

**Elisabeth B. Macdougall and Richard Ettinghausen, eds., *The Islamic Garden*. Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, 1976.  
135 + xxxvi pp., illus., \$15.00**

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lapses with the fourth essay, 'Excavations in Jerusalem – Review and Evaluation,' which would have provided a very useful introduction to the rest of the volume by giving a summary of the problems currently under investigation. The articles are of a fairly uniform length, generally three or four pages. Some topics can be summarized adequately in this space but others suffer from this restriction, such as, for example, the essay on 'The Lintels of the Holy Sepulchre.'

The black-and-white illustrations which accompany the text (Fig. 1) are of excellent quality, but they are not numbered or referred to in the body of the text; consequently, the reader never knows when to look for illustrations of particular points. The four colour plates, on the other hand, appear rather flat, almost like reproductions of water-colours. The bibliography for the entire volume consists of one page, approximately thirty entries, with no attempt to link these entries to the individual articles. In addition, most of the references are to the periodical IEJ (Israel Exploration Journal), but the meaning of this abbreviation is not given anywhere.

On the positive side, the book contains many maps, tables and indexes which are clear and useful, and the volume is printed on good quality paper. A volume which goes from pre-Davidic times to future plans for a national park, referring to such topics as the aqueducts of

Jerusalem, Islamic architecture, Crusader Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre, could suffer problems of unity and cohesion, but this is not the case, and the text flows smoothly. On the whole the book provides a very useful summary of the archaeological problems under investigation in the city of Jerusalem to 1974. The reader is given a picture which extends over a wide period of time, wider than one usually finds in an archaeological publication, and the result is comprehensive and coherent, and more than a 'tourist manual.' Other major cities of antiquity which are still flourishing in the twentieth century could benefit from a similar treatment.

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ELISABETH B. MACDOUGALL and RICHARD ETTINGHAUSEN, eds. *The Islamic Garden*. Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, 1976. 135 + xxxvi pp., illus., \$15.00.

The art of garden construction and design is the most ephemeral of a culture's efforts to force some aspect of its physical environment into conformity to that culture's idea of 'nature.' Scarcely any other creation of man's architectural imagination is so vulnerable to accident or digression. Any gardener knows that a single season's inattention can return his or her ordered world to wilderness. And since the basic components of garden design – wood, water, grass, plant and flower materials – are light and flexible, no comparable physical structure has lent itself with such fluency to destructive transformations of taste. The international garden Anglomania of the eighteenth century, for example, virtually eradicated the tradition of the private formal garden in France.

As a result, the garden historian, far more than the art historian, must work with secondary source

materials: ground plans, old photographs, engravings, cartoons describing a fête or *plein-air* theatrical performance. The opportunities provided for archaeological deduction are often considerable, as F.H. Hazelhurst has demonstrated in his brilliant reconstruction of Le Nôtre's design for the garden of the Archbishop of Paris at Conflans. Nevertheless, the emotion most frequently experienced by the garden enthusiast as he or she surveys the history of the subject is regret for so much that has been destroyed.

Any serious attempt to interpret the surviving fragments of civilization's most exquisite contradiction of perceived chaos must be welcome. For the past decade, the Center for Studies in Landscape at Dumbarton Oaks in the District of Columbia has published the results of a series of symposia discussing the major, national garden traditions of the Western world. The Italian, French and English garden have been considered. The present volume deals with the Islamic garden.

*The Islamic Garden* offers the student of garden history, and of Islamic culture, significant rewards. Not the least of these is Richard Ettinghausen's cogent justification of a selective cross-cultural, rather than strictly regional, presentation of the subject. Like Islam itself, the Islamic garden exists as a nexus of attitudes and responses which have been translated into the visual languages of societies as diverse politically, and as distant physically, as Umayyad Spain and Safavid Iran. But while cultural idioms may have varied, basic expressive relationships – the relationship of artificial to 'natural,' of garden setting to architectural focus, of walled to non-walled areas – demonstrate a binding continuity over space and time. The streams that nourished the Islamic garden flowed out from a single, central source, as Ettinghausen suggests. The fact that the five essays which follow the introduction elaborate specific aspects of this perceptive text imposes upon the collection a thematic structure



FIGURE 1. Stone vessel. Yadin, p. 48.



not absent, certainly, from preceding volumes in the series, but less consciously developed in those earlier volumes.

Anne-Marie Schimmel's paper, 'The Celestial Garden in Islam,' analyses the unitive ideology of the Islamic garden. Working from a precise ground plan of Quranic reference and Arabic and Persian source materials, the author considers the significance to desert cultures of the paradise concept, the fusing of economic necessity and poetic impression in the careful management of water (always the dominant metaphor in Islamic gardens), and the symbolic use of fountain, tree and flower. Such anthologizing of primary assumptions, combining as it does impeccable scholarship with lucid literary style, offers both general reader and specializing student a valuable 'guide' to the gardens of Islam.

Ralph Pinder-Wilson's essay, 'The Persian Garden: Bagh and Chahar-Bagh,' and William Hanway's study, 'Paradise on Earth: the Terrestrial Garden in Persian Literature,' focus developments of Islamic garden design through the imagery of a specific culture. Hanway's essay, indeed, although in places so densely argued as to be stylistically impenetrable, is especially noteworthy. His analysis of the relationships between the imagery of the poetic and the actual garden culminates in an ingenious demonstration of similarities between the literary rhythms of Sa'adi's *Bustan* (orchard) and *Gulistan* (rose-garden) and the structure

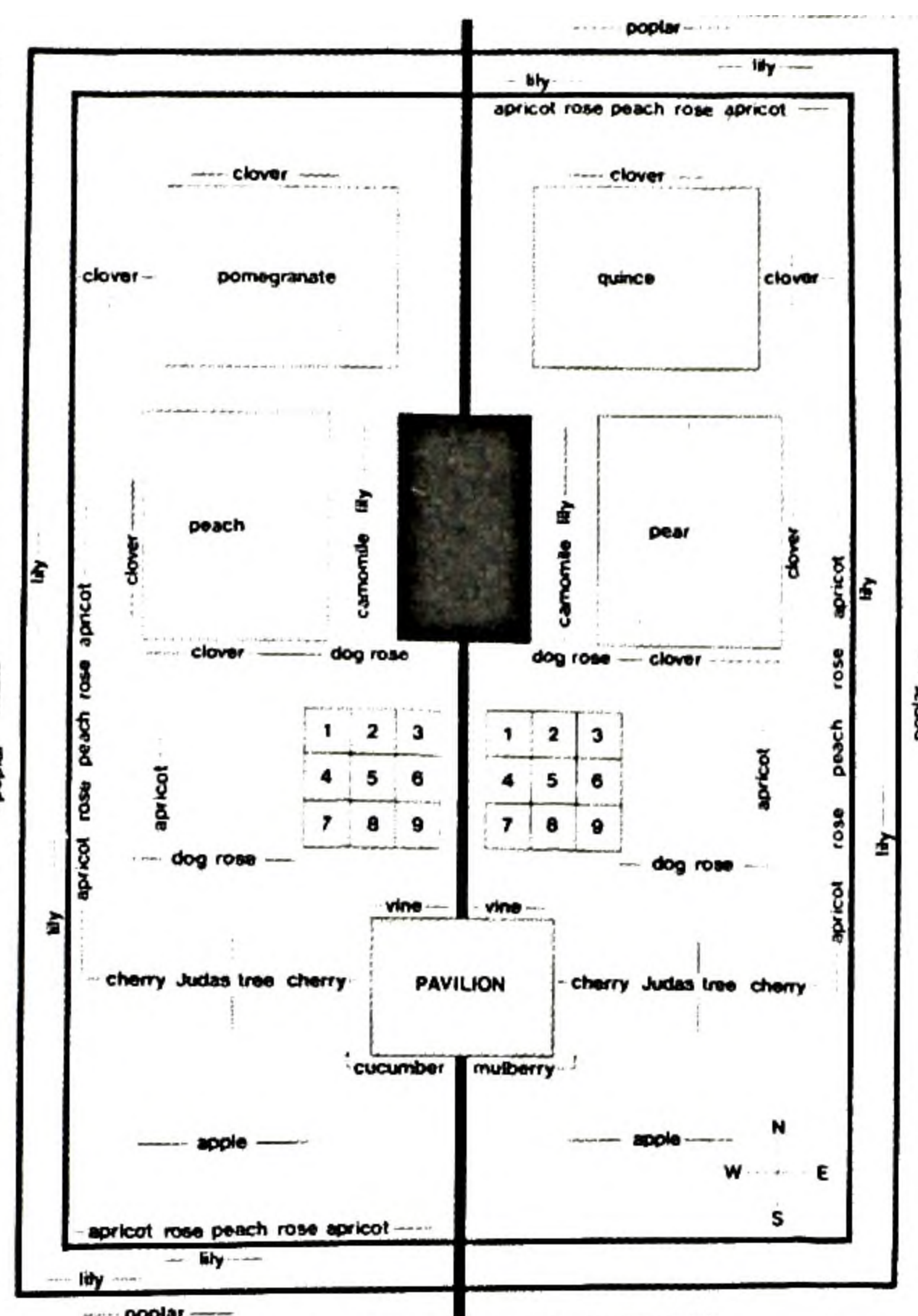


FIGURE 1. Layout of a chahar-bagh. MacDougall and Ettinghausen, fig. 8.

of the chahar-bagh, the four-part, symmetrical Persian garden layout (Fig. 1).

The pleasure gardens of Muslim Spain and the garden palaces built by the Mughal emperors of North India have suffered most severely from the depredations of unsympathetic conquering cultures. What has been described above as the archaeological condition of the subject may account for the slightly labored quality of James Dickie's discussion of 'The Islamic Garden in Spain.' Dickie seems too often forced to analyse ruins rather than to describe gardens ('glazed green and white tiles were found bordering the paths, which provides another link between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In addition, evidence was found of confin-

ing basins . . . ') The author's scholarship is irreproachable, but his style seems in general less evocative than that of Constance Villiers-Stuart, who explored the Moorish paradise gardens during the early decades of the twentieth century. The concluding essay in the collection, Susan Jellicoe's 'The Development of the Mughal Garden,' is an admirable précis of a subject which is treated fully in her co-authored publication *The Gardens of Mughal India* (1972).

A small but significant garden bibliography may be culled with a certain amount of application from footnotes in these volumes. Photographs are monochromatic and so severely reduced as to be frequently non-descriptive. This problem becomes serious when the reader is invited to refer to reproductions of complex palace and/or garden ground plans. The present volume has collected its illustrations at the end of the book instead of interleaving them with the appropriate texts, a practice found less effective by the present reviewer.

The student of the history of garden design may receive *The Islamic Garden* as an illustration of an attitude toward the manipulation of 'nature,' or may perceive it in the context of a universal human desire to distil order and 'beauty' (paradise) from the impinging facts of environment. The five essays collected here constitute a significant addition to, and an enrichment of, an already distinguished series of investigations into the ecology of the earthy paradise.

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