Gardens of the Mughal Empire Bibliographic Update II -- 2008-18

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This update of the Gardens of the Mughal Empire bibliography is the result of new questions and avenues of research that have expanded the temporal, geographic, and thematic bounds of Mughal garden sources. It builds on this site’s first bibliography published by Michael Brand (2001), which reflected the many historical sources for and rapid growth of Mughal garden scholarship in the 1990s. In addition to delineating the contours of this body of scholarship, that bibliography became a comprehensive list of sources on Mughal Lahore and its gardens. Notably, even in that early iteration, an understanding of the necessity for multidisciplinary approaches to Mughal gardens is evident. The range of sources identified stemmed from the disciplines of landscape architecture, geography, history, and art history, as well as South Asian and Islamic studies.

In 2007, the bibliography was updated with scholarship published since 2001, and its thematic categories were refined to reflect the use of Mughal gardens as an analytic lens into the cultural heritage of Punjab. The update also benefited from detailed excavations and conservation of notable garden sites, such as the Moonlight Garden in Agra, Humayun’s Tomb in Delhi, and Babur’s tomb-garden in Kabul. These projects made possible the reconstruction of newly unearthed water systems and pathways and necessitated a new bibliographic category, “Mughal and Islamicate Gardens, Waterworks, Arts, and Conservation.” The 2007 Nagaur palace-garden complex excavations also brought to light the importance of soil profiles and planting techniques, and the bibliography was also updated to include materials on plants and vegetation of South and Southwest Asia.

This latest iteration highlights the substantial amount of additional scholarship on Mughal gardens published from 2007 to 2018. As in previous updates, we include earlier items missed in the previous bibliographies. Many of the updates reflect new directions in the field of art history, moving Mughal gardens beyond the visual dimension foregrounded in art historical practice. New emphasis has been placed on multisensorial experiences, bringing oral, olfactory, and affective dimensions of Mughal gardens. In addition, we have expanded the geographic span beyond Lahore and the Punjab to include recent research on regional gardens of Kashmir, Rajasthan, and the Deccan. The wider range of related materials include Pahari painting and Sikh sacred texts. These updates respond to the need for regional approaches to South Asian studies expounded in recent edited volumes on the Punjab and the Deccan, for a cross-regional comparison of gardens and water systems, and for a broader understanding of the geographic and temporal reach of Mughal gardens. This includes sources on colonial and postcolonial garden practices, contemporary Mughal gardens outside of South Asia, and vernacular kitchen gardens.
Significant progress has been made in broadening the types of sources considered and making them more accessible on platforms such as academia.edu, researchgate.net, and archnet.org. The underlined articles in this bibliography are linked to PDFs that are available online for free.

A number of investigative loose ends remain. While advances in scientific method were used to great effect in Mughal garden research of the early 2000s, a broader exploration of methods across disciplines is necessary, particularly in the realms of digital humanities and anthropology. On the one hand, urban infrastructure development in Lahore raises new challenges for heritage conservation. On the positive side, conservation projects carried out by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture has demonstrated successful integration of heritage conservation and community concerns, of those whose lives and livelihoods intersect with historic Mughal gardens, which opens the door for further research on urban landscape heritage conservation in South Asia.

List of Sections in the 2008-2018 Update

1. General Indo-Islamic History, Geography, and Culture
2. General Mughal Gardens, Art, Architecture, and Conservation
3. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Punjab
4. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Lahore
5. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Kashmir
6. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Himachal Pradesh
7. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Rajasthan
8. Cultural Landscape Heritage of the Deccan
9. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Colonial and Postcolonial India
10. Contemporary Islamic Gardens
11. Selected Water References
12. Selected References on Plants and Vegetation of Southwest Asia
13. Older Materials on Lahore
1. **General Indo-Islamic History, Geography, and Culture**
2. General Mughal Gardens, Art, Architecture, and Conservation


3. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Punjab


4. **Cultural Landscape Heritage of Lahore**


5. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Kashmir


6. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Himachal Pradesh

7. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Rajasthan


10. Cultural Landscape Heritage of the Deccan


11. Cultural Landscape Heritage of Colonial and Postcolonial India


o. Gordon, W. B. 1909. “Note by Chief Engineer on Complaints against the Canal Administration in the Districts of Multan, Muzaffargarh and Dera Ghazi Khan (with


12. Contemporary Islamic Gardens


13. Selected Water References


d. Gilmartin, David.


13. Selected References on Plants and Vegetation of Southwest Asia


14. Older Materials on Lahore


x. Lahore Development Authority. Conservation Plan for the Walled City of Lahore Library and Documentary Research: Bibliography and Lists of Documents Researched. Lahore: Pakistan Environmental Planning and Architectural Consultants Ltd.