attempts have been undertaken to reconstruct the *chārbāgh* described in the *Irshād*.[32] All versions agree that the garden had an oblong plan with the main building on a terrace set at the southern end of the main axis formed by a channel flanked by paved walkways. The four-part element seems to have been represented by garden plots (*chaman*) arranged in two pairs on either side of the main axis. According to Subtelny two of the garden plots were divided into nine beds, and two into four squares, thus forming sub-*chārbāgh* patterns.[33]

The juxtaposition of a building on a terrace and a four-plot garden also appears in the later Mughal waterfront garden. What distinguishes the Mughal versions from their Timurid predecessor is that the pavilion was not positioned at the southern end of the garden but at the waterfront in whatever direction it happened to be. More important than the change in orientation, however, is the difference in the formal approach. The Mughal adaption reinforces the principle of organization and binds the elements of the Timurid model into a strictly planned architecturalized composition. The components of the *Irshād chārbāgh* were related loosely to each other, plantings playing a bigger role in the concept than solidly built garden architecture. The terrace there did not cover the whole southern area of the garden but was embedded in an orchard; the *chārbāgh* element was not generated by the rigid cross of the intersecting walkways but was put in the form of less sharply defined plots and beds in the area between the axial channel and the surrounding walls. The built features of the Timurid garden were confined to the surrounding frame and to the elements on the main axis.[34]

If the *chārbāgh* of the *Irshād al-zirā'a* did indeed serve as a model for the Mughal waterfront garden, the way the Mughals adapted it was characteristic for the whole relationship between Timurid and Mughal architecture. The Mughals with their clear and rational approach — aiming at strict functional planning and perfect symmetry — systematized and disciplined ideas which had been more vaguely expressed in Timurid architecture.[35] This trend gains momentum in Shah Jahan's time and also represents the characteristic contribution of the period to the development of the waterfront garden.

It has been suggested that the garden form described in the *Irshād* was what the late Timurids understood by the term *chārbāgh* because the author does not allude to any other form.[36] However, it will be remembered that Babur, our main contemporary eyewitness, mentions features of his gardens, as well as of earlier Timurid foundations, which cannot be brought into accordance with the description by Qasim ibn Yusuf. Babur's first *chārbāgh* at Agra, built in 1526, eleven years after the *Irshād al-zirā'a* was written, and described *expressis verbis* as *chārbāgh*, seems to have had intersecting walkways, an element absent in Qasim ibn Yusuf's definition. Babur's Bagh-i Nilufar at Dholpur was a *chārbāgh* with an irregular plan. For the early Mughals who transferred Timurid traditions to India the *chārbāgh* of the *Irshād* was clearly not a canonical form. The first Mughal garden planners also employed other solutions, one of them being perhaps their architecturalized adaption of the *Irshād chārbāgh*,

Another variant seems to have been the centrally planned *chārbāgh* with the building at the main intersection in the middle of the garden. The splendid and confident introduction of this plan into the monumental funerary architecture of the Mughals in Humayun's tomb (1562–71)[37] leads one to believe that there were earlier treatments of it in residential garden architecture.[38] The problem is that the earliest preserved Mughal residential example of the centrally planned type, the first (lower) *chārbāgh* of the Shalimar Gardens at Kashmir which originally stood by itself, dates only from 1620.[39] The centrally planned *chārbāgh* remained the exclusive plan of Mughal tombs, also in a riverfront context, until the Taj Mahal. That it was also used together with the additive "*kursī cum-chārbāgh*" formula for residential gardens along the riverbank, at least up to Shah Jahan's time, can be seen in the description of the gardens of Mughal Agra by Peter Mundy, a reliable European eyewitness, who stayed in the city in the early 1630's. He says that "the better sort" of gardens had an enclosure wall with four towers at the corners with domes and galleries, anywhere from one to four gates, and long walks lined by cypresses leading "comonly . towards the midle ... where is the cheife howse of pleasure and Tancke .... This square Garden is againe devided into other lesser squares, and that into other like bedds and plotts "[40]

Eventually, however, the "riverfront *kursī-cum-chārbāgh*" formula — which for simplicity's sake may be called a "riverfront garden" or "waterfront garden" — became the more widely used residential form. The early-eighteenth-century artist of the map in the Jaipur City Palace Museum considered it so characteristic of the urban landscape of Mughal Agra that he even showed centrally planned *chārbāghs* in this way, such as the tomb garden of I'timad al-Dawla (1626–28) (figs. 2, no. 4; 3, 4).[41] The impression that Agra with its chains of riverfront gardens on either side of the Jamna made on contemporaries is put in highly poetic words by Shah Jahan's historian Muhammad Salih Kambo: "On either side of that sea [he means the Jamna] full of pleasantness, buildings and gardens (*'imārat-hā wa bāgh-hā*) of paradisiac space are placed together in such a handsome close way that the sight of the beholder from the heart-attracting entertainment of each one of them gathers the flowers of bounty of the month of [spring] Urdi Bihisht. Because of the riverfront buildings (*'imārat-hā-yi sāhil*) and the flower gardens, in front [of the landward side] of all of which it appears that garden is linked to garden and garden plot (*chaman*) to garden plot, the desire to stroll in the garden of Paradise is completely erased from the page of memory .... In particular, the spacious buildings (*'imārāt-i wazi'*) and wonderful pavilions (*nashīman-hā-yi badi'*) of the princes of exalted origin and other famous amirs . give a display of the garden of Rizwan[42] and the palaces of the garden of paradise "[43]

Comparable urban schemes were developed in the capitals of the two other great Muslim empires. In Ottoman Istanbul royal and non-royal suburban garden villas lined the Bosporus.[44] In seventeenth-century Safavid Isfahan garden residences were built on the shores of the Zayanda river.[45] However, in its systematic and uniform planning — in which we again recognize the peculiar Mughal logic — riverfront Agra differs from these more informal waterfront schemes. The planning actually anticipates a prominent landlocked feature of the urban development of Isfahan under Shah 'Abbas I, namely the scheme of the Chahar bagh realized since 1596. It consisted of gardens laid out on both sides of a large avenue (*khiyābān*), and its canal which extended across the river between the palace in the city and the suburban Bagh-i 'Abbasabad.[46] Did Jahan's court poet Kalim allude to the fact that Mughal Agra resembled the scheme of Isfahan when he compared the river Jamna framed by garden buildings and towers with a cypress-lined *khiyābān*, the façades of the buildings reflecting each other like faces in a mirror?[47]

In Shah Jahan's reign we notice two important trends. First, as already pointed out, the elements of the riverfront garden were arranged in a perfectly symmetrical composition. Second, outside of Kashmir where the Mughal garden had developed its own form of terraced compositions, this garden formula became the predominant one of the period; the actual form of the component parts might be changed without disturbing the organization. At Agra, the pattern was employed not only for urban residential gardens but also for Shah Jahan's new palace garden in the Agra Fort, the ensemble now called Khass Mahal and Anguri Bagh, rebuilt as the main complex of the female quarters (*zanāna*) between the early 1630's and 1637 (figs. 10–11).[48] The waterfront plan appears, although enlarged to an unparalleled scale, in the funerary garden of the Taj Mahal, begun late in 1631 or early in 1632 and completed in 1641 (figs. 12A, 13).

The Taj complex and the fortress palace were positioned in the overall scheme of the riverbank garden city as a garden would be; consequently they adopted the predominant garden form of this urban plan. In other words, the form both of the palace garden and of the funerary garden of the Taj was dictated by their urban context. The design of the garden of the Taj Mahal[49] trans-

posed an established Mughal residental garden type of possible Timurid antecedents into the context of monumental funerary garden architecture. Begley was perhaps overlooking evidence nearer home when he attempted to derive the plan of the Taj Mahal from complex concepts of Islamic cosmology.[50] All the evidence suggests rather that the aim of the planners was to perfect the earlier tradition of the waterfront garden, and then to enlarge it to a scale beyond the reach of ordinary mortals in order to create an ideal paradisiacal garden palace for the deceased. Moreover, the waterfront scheme was not only used for the organization of the tomb garden, but also for the spatial organization of the other two main units that make up the Taj complex (fig. 12).[51] The garden configuration of rectangular unit and quadripartite square is repeated in the rectangle of the forecourt (*jilaw khāna*) (fig. 12E) with its subsidiary courts followed on the same axis by a square divided by cruciform bazaar streets into four quadrants containing *karwānsarā'is* (fig. 12F). The whole complex of the Taj Mahal may thus be read as a band of two configurations based on the waterfront scheme.

The allusions to the waterfront garden plan do not end here because abbreviated miniature versions of the large tomb garden also served as settings for three subsidiary tomb enclosures (fig. 12B–D). Two of these funerary enclosures are placed at the southeast and southwest corner of the forecourt, and one appears as an independent unit outside the east wall. The funerary enclosures situated inside the complex are modified abbreviations of the main tomb garden; each one has an octagonal tomb flanked by small wings set on a terrace aligned on one side of a small square *chārbāgh* with a pool at the crossing of its paved walkways. The funerary unit situated outside the east wall varies the scheme in that a small mosque is placed on the terrace instead of the tomb; the tomb itself, also octagonal, is set in the center of a small garden of which only traces remain. We are on safe grounds in assuming that it also had the form of a *chārbāgh* (fig 12D). These subsidiary funerary enclosures, in which the waterfront garden is transferred to a landlocked situation, were dedicated to the chief lady-in-waiting of Mumtaz, Satti al-Nisa Khanum (1647–48), and lesser wives of Shah Jahan.[52]

Since the waterfront garden appeared at the time when the Taj was built in the Agra Fort also in a *zanāna* context one feels tempted to assume that in the imperial context it had — at least in the earlier 1630s — a *zanāna* connotation attached to it. However, introducing the waterfront garden into the monumental tradition of imperial funerary architecture gave it a distinctly imperial connotation. The trend gains momentum in the Lahore Fort where a highly architecturalized variant of the waterfront garden is used for the complex of the Shah Burj (Shish Mahal) rebuilt in 1631–32 by Shah Jahan as one of his earliest additions to the Lahore palace (figs. 14–15).[53] The group of riverside buildings is here compressed into a massive polygonal block. The *chārbāgh* element is represented by the paved courtyard which is divided into four parts by narrow channels running off from a central pool. The Shah Burj was, as indicated by its name, a building with an exclusively imperial connotation. As one of the established ceremonial building types of Shahjahani palaces, it was reserved for the emperor's private council and accessible only to a select few who had the emperor's special confidence.[54]

Eventually the waterfront garden became the main module for the planning of Shahjahani palaces and gardens. The plan could be used independently from a waterfront site. In the Shalimar Gardens at Lahore (1641–42),[55] for example, a single terrace is set between two square *chārbāghs* acting thus as a constituent element for a plan which reads as two overlapping waterfront schemes (fig. 16). In the elevation the two *chārbāghs* are set on different levels, the terrace element being assigned to the lower one. The whole concept thus merges the type of terraced garden which the Mughals had developed in Kashmir with compositional elements borrowed from the waterfront scheme.

The use of the waterfront garden as a modular unit culminates in the fortress palace of Shah Jahan's new capital city Shahjahanabad (fig. 17) built between 1639 and 1648.[56] The plan for the palace, which is today called the Red Fort, is based on a giant *muthamman baghdādi*[57] which here takes the form of a rectangle with chamfered corners. The pavilions and halls for the emperor and the *zanāna* stand on terraces threaded along a canal on the riverfront (figs. 18–19). "In front of each Iram-like[58] pavilion (*nashīman*)," says the emperor's historian Kambo, "is a garden (*bāghcha*) of perfect freshness and pleasantness, so that this [whole] paradisical ground [i.e., the palace] from one end to the other because of its exuberant vegetation has drawn a veil across the green sky and the sight is presented to the eyes of the beholder like the highest paradise."[59] In the organization of each individual complex we clearly recognize the formula of the waterside garden which was in the palace of Shahjahanabad used as a modular unit for planning the whole riverfront.[60] Moreover, the riverfront scheme, which had been borrowed from the Mughal riverfront city, was now

usurped by the palace. The access to the riverfront for other members of the imperial family and the nobles was considerably limited. When Kambo tells us that the imperial princes and famous nobles built spacious and wonderful buildings (*ʿimārāt-i wasiʿ wa ḥadīʿ*) and extraordinary pavilions (*nashīman-hā-yi gharīb*) on both sides of the fort along the riverfront,[61] he seems to repeat what he had said about Agra rather than to take in what was right before his eyes. The surviving Mughal urban landscape and recent reconstructions of Shahjahanabad[62] which, with help of contemporary literary sources, work back from a nineteenth-century map of the Oriental and India Office Collections in the British Library,[63] show that not only the nobles but also the members of the imperial family had to build their *ḥawīlīs*[64] inside the city rather than as garden residences on the riverfront (fig. 17). The few residences on the waterfront were built by persons especially favored by the emperor,[65] and there were none at all on the opposite river bank.[66] The evidence compares in no way with the "democratic" riverfront garden scheme of Agra (compare figs 2–4 with 17–19) which had been imitated to some extent in Akbar's Delhi and probably also in Lahore. The best indication of the new state of affairs at Shahjahanabad is perhaps in the garden of Shah Jahan's favorite daughter Jahanara At Agra her garden, the Bagh-i Jahanara or Zahra Bagh, was praised as one of the fabled sights of the riverfront,[67] while at Shahjahanabad her Sahibabad gardens, large (982 *gaz* × 242 *gaz*) as they were,[68] were laid out *inside* the city. In Shah Jahan's new capital the waterfront garden scheme had become an imperial prerogative.[69]

On the landward side the fortress palace was encircled by gardens and garden residences (*bāghāt wa sarābustān-hā*).[70] The poets projected into these satellite gardens a sentiment which must have been echoed by many a new *ḥawīlī* resident of the city regretting the lost waterfront:

> The flower garden has fallen at its [the fortress palace's] feet
> so that perhaps it will be given a place inside.
> The heart of the tulip garden outside is full of grief,
> because it has fallen outside the garden [of the palace].[71]

The palace of Shahjahanabad provided no inspiration for the future; as an entity it represented the end of a development. A number of elements did emerge from the palace to have a lasting effect on Indian art, but the waterfront garden was not among them. The later history of the garden has still to be written, but it does not seem to have played a great role under the later Mughals and those Indian patrons who took inspiration from the Great Mughals.

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NOTES

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1. James L. Wescoat, Jr. "Picturing an Early Mughal Garden," *Asian Art* II, 4 (Fall 1989): 59–79; idem, "Landscapes of Conquest and Transformation: Lessons from the Earliest Mughal Gardens in India, 1526–30," *Landscape Journal* 10 (1991): 105–14; idem, "Gardens versus Citadels: The Territorial Context of Early Mughal Gardens," *Garden History: Issues, Approaches, Methods*, ed John Dixon Hunt (Washington, D.C: Dumbarton Oaks, 1992), pp 331–58 Wescoat persuasively suggests that Babur placed his gardens outside the citadels or fortress palaces of pre-Mughal rulers in deliberate opposition to them "As symbols of the appropriation of land and "royal emblems of territorial control" (Wescoat, "Picturing an Early Mughal Garden," p 76), the gardens had a definite political meaning For Catherine Asher the gardens of Babur had a significance beyond mere territorial conquest and the introduction of a new aesthetic; she shows that they also had funerary dynastic and religious associations, and, in the last analysis, were conceived as "a visual metaphor for his ability to control and order the arid Indian plains and ultimately its population." See Catherine B Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 37; see also pp 20, 23; eadem, "Babur and the Timurid Char Bagh: Use and Meaning," in *Mughal Architecture: Pomp and Ceremonies, Environmental Design*, 1991, nos. 1–2, pp. 46–55 Further connotations of early Mughal gardens are delineated by Wescoat, "Gardens of Invention and Exile: The Precarious Context of Mughal Garden Design during the Reign of Humayun (1530–1556)," *Journal of Garden History* 10, no 1 (1990): 106–16.
2. The form of the *chahârbâgh* is discussed by Ralph Pinder-Wilson, "The Persian Garden: *Bagh* and *Chahar Bagh*," *The Islamic Garden* (Washington D.C: Dumbarton Oaks, 1976), in particular pp. 79 ff. Lisa Golombek, "From Tamerlane to the Taj Mahal," *Essays in Islamic Art and Architecture in Honor of Katharina Otto-Dorn*, ed A Daneshvari (Malibu, 1981), p 47, addresses the problem whether the Timurid *chahârbâgh* described a garden divided into four quarters or rather a garden containing quadripartite beds Cf. Wescoat, "Picturing an Early Mughal Garden," p 69 I return to this point below Yet