

Aesthetics of Iranian Gardens in India

Influence of Hindi Gusto on the Indian Subcontinent's Iranian Gardens in Agra

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Abstract

In Mughal age, the cultural exchange between Iran and India increased because of particular political situations. Iranian garden was changed along with other cultural and artistic developments, through immigrating to India. These changes examined in three categories: different political and social conditions, Special geographical location and cultural context of India.

This Article surveys one of the factors of these changes: the effects of Indian's gusto on Iranian gardening. It describes it by what name "ornamentation", through using library studies and field observations in an analytical – expository way. Moreover, indicates how this affect the evolution of Iranian gardens in India. Hence, first we express the word "Indian gusto" and its ornamentation and then represent some signs of Hindi taste for Iranian Garden. These changes categorized in four steps: Firstly, smaller decorative divisions in garden's plan, second, decorating garden's implant design with various decorative garden plants, third, Landscaping details and fourth, ornamental use of natural elements such as water and trees. The study shows this affecting, upon different aspects, on the garden without any structural or essential change in the fundamental system. As a cultural factor in outer layers, Hindi talent imports the structure of the decorative garden and discharges the Iranian Garden's perspective through an epic aspect.

Keywords

Aesthetics, Hindi gusto (taste), Iranian Garden, Decoration, Iranian Garden in India.

Introduction

Mughal dynasty had launched in Delhi, India with the reign of "Babur" in 932 A.H. (905 A.H. – 1526 A.D.); Humayun who had been in Shah Tahmasb's court in Iran for a long time and was so influenced by Iranian culture, originated a great empire in the history of India. "The important role of Iran in shaping the culture and Mughal's art was so much that eulogist's described one of the seniors, who were a major architecture supporter, as the person who had turned India into Iran (Sultanzadeh, 1999: 64). In this term, Iran's cultural rich goods, including architecture, music and language had a profound influence in shaping the Indian culture. Iranian Garden and especially " tomb-garden" - as one of the Iranian gardens- are samples of these products with various functions, which entered into the cities of India. However, naturally, entrance to a new culture that was influenced by a different background, caused some changes in the body and content. These changes classify as:

Changes that applied due to placement in a historical period with different social and political conditions

Changes that established due to placement in a specific geographic location

Changes that occurred due to exposure in the context of Indian civilization and culture

Aesthetics of Iranian gardens in India are from those effects that consider in the third group, the cultural context of this land. For this review, we must first answer this question: has the Iranian Garden changed by entering into this country? In addition, we should know the level and extent of these changes, if they are, in the garden plot. Moreover, what are the samples of these changes in the Hindi gardens?

Hypothesis

With entrance into India, Iranian garden had affected by the prevailing aesthetics of Indian art, which has a collective and artistic taste, and had some changing in the way that created the Hindi Iranian garden. Thus, the Hindi gusto is the one that has created important characteristics of this species.

Definition of the concept "Gusto"

Gusto is an aesthetic perception. Gusto means "taste" (Moien, 1986: 1612) and "some one's certain innate desire for something" (Dehkhoda, 2012) and is a congenital taste and tendency that within the realm of a nation, leads all facets of that community life into a series of unique characteristics. Aesthetic taste -which generally refers to the tal-

ent or the ability to grasp aesthetic characteristics of objects - had the total significance in aesthetic in eighteenth-century, but now it has lost its value. In the current aesthetics literature, gusto is a broad concept that requires specifying an aesthetic aspect of a phenomenon.

First authors who contributed to this issue, such as "Shaftesbury" and "Hutcheson", believed that the aesthetic judgment of the "inner sense" relies on the individual's moral conscience. In these definitions, the gusto is as a criterion for judgment and taste. Persons who assign gusto as a type of aesthetics scent or intuition, mainly accept that it is kind of an innate feeling that helps the one indicate the elegance, glory or eminence of a phenomenon and characteristics such these. Anyway, the obvious aspect is the satisfaction that receives.

However, this definition can be represented in different fields with more explanations; but the point of view in this article, called Hindi gusto, is the ornamentation taste as an aesthetics pillar in culture and art of India.

Although the art is an extremely complex cultural phenomenon, yet, taste, is not necessarily confined to the culture (Whewell, 2010). Hindi taste derived from the culture of this country, is a desire and trimmer taste. A collective and innate taste within Indian people occurs in all spheres of their life. An Indian's aesthetics, takes him to decorate every product that he made. Generally, in other words, "ornamentation "in India's gusto space means have interest in every ornamental thing and any artifact that is representing in a more decorative way in the Indian community.

Now to precise Hindi taste, we will review some arena where it occurs:

- Hindi taste in literature: For a long period, Iranian language and Literature was the official, scientific, courtier common language in India. At the same time, due to the political- Social situation in Iran, it became a suitable base for the development of Iranian poetry. Iranian poetry in Hindi style, influenced by Hindi "taste", is a poem full of metaphors, allegory, literary agents and other arrays that actually is considered as decoration of the text and author's main speech. "Briefly, we can say that elocutionists of this method generally have penchant for inventing purports and creating new imagery; perhaps that is why the eloquence and simplicity has been procrastinated. Daydreaming, accurate and sometimes far from mind imagery, hyperbole and bombast are common among these popular poets" (Dashti, 1976: 52). In this style, exaggerated attention to the bright fantasies, imagination, and illusion, daydreaming

and expressing new themes, bringing proverbs and using poetic arts such as metaphor, brevity and etc. are authorized and has full vogue (Mostafavi Sabzevari, 1995).

This word arrangement will continue until it undermine the original word and it itself finds the authenticity. Relating to this period of literature history, in the valuable stylistics book, "Bahar" wrote: "... the resident author in India rather wants to say grace than has an expressible content to say; or even if he has anything, instead of writing his words, talks about irrelevant topics" (Bahar, 2003: 259).

This sample is a clear touch of poetry in this period: If bumblebee drops on thou's beauty | Till doomsday, will rain rosewater, of clouds, in candle's smoke ... (Saeb)

Until has rectified thou's stalk's wonder | various hereafters have emanated of my eyelashes...

Free, I am, of world's witchcraft's illusion | Has tumbled out of my mind, the meadow's peacock ... (Bidel Dehlavi)

In conclusion it can be said, with the arrival of Iranian poetry at India and under certain conditions that mentioned above, influenced by Hindi taste, it got ornamentations and elaborate arrays of literature that made the "Hindi -style" in Iran's bank-rolled literature. However, as noted, this style was coincided with Safavid government in Isfahan, Iran. "Since this method accomplished with "Saeb", we can call it "Isfahani style" - according to his residence in Isfahan - or "Saeb style". As well as his contemporaries called it as "The Mirza way" or "Saeb way". With regards to the late Amiri ... - that introduced this style as Isfahani or Saeb style- Saeb style's points toward the Iraqi style, only are limited to the sonnet while in the material, the point of view is attending to thinner imagination and imagery and metaphors and new forms" (Mohammadi, 1997: 31, 32). Nevertheless, the influence of India on Iranian literature during this period spared cannot be con-
nivance.

- Hindi taste in clothing: One of the areas that are not only in class and in property of the artists, but are to the general public and people's daily life, is people's coverage and dresses in the land. Various and often cheerful colors, clothes with all kinds of metallic and woody jewelries and lots of feminine jewelry in their face, feet, hands and hair styles shows common taste among Indian people, which ornamenting is originated in their aesthetics (Figs.1&2).

- Hindi taste in food culture: popular Indian food including Hindi hot flavors and full of spicy does not even need to elaborate further. If consider the main



Fig.1. Any kinds of Jewelry that used by people, from beggars too privileged classes. Photo: Mohammad Jamshidian, 2012.



Fig.2. Use decorative tools in different parts of body in addition to grooming the hand, foot and face, painting in hand and foot is current. Source: www.topnop.ir.

ingredients of the food as the "text", spices have always been counted as a "marginal" and decoration of taste and appearance of food. Sometimes this ornament is strong enough that the entrée called by the name of the sauces. The Spice "Curry" is one of the most important add-ons for all Hindi foods and even, they have a stew that called after it, "curry". Najaf Daryabandari in "Ketab-e mostatab-e ash-pazi, az sir ta piaz" with a comprehensive investigation into the history and types of cuisine in the

world pointed to cooking styles of "Iranian , Chinese and Romans" and added the Hindi cook in Iranian style category. Referred to the reign of King of Mughal, He writes: "Hindi cookery has been the royal Mughal's court cooking in India and this actually is what is mixed with the "hot drugs" or "Garm-masala"; which today is known as Hindi Cooking in the world. Naturally, if we reduce pepper and Garmmasala from Indian cuisine, we will approach to Iranians Mughal's culinary, Iranian Cuisine in the Teymuri era (Daryabandari, 2005: 99)". In Hindi cooking section, he writes : "everyone prepare their cuisine very edible and exquisite, and the main material of it is fragrant herbs and vegetables that plant in the territory of India and people call it "Garmmasala" as "hot stuff", which use up in cooking ... particular quality of Hindi cuisine is largely related to the usage of Garmmasala" (Ibid: 103).

- Hindi talent in the visual arts and architecture: A quick look at examples of the visual arts including painting, sculpture and layout speaks of Indian ornamentation talent. Repetitive fine prolific figures and delicate intricacy in making sculptures on the facade of a building whose numbers reach to thousands, is explanatory to this talent.

A specific type of architecture named feminine structures has been found in Hindu's artistic phrases, which was a place for royal woman in regal domiciles. According to ornamental taste of Hindi woman, these structures are full of tore and stony intricacy, lithograph on the facade and even space making.

This of course is evident in Islamic period that carried a distinctive role for women, Hindi architectural studies and Islamic indicate that the "Indian art and the Islamic differs essentially to the retrospective Indian art and the Buddhist, but in various ways it depends on that. It means even with the shared geographical and even racial background, application of some materials and the use and assignment of masons, painters and other Hindu careers, and enforcement of Hindi taste by Hindus that converted to Islam and female Hindus in "royal and aristocratic feminineness" "differed from its back ground" (Halayd & Gootes, 1998: 50). "another flow in the Hindu art was the great feminineness with some of Hindu woman who apparently had converted to Islam , but in practice were committed to their native ceremonials, daily life jewelries and accessories" (Ibid: 51) . The "Air Place "is a very beautiful example of these buildings in Jaipur city. (Fig.3)

Hindi taste in the India's Iranian garden

Indians, In face of a product called Iranian Garden, enter their ornamental spirit and taste space to their constructions unconsciously. In this section, we are searching for these influences on the Iranian garden that entered to the Indian territories. However, it is remarkable that this influence does not appear in the structure and geometry of garden, but it appears on the outer surfaces, miniature and ornamentation look to the garden elements. Strong geometry and full spatial organization of Iranian gardens in this context still remains, but it is the types of elements

Fig.3. Hawa mahal, a beautiful place in India is a good case from royal and female architecture in this country, that used by royal women for watching soldiers parade. Hawa mahal, Jaipur. Photo: Mohammad Jamshidian, 2012.



applications that will change. It is rooted in nature and originality of the Iranian garden that is based on the geometry, rectangular lines and a very regular perspective. Undoubtedly, any change in it would vary the garden from being "Iranian".

Here are the changes that the influence of Iranian gardens caused in the subcontinent²:

- Architecture of garden's building: Building or monument in the garden is one of the expressions of Iranian gardens in the India subcontinent. The building, which often is a tomb, is filled with several decorative and architectural intricacies. Still, there are remained traces of this taste from ancient periods in civilization of India in the architecture of tomb-gardens³ in Mughal period. "Soon Teymuri's architectural elements combined with local building traditions, especially with the appearance of buildings and architectural decorations. The inspired source in here was the revival of rock decorative that belonged to the reign of Delhi" (Koch, 1995: 38). Certainly, a quick look at the architecture of former Hindu and Buddhist temples from centuries ago or even a reference to architecture and lithograph of Ajanta and Ellora caves are strict evidences of the presence of this spirit in all periods of art and architecture in India. "Ebba Koch" in the book "Indian Architecture in Mughal's period" refers to the architectural monuments such as the "Taj Mahal", notes the "Shahjahany" architecture method and wrote: "In the broader architecture range, other properties especially decorative plant motif figures... were used in the buildings. These motifs became the main elements of Plinth's decorations in "Shahjahany" architecture. Generally, application of plant motif figures is a return to the architectural

decorations from the exaggerated visual aspects of old periods to the artistic ways that was consistent with Islamic laws.

At the same time, the figures of flowers and plants, that some of them were even better than natural and myth samples, confirmed poet's purports, that regal building was heaven-likes on the earth.

About the importance and role of these decorations in the tomb building, we can note that one of the most important steps to complete the decorations and the crafts in the architectural monument is the tomb building. In "Padeshahnameh" written by historian of the period, "Mollahamid Lahouri" that in some parts deals with the constructions of the "Taj Mahal", it said: "carpeting the first floor with stone:... and Sculptor groups of people who were whether a simple worker or a hedger or a precise woodcutter that were gathered together from around the world. Every single of them was proficient in his field. Moreover, scraped the surface with the red stone by using different methods of work on it; so accurately that no one would find any interstice in it. About the rugs and carpets: "...in the entire building, from the inside to the outside of this synthetic leading Magical Shrine, riveted opal and every other types of colored stones and magnificent Samin rocks in a way that subtlety look can't see and perception thought can't even comprehends it" (Sultanzadeh, 1999: 71-74).

The presence of a grandiose architecture in Tomb-gardens like "Bibi-ka", "Humayun" and "Taj Mahal" has an essential role in landscaping of Iranian gardens, which is evidence of the dominance of Hindi taste in creating the decorated and adorned landscape. Presence of all kinds of handicraft and

Fig.4. Types of decorating on stone in architecture of Taj mahal building indicative the insistence of architecture on decoration tomb. Moarraq-kari in this building is characteristic of this. Taj mahal, Agra. Photo: Mohammad Jamshidian, 2012.

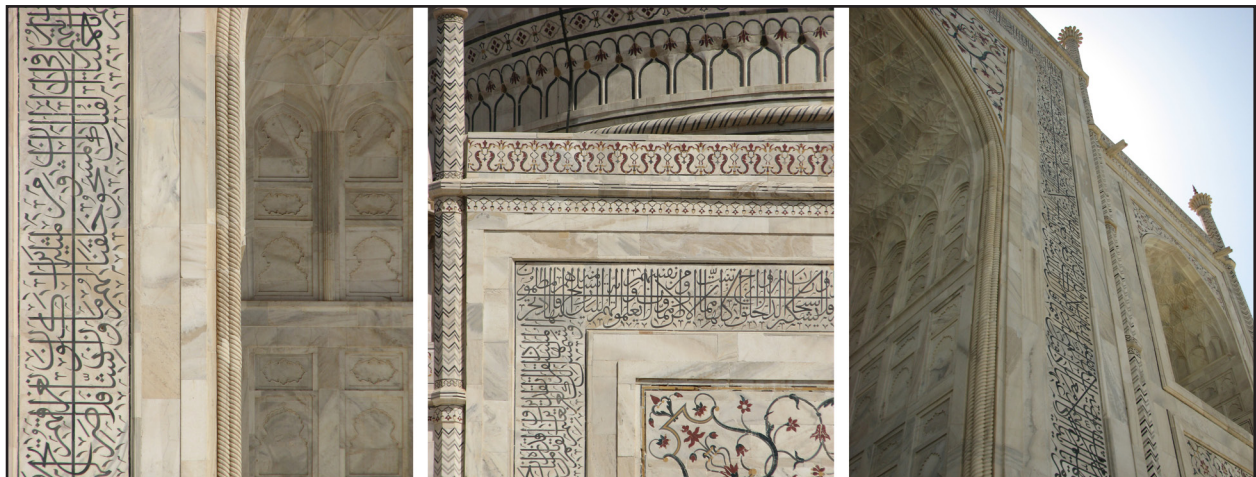




Fig. 5. Tiny subdivisions in plan of Jaipur gardens are show radial approach too vegetation in Iranian Char-bagh. Amber fort, Jaipur. Photo: Mohammad Jamshidian, 2012.

decorative arts such as sculptures and epigraphs on the facade of building, the various labyrinth arcs and edgings in structures and pillars are different types of Hindi taste in the garden's buildings (Fig.4).

- **Landscape Design:** In the first look it seems that the dominate geometry is the Iranian "Charbagh". However, there are gardens that are designed especially for promenade, and are a bit different from the origin "Charbagh" form. With a closer look to them, we can note that sometimes the plan divisions and garden making in the sites are so tiny and overwrought that the presence of varied and prolific plant coatings and short coatings in colors, textures and different sizes, spontaneously brings to mind the same fabrics and decorative and colorful coatings of the Indian people. In Jaipur, gardens and some parts of the castle and the governmental palace observed gardens with microscopic divisions in the plan (Fig.5). In the particular case of designing we find some enclosure platforms named "Chabutareh" and this is the decoration of Iranian Charbagh in a larger view, so that the decorative element is added to the plan area. " In the crossing area of a main street Chabutareh or a courtyard that made higher than the street level and on that a square shaped pond and five fountain is made" (Sultanzadeh, 1999: 92). As the ornamental look appears in the architecture of Hindi garden in its façade's design, the microscopic ornamental decorations in the garden plan are examples of Hindi taste.

Landscaping: In a smaller scale, the ornamental spirit can be followed in the performance and landscape details:

- The edges of the gardens and ponds with laby-

rinths, arches and decorative shapes are reminiscent of those heavy lithographs in view of the building architecture. On the floor and even underwater of the ponds, a beautiful figure plays in garden landscaping. By moving towards the main axis or the gardens on the sides of it, it's like the bound between garden and pond are separated from each other and a great miniature figure is coursed over the length of the garden (Fig. 6).

- The presence of a various large and small fountains and sprinklers in different areas of ponds and sites with the same elegant and decorative curved lines dominant on architecture's ornaments, in a sheer form, has an important role in overcoming of ornamentations on landscaping in the garden.

- **The presence of Nature:** The look to the natural elements in the garden also is a painterly and ornamental look. In addition to the presence of diverse and coloring vegetation coating in the gardens that in the plan clearly are like a painting of them, the application of the two elements, the water and the tree, are organized in the same way of ornamental Hindi taste. If the usage a variety of plants and flowers would be kind surface usage to decorate the garden with the nature, this look in the application of that elements will be more understandable.

In Iranian garden the presence of the tree, have roles such as fruiting, shading and creating perspective and the depth of field view, which the last one is one of the most essential basic features of the garden. It means the presence of the principal axis is emphasized by two rows of perceptive maker trees, and its definition is responsibility of these trees. This principle, which is the landscaping index as-



Fig.6. Carvings edge in gardens show decoration in landscaping of Indian gardens in Humayun tomb-garden and Taj mahal. Photo: Mohammad Jamshidian, 2012.

pect in Iranian garden, in entrance to the India got very inconspicuous, but not completely destroyed. It seems that the main role of trees as natural landscaping elements in the garden, despite of emphasizing the main axis considering the painterly vision of Hindi gardener is the role that plays as the single- tree in the intersection of the axes. In most of Hindi tomb-gardens, there are large and spectacular unique-trees in the impact site of two axes, sometimes on the same platform. As if Hindi taste tends to put the tree in the visual field and wide net such as other decorative elements, and watch it from the tombs and platforms. It is also affective in making a decision for planting pattern; thus that the planting pattern - at least in the present situation of gardens - has a light (low density) cover and in wide green garden, makes the intersection site of axis a spectacular scene for presence of a beautiful tree. In this case, we can consider paintings of Mughal period -that is also known as Mughal's miniature-as evidence to this claim (Figs.7&8).

The look to the water also just like tree, is a minimalist look. There are no more wide water axes and roaring waters with quick movements. In India's Iranian gardens, you hear less water sound, causing from the movement of great volume of it; instead we see narrow water channels that water is moving slowly in them (Fig.9). There are different kinds of sheer movements of water with a fine variety of large and small ponds in India's Iranian garden. Crossing the water by using narrow bridges and reaching to some platform in the middle of a huge pond, using different plays and water appearances, and crossing the water flows all includes a kind of view to the water that is inspired by ornamental Hindi taste. It seems that all properties of water such as reflection, movement and clearness are in hands of this painting. In a particular sample in "Mahtab bagh", a wide water pond, that is destroyed behind the pavilion and is located at the main axis of the Taj Mahal, faced completely the water for the reflection of the large image of Taj Mahal (Fig.10).

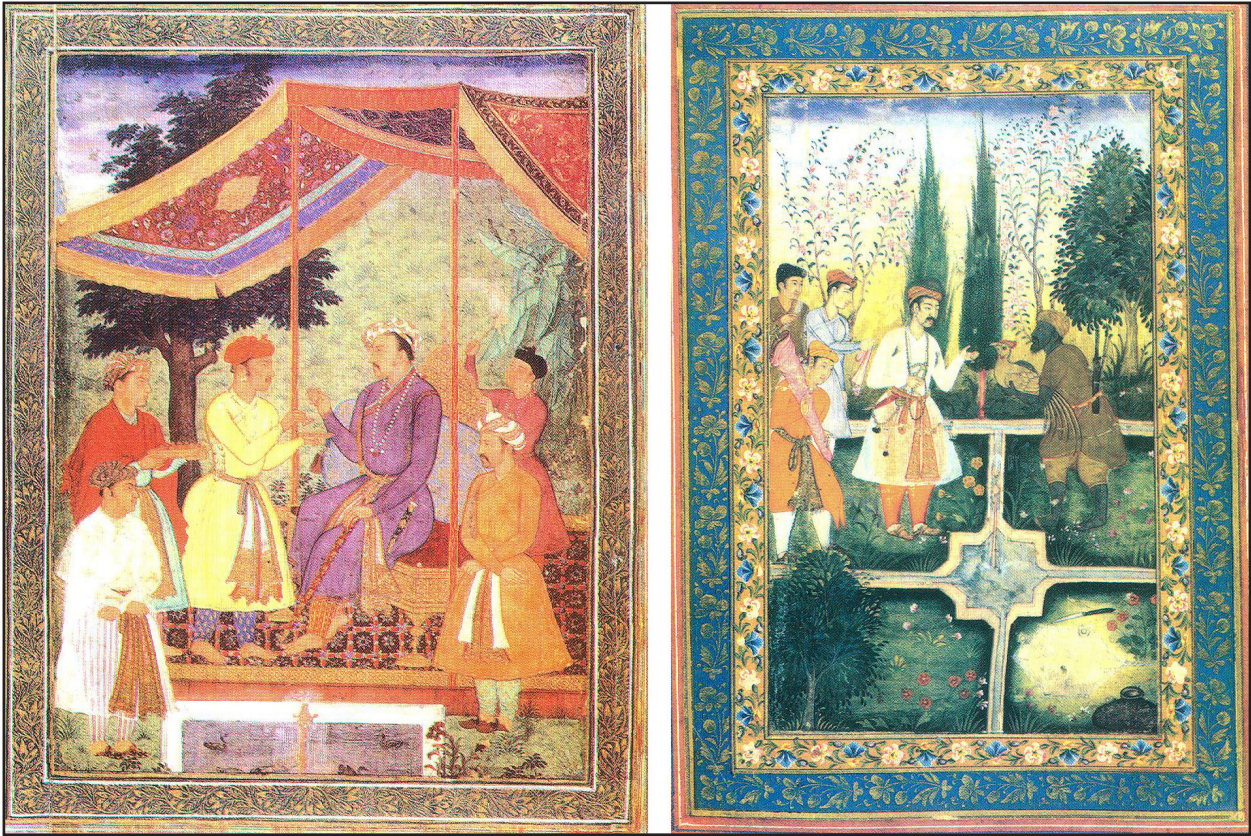


Fig.7. A few examples of Mughal kings painting. Presence one tree in painting and placement the trees in margin represents Hindi taste in landscaping. Source: Rogers, 2004: 28 & 79.

Fig.8. trees in main axis in addition of axis role are in center of subsidiary axis and intersection point sporadic. Taj mahal tomb-garden, Agra. Photo: Mohammad Jamshidian, 2012.





Fig.9. Subsidiary an main axis water axis very thin and decorative extend in garden and arrive to Small and shallow pools. Humayun tomb-garden, Agra. Photo: Mohammad Jamshidian, 2012.



Fig.10. Small bridges that cross from water line and pools, are other type of decorative approach too water in Hindi Garden. Bibi-ka tomb -garden, Aurangabad. Photo: Mohammad Jamshidian, 2012.

Conclusion

Hindi taste with characteristics of ornamentations and strong tendency to semblance pretending as an important factor in new environmental effects, has undergone Iran's imported garden in the territory of India on significant changes. This study showed that the most significant affects happened in the appearance of the garden and the variations contain less amount of structure and basis of the garden. In addition to the structural rigidity and strength of the dominant configuration of the Iranian Garden, this is a case arising from Hindi taste and points to the cultural and artistic products. The important change of Hindi Iranian garden towards its origin samples, that was the implant design of garden; by weakening the epic and formal landscaping of the garden's street, it lead to the free view of viewer and strengthened characteristics decorating the plants. The density variations in the garden show the influence of a semblance factor in this transformation. Compared with other aspects of Indian art and civilization, Hindi taste, which is the source of aesthetics of this people, must be counted as the factor of this evolution.

Endnote

1. Here, the meaning is the domicile or buildings that are especially for woman
2. These effects mostly have been studied in the sample gardens in Agra district in the Indian subcontinent. Kashmir gardens areas are other Iranian gardens of the Indian subcontinent, which are excluded from the samples here.
3. tomb-Garden is discussed as a Iranian garden that an important place is located in it.

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