

Original Research Article

A Comparative Study of Timurid Chaharbaghs' Features in Persian Texts of the 9th and 10th Centuries AH with Abu Nasri Heravi's Model

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Received: 02/06/2025

Accepted: 03/08/2025

Available online: 23/09/2025

Abstract | This study aims to elucidate the characteristics and conceptual evolution of "Chaharbagh" gardens in Persian texts from the 9th and 10th centuries AH. It also compares extracted features of the texts with the model presented by Abu Nasri Heravi in "Irshad al-Zira'a". The main research problem focuses on identifying the Chaharbaghs mentioned in this period, examining their physical, functional, and semantic characteristics, and determining their alignment with or divergence from Heravi's model. The study employed a qualitative approach and content analysis of primary historical texts to extract descriptions of Chaharbaghs, analyze them based on the chronology of the texts' composition, and compare them with Heravi's model. The findings indicate that no uniform model for Chaharbagh existed during this period. Some texts mention cypress trees alongside water channels, which aligns with Heravi's description, but the presence of multiple buildings or discrepancies in the types of flowers and trees contradicts Heravi's account. This lack of conformity suggests the flexibility of Chaharbaghs in responding to local and governmental needs, indicating that Heravi likely described an idealized Chaharbagh. The geographical context of Heravi's residence also appears to influence his depiction. Many Chaharbaghs were located on the outskirts of cities, featuring governmental functions, water pools, and fruit trees, and served political, cultural (e.g., gatherings of poets in Samarkand), and social roles (e.g., mythological ties in Kabul and religious significance in Mashhad). The absence of evidence for a specific, particularly quadripartite, geometry and the transformation of the Chaharbagh's meaning (e.g., Chaharbagh Street in Isfahan) underscore the importance of the cultural context of Greater Khorasan.

Keywords | Chaharbagh, Persian garden, Heravi's Chaharbagh, Irshad al-Zira'a, Timurid architecture.

Introduction | The term "Chaharbagh" has changed throughout history and has been described with diverse meanings. In the 9th and 10th centuries AH, the term Chaharbagh was prevalent in Persian written texts. Apart from "Chaharbagh," historical texts from this period also mention "gardens" that were distinctly different from Chaharbaghs. However, some texts refer to Chaharbaghs as gardens, such as the description of the Jahan-Ara Garden in Herat: "Skilled architects and proficient engineers designed a Chaharbagh [...]1" (Khvandamir, 2001, Vol. 4, 146) and Qatghan (2006, 114) states: "[...] the governor of Iraq [...] proceeded to the Jahan-Ara Garden [...]" (Qataghan, 1385, 114). Additionally, in the 10th century AH, Qasim Ibn Yusof

Abu Nasri Heravi in "Irshad al-Zira'a" described the construction of a Chaharbagh.

The main research questions are: 1. Which Chaharbaghs are mentioned in the texts of the 9th and 10th centuries AH?/ 2. What are their characteristics?/ 3. What are the similarities or differences between these Chaharbaghs and Heravi's model?

This study focuses on primary historical texts to understand the concept and examine the characteristics of Chaharbaghs during the Timurid era. The examination of Chaharbaghs is based on the chronology of the source texts' composition. Subsequently, to trace developments, the study follows references to a specific city in later texts. The research employs a qualitative approach based on the analysis of historical texts. The methodology involves

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extracting descriptions, tracing their evolution based on the date of the sources' composition, and comparing their physical, functional, and semantic characteristics with Heravi's model. To ensure fidelity, quotations are presented as they appear in the original sources.

The significance of this study lies in clarifying the tradition of Persian garden design, elucidating the meaning of Chaharbagh, and examining its impact on Safavid urban planning (e.g., Chaharbagh-e Ali in Isfahan). By analyzing texts based on their composition date, this study provides a framework for understanding Chaharbagh and distinguishing it from other gardens, contributing to interdisciplinary studies in architecture, history, and culture. The research limitations include the scarcity of physical descriptions in some sources and the lack of access to primary sources for all Chaharbaghs.

Previous studies have primarily focused on architectural aspects or specific periods, paying less attention to the semantic and functional diversity of Chaharbaghs over an extended timeframe. Some have described Chaharbaghs as symmetrical spaces with architectural elements such as pools and porticos, but their semantic transformations after the 10th century AH have been overlooked. Others have considered Abu Nasri Heravi's quadripartite model as a framework for Chaharbaghs, but its alignment with historical Chaharbaghs across different regions, particularly in light of the texts' composition dates, has not been comprehensively examined.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach, emphasizing content analysis of historical texts. The sources are Persian texts from the 9th and 10th centuries AH, selected as primary sources. The methodology includes the following steps:

Data Collection: Extracting descriptions of Chaharbaghs from historical texts, focusing on physical characteristics (e.g., buildings, pools, water channels, and trees), functional roles (e.g., governmental, cultural, or social), and semantic aspects (e.g., mythological or religious associations).

Data Organization: The extracted descriptions were organized based on the chronology of the texts' composition to examine the evolution of Chaharbaghs. Additionally, for a more detailed analysis, the characteristics of Chaharbaghs in specific cities or regions were tracked.

Analysis and Comparison: The extracted features were compared with the Chaharbagh model presented by Abu Nasri Heravi in "Irshad al-Zira'a" to identify similarities, differences, and the extent of alignment or flexibility of this model.

Fidelity: Quotations and descriptions were presented

as they appeared in the original texts to preserve their authenticity.

The limitations of the study include the scarcity of physical descriptions in some texts and the lack of access to primary sources for all the mentioned Chaharbaghs. This methodology enables a deeper understanding of the Chaharbagh concept and its role in the Persian garden tradition.

Findings

• Heravi's Chaharbagh

First, it is necessary to understand Heravi's description of the Chaharbagh in "Irshad al-Zira'a". Jayhani & Rezaeipour (2020, 189) interprets it as follows: "Under the title "Design of Chaharbagh and Building," Heravi outlines the main building of his proposed design, including the location and characteristics of the garden's peripheral pathway. His descriptions indicate a pathway with two water channels on either side, three zira' (approximately 1.5 meters) wide, encircling the garden. This pathway is three zira' away from the wall, and along its inner edge, poplar trees should be planted. He then mentions the garden's main water channel, stating: "... and in the middle, the main channel of the garden is placed straight, leading water to the pool facing the building..."

Heravi describes the garden's central pathway as straight, with a pool positioned facing the building. Although he briefly describes the central part of the garden, where the building and pool are located, he provides no details about the building itself. He notes that "the pool should be twenty zira' or as deemed appropriate away from the building..." Subsequently, rather than detailing the construction of the building or the central garden area, he focuses on the arrangement of garden beds and the types of trees and flowers planted in them. Heravi also mentions pedestrian paths on both sides of the main water channel leading to the central pool.

He then refers to four "chamans" (grass-covered sections), stating: "On each side, three plots in the upper tier, four grass-covered sections are designated: the first for pomegranates, the second for quinces, the third for peaches and nectarines, and the fourth for pears, followed by the arrangement of garden beds..." The term "chaman" has multiple meanings, including a straight pathway, garden area, or seating space. Here, it likely refers to garden beds, as Heravi specifies planting a single type of fruit tree in each. This section of Heravi's descriptions is the most complex, and different interpretations have arisen, as will be discussed later.

Heravi does not mention shade or coniferous trees, except around the building's platform and the garden's perimeter, where he recommends planting Samarkand poplars. He does not specify trees along the main pathway's

water channel. After the four grass-covered sections, he mentions nine garden beds dedicated to seasonal and perennial flowers and shrubs. He does not clarify the placement of these beds relative to the grass-covered sections or the building, but notes that after arranging the beds, two rosebushes should be planted on the east and west sides, with their counterparts north of the pool. This suggests the beds were likely opposite the pavilion, possibly extending to the garden's entrance. He also mentions the building's platform, recommending mulberry and plane trees around it. The platform, or "korsi," refers to a raised base on which the building stands. While it is unclear from Heravi's text whether the platform was larger than the building, it may have functioned as a terrace or open space surrounding the building, with mulberry and plane trees planted around it. Although Heravi's descriptions leave some aspects of the garden's design unclear, they are valuable for defining a Chaharbagh model in the early 10th-century AH garden tradition".

Thus, Heravi's Chaharbagh is a formal, enclosed garden with a central pathway featuring a main water channel, two side channels with poplar trees along the wall at specified distances, a central building with a pool at a designated distance, four grass-covered sections (likely garden beds) with specific trees, nine garden beds, and planting recommendations (Fig. 1).

• Chaharbaghs in the Texts

Chaharbagh-e Khiyaban in Bukhara: "[...] Sultan Uzbek's brothers arrived in Bukhara. [...] Khan Iskandar held a regal celebration in Chaharbagh-e Khiyaban [...]"

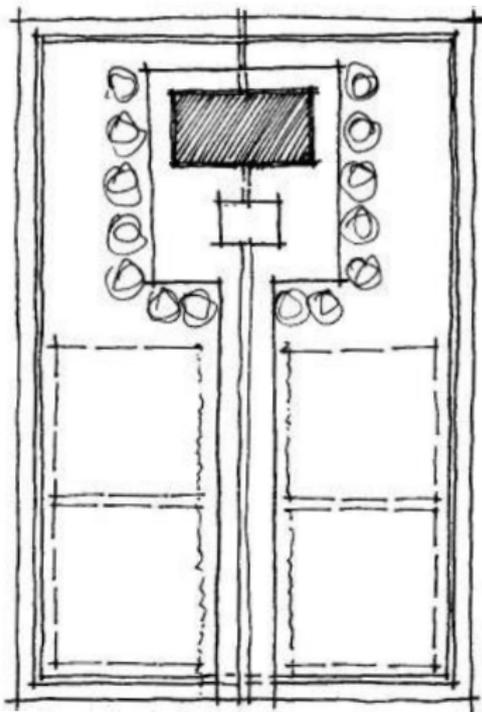


Fig.1. Reconstruction of the Chaharbagh Plan of Abu Nasri Heravi. Source: Jayhani & Rezaei-pour, 2020.

(Qatghan, 2006, 260). This suggests a royal residential function.

Endowed Chaharbagh in Bukhara: "[...] and from the water of this qanat, a Chaharbagh was built, which was also endowed [...]" (Wasefi, 1970, Vol. 1, 276). This indicates the water supply system and the garden's utility due to its endowment.

Chaharbagh in Bukhara: "[...] I, the humble, came with four companions to others who were in the Chaharbagh [...]" (Seyedi, 1976, 136). "[...] During the fifteen days we were in Bukhara, we went to the Chaharbagh every day, where gatherings of joy and camaraderie were held [...]" (ibid., 139). The residence of Seydi Ali Reis, the Ottoman admiral, and his companions in the Chaharbagh likely reflects their political significance. The second reference also indicates a governmental role through celebrations.

Chaharbagh of the Governor of Nishapur: Wasfi (1970) in "Badai al-Waqai" describes this Chaharbagh as enclosed by a relatively high wall, with a porticoed building attached to one side, an elevated upper floor, three rooms, and a window facing the street.²

Chaharbagh in Transoxiana: "[...] He set out with six hundred mounted men, spent the night on the way, and reached the Chaharbagh the next day [...]" (Shami, 1984, 44). "[...] They crossed the Jeyhun; at nightfall, they entered a Chaharbagh and rested [...]" (Mirkhvand, 1891, 17). It is unclear if these refer to the same Chaharbagh, but both served as governmental rest stops.

Four Garden Beds in Herat: "Approximately four jaribs in Herat are under buildings, including four garden beds, stables, many houses, and a courtyard of four dang jaribs [...]" (Hafiz-i Abru, 2001, Vol. 3, 14). The author may refer to four actual garden beds.

Jahan-Ara Garden in Herat: Esfazari (1959, Vol. 2, 316) in "Rawdat al-Jannat fi Awsaf Madinat Herat" describes the construction of the Jahan-Ara Garden, calling it a Chaharbagh: "The royal mind inclined toward building a Chaharbagh [...] and ordered the design of a garden larger than all others and the foundation of a palace grander than all. Its location was set between the east and north of Herat—in a place where the pure souls of Gazargah rest and where His Majesty was born—and skilled architects and diligent builders, guided by auspicious omens, designed a garden spanning 440 jaribs with a flawless palace of lofty roofs at its center. Master craftsmen and skilled builders worked tirelessly from dawn to dusk, supported by state officials and high-ranking administrators who sourced materials and provisions from various regions. Artisans and craftsmen from surrounding cities were summoned, and tasks were distributed among commanders, nobles, and retainers. With boundless effort, each fulfilled their assigned duties, rewarded generously by royal favor. From

the year 873 AH until the writing of these pages in 898 AH, skilled masters and talented artisans have continuously worked in this auspicious garden, employing various crafts, innovations, and marvelous creations, resulting in a garden and palace unmatched in the imagination of any engineer or philosopher [...].

According to this text, Sultan Husayn Bayqara ordered the construction of the Jahan-Ara Garden and selected its unique location. Spanning 440 jaribs, it was designed by skilled architects, with artisans and builders from surrounding regions employed to achieve unparalleled mastery. The building is described as grand, pleasant, and lofty, featuring a portico, cypress trees, a pool, and tulip and rose flowers.³

In "Matla-us-Sadain wa Majma-ul-Bahrain" (Samarqandi, 1993, Vol. 2, 1008), the garden is called a Chaharbagh: "[...] its four sides, adorned like paradise with various fruit trees and other trees such as cypress, pine, willow, plane, and grapevines, and colorful flowers envied by celestial beauties [...]". This indicates green spaces and diverse trees around the building, with regular plots, cypress, pine, willow, and plane trees along the water channel, and fruit trees like peach, apple, pear, and quince.⁴ Khvandamir (2001, Vol. 4, 13) refers to it as Murad, the residence of the sultan after the Zaghan Garden.⁵

Another source (Wasefi, 1970, Vol. 1, 493) states: "[...] this celebration was held in the Jahan-Ara Garden {in the Tarab-Afza Palace} [...]". "[...] About two hundred people gathered at the gate of the Jahan-Ara Chaharbagh, raising cries [...] such that the prince within the harem was alarmed and inquired [...]" (ibid., 421). These passages confirm its royal residential function.

Chaharbagh-e Torkan in Herat: "[...] His [Khwaja Adina's] tomb is near the pool of Chaharbagh-e Torkan, south of the tomb of Qutb al-Aqtab Khwaja {Abu} Abdullah Taqi, may his soul be sanctified [...]" (Wa'iz, 1972, 60). The phrase "pool of Chaharbagh-e Torkan" may suggest the garden's antiquity in the author's time, having lost its original function and become a cemetery.

Chaharbagh of Herat (Quarter): "[...] When the news arrived, people of all kinds—men and women, white and black, old and young—came to the Salar Bridge in Herat's Chaharbagh to welcome [...]" (Wasefi, 1970, Vol. 2, 334). Here, Chaharbagh refers to a district, likely named after a Chaharbagh garden.

Amir Alishir's Chaharbagh in Gazargah, Herat: "[...] {His Excellency} Amir Alishir {reported} the same encounter with Hafez in the Gazargah Chaharbagh to the king [...]" (ibid., Vol. 1, 493). "Shah Mohammad [...] said this and headed to Gazargah, stopping at Amir Alishir's Chaharbagh [...]" (ibid., Vol. 2, 345). "[...] Amir Alishir built a Chaharbagh there, whose fiery tulips would make

the Garden of Eram envious, and whose trees would leave Khawarnaq's cypresses in awe [...]. The narrator says: "[...] His Excellency the Amir opened the chamber door to renew ablution, and a cat entered, jumping onto shelves, breaking the Chinese porcelain there [...]" (ibid., Vol. 1, 477). This suggests Amir Alishir Nava'i resided in the Chaharbagh he built.

Mirza Baysunghar's Chaharbagh in Herat: "[Mirza Baysunghar] ordered: Whenever a merchant arrives here, no one should approach or greet him [...] until I come out of the Chaharbagh gate [...]" (ibid., Vol. 2, 312). This garden was Mirza Baysunghar's residence, possibly the White Garden attributed to him by Esfazari and Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi.

Mirak's Chaharbagh in Parza, Herat: Wasfi (ibid., 408) describes this Chaharbagh as having a deep pool, rows of cypress trees along the water channel, tulip, violet, and narcissus flowers, a porticoed building, and a marble pool in front of the building. It also hosted gatherings of notables.⁶

A Chaharbagh in Herat: "[...] I entered that alley [...] reached a large water channel flowing into a garden with a sluice. I threw myself into the channel and entered the sluice, where spikes made passage impossible. I pressed my chest against a wooden beam, which broke. I got out, held onto the channel's edge [...] saw a ruined building. I entered it [...] saw a building on one side of the garden [...] Come into this house. He brought me inside [...] hid me in the qazanaq (space between the bath's ceiling and roof), under baskets [...] We headed toward the city, and it was evening prayer time when we reached my house [...]" (ibid., 253). This Chaharbagh was watered by a channel and served as a residence, located on Herat's outskirts.

Chaharbagh in Shabarghan: "The Chaharbagh area in Shabarghan, his birthplace, was granted to him [...] A royal decree exempted the said area from taxes and administrative obligations [...]" (Esfazari, 1959, Vol. 1, 112). The term "area" may extend beyond the garden to surrounding lands, and its tax status suggests its importance and productivity.

Chaharbagh in Mashhad: "[...] In eastern Mashhad, he resided in a Chaharbagh built by His Excellency's architect, and the next day, he donned the ihram for visiting Imam Reza (peace be upon him), first bathing for complete purification [...] returned to the Chaharbagh, and on the third day, headed back [...]" (Samarqandi, 1993, Vol. 1, 478). "[...] Mirza Ulugh Beg [...] due to Yar Ali Turkman's rebellion, left Mashhad's Chaharbagh for Herat, the capital [...]" (ibid., Vol. 2, 657). "[...] On the 14th of the month, Mashhad's Chaharbagh became the site of royal tents [...]" (Esfazari, 1959, Vol. 2, 186). "From Mashhad's Chaharbagh, he entered a litter for a tour, returning via

the Eidgah and ascending the throne [...]” (*ibid.*, 188). “[...] Amir Mohammad Wali Beg and his companions fortified themselves in Mashhad’s Chaharbagh and Amir Seyyid’s madrasa, preventing the prince’s dominance [...]” (*Khvandamir*, 2001, Vol. 4, 217). Mashhad’s Chaharbagh was a center for Timurid rulers.

Chaharbagh in Zamin, Uzbekistan: “When the terrible incident of Abdul-Mu’min Khan occurred in Zamin’s Chaharbagh [...]” (*Qatghan*, 2006, 175). This Chaharbagh also served as a governmental base.

Chaharbagh near Mahmudabad, Merv: “[...] Some court confidants led Mohammad Khan Shaybani’s steed toward a nearby Chaharbagh [...] fought and were martyred in that Chaharbagh [...]” (*ibid.*, 111). This Chaharbagh was a governmental stronghold.

Chaharbagh in Hamadan: “Coincidentally, in Hamadan’s Chaharbagh, Amir Haji Hossein was executed in the same manner as his father [...]” (*Samarqandi*, 1993, Vol. 2, 581). This also indicates a governmental role.

Chaharbagh-e Uzun Ahmad in Kazakhstan: “[...] Heading to Kazakhstan, arriving at Nikin, an ancient now-ruined city [...], a group of the sultan’s retinue stayed in Chaharbagh-e Uzun Ahmad, a blessed garden that would make Eram envious [...]” (*Wasefi*, 1970, Vol. 2, 404). The sultan and his entourage resided here, another example of a governmental function.

Chaharbagh in Radkan: “[...] The victorious banner headed to Alang Radkan, staying in Radkan’s Chaharbagh for a few days [...]” (*Samarqandi*, 1993, Vol. 2, 655).

Chaharbagh in Mir Jam: Wasfi describes this Chaharbagh as belonging to a notable, likely the governor of Jam, enclosed with a building in one corner and another with a portico and dome, likely the main building⁷ (*Wasefi*, 1970, Vol. 2, 235).

Chaharbagh-e Shahrukhiyya: “One day in Chaharbagh-e Shahrukhiyya, a group of scholars and poets attended His Majesty [...]” (*ibid.*, 331). “One day in Chaharbagh-e Shahrukhiyya, His Excellency was eating melon with a knife when something occurred to me [...]” (*ibid.*, 370). This Chaharbagh also served a governmental function.

Sultan Mahmud’s Chaharbagh in Ghazni: “[...] Abu al-Qasim [...] arrived near Ghazni; the sultan had a Chaharbagh like the Garden of Eram, adorned like a celestial beauty, where Onsuri, Farrukhi, and Asjadi were engaged in merriment [...]” (*Wasefi*, 1970, Vol. 1, 351). This Chaharbagh, owned by Sultan Mahmud, hosted gatherings of poets.

Ferdowsi’s Chaharbaghs: “[...] The governor of Tus oppressed {Ferdowsi} [...] They advised him to sell his estates and leave his homeland for trade, but he refused [...]” (*ibid.*, Vol. 1, 351). In one manuscript, instead of “estates,” the phrase “yeryurt gardens and Chaharbaghs” is used. “Yer” (Turkish for place or land) and “yurt”

(residence or camp) suggest a residential garden. This may indicate Ferdowsi’s residence included a garden, or it reflects the author’s perception of Ferdowsi’s stature, implying he lived in a garden.

Chaharbagh-e Kikavus in Tashkent: “One day in Chaharbagh-e Kikavus, a group of scholars, notables, and poets of Tashkent gathered [...]” (*ibid.*, Vol. 2, 179). Wasfi describes it as having pools with cypress and juniper trees, grass along the water channel, narcissus, violet, lily, iris, and lotus flowers, and fruit trees like apple, pomegranate, orange, citron, and fig.⁸

Sultan Ibrahim Mirza’s Chaharbagh in Balkh: “[...] Badi’ al-Zaman Mirza [...] upon arriving at the outskirts of Balkh, resided in Sultan Ibrahim Mirza’s Chaharbagh [...]” (*Khvandamir*, 2001, Vol. 4, 294). “That night, he hastened to Sultan Ibrahim Mirza’s Chaharbagh [...]” (*ibid.*, 295). The first reference indicates its location on the city’s outskirts, the second its governmental role.

Amir Mazid Arghun’s Chaharbagh in Balkh: “[...] The khan traveled to Balkh and resided in Amir Mazid Arghun’s Chaharbagh on the city’s outskirts [...] wintering there [...]” (*ibid.*, 190). This Chaharbagh was a seasonal royal residence.

Chaharbagh on Baghdad’s Outskirts: “[...] Laleh Bey arrived at Baghdad’s Chaharbagh on Friday [...]” (*ibid.*, 493). Located on Baghdad’s outskirts, its building likely differed from Iranian Chaharbaghs due to geographical differences.

Chaharbagh in Talqan: “[...] We arrived in Talqan and met Sultan Suleiman Shah and his son Ibrahim Mirza [...] visited him in the Chaharbagh [...]” (*Seyedi*, 1976, 126). “We saw the king’s Chaharbagh and reached a garden named Two Waters built by His Majesty [...]” (*ibid.*, 129). This Chaharbagh was clearly a royal residence.

Chaharbaghs in Kabul: “Kabul is a beautiful city, surrounded by snow-covered mountains with a mighty river flowing through it. It has Chaharbaghs. In every corner, gardens hosted joyous gatherings, with charming musicians and singers holding assemblies of delight [...]” (*ibid.*, 124). This suggests multiple Chaharbaghs in Kabul, possibly referring to festive gardens.

Mythical Chaharbagh in Kabul: “[...] Kabul Shah, per his agreement with Shaghad, ordered wells dug on the way to a Chaharbagh in that region [...]” (*Khvandamir*, 2001, Vol. 1, 205). This may imply Rostam’s intent to visit the Chaharbagh.

Chaharbagh in Kashgar: “[...] Headed to Kashgar, passed through [...] attacked the Chaharbagh, and reached Uch [...]” (*Thattavi*, 2003, Vol. 7, 490).

Humayun’s Chaharbagh in Delhi: “[...] They said the king was going to the Chaharbagh and prepared horses [...]” (*Seyedi*, 1976, 126). This indicates a Chaharbagh as Humayun’s residence.

Shahrukh's Chaharbagh in Samarkand: "[...] Sent to Samarkand [...] Arghunshah and Khwaja Yusuf spent the night in Mirza Shahrukh's Chaharbagh near the gate [...]" (Khvandamir, 2001, Vol. 3, 539). This explicitly refers to a royal residence.

Khosrow Shah's Chaharbagh in Kunduz: "[...] Resided in Khosrow Shah's Chaharbagh outside Kunduz [...]" (ibid., Vol. 4, 193). This indicates both a residential function and its location outside the city.

Chaharbagh in Maimana: "[...] Maimana's Chaharbagh resounded with the fanfare of His Majesty's arrival [...]" (ibid., 146). This was a royal rest stop.

Hafez Bey's Chaharbagh in Andijan: "[...] Traveled from Andijan, Hafez Bey's Chaharbagh became a paradise rivaling Eram [...]" (ibid., 265). This was also a royal residence.

Discussion and Analysis

The elements described in the texts and those mentioned by Heravi are compared in Table 1.

This comparison reveals that the diverse Chaharbaghs of the Timurid era differ from Heravi's model in several aspects. Elements mentioned by Heravi but absent in the texts may have been deemed less significant by their authors, who often aimed to praise the Chaharbaghs, focusing on noteworthy features. Some authors described events, and omitting certain garden elements is understandable in that context. Heravi likely aimed to present an idealized Chaharbagh model rather than a fixed, immutable phenomenon. Thus, Chaharbaghs were flexible in response to geographical, functional, and even aesthetic preferences, making differences or contradictions between the sources and Heravi's model natural.

Conclusion

By examining Persian texts from the 9th and 10th centuries AH and comparing their extracted features with Heravi's descriptions, no definitive Chaharbagh model can be identified for this period. Some sources

Table 1. Comparison of the elements of the identified Chaharbaghs with the Chaharbagh of Abu Nasri Heravi. Source: Authors.

	Element	Sources	Heravi
1	Overall Geometry	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
2	Garden Location	Often on the city outskirts	Not mentioned
3	Wall	Mentioned	Mentioned
4	Building	Mentioned	Mentioned
5	Building Placement	In one case, attached to the garden wall	Not mentioned
6	Number of Buildings	Some cases have at least two Buildings	Only the main Building
7	Building Components	Portico, upper floor, dome	Not mentioned
8	Main Water Channel	Mentioned	Mentioned
9	Pool	Mentioned	Mentioned
10	Channels by the Wall	Not mentioned	Mentioned
11	Trees by the Building	Not mentioned	Mulberry, plane
12	Trees by the Pool	Cypress, juniper	Not mentioned
13	Trees by the Channel	Cypress, willow	Mentioned
14	Plants by the Channel	Grass	Mentioned
15	Distances Between Elements	Not mentioned	20 zira' from pool to building, 3 zira' pathway width, 3 zira' from pathway to wall
16	Number of Grass-covered sections	Not mentioned	Four grass-covered sections: quince, peach, nectarine, pear
17	Number of Garden Beds	Not mentioned	Nine garden beds
18	Types of Trees	Cypress, juniper, willow, tabarkhun, apple, pomegranate, orange, citron, fig, pine, grapevine, peach	Mulberry, plane, poplar
19	Types of Plants	Grass, tulip, rose, narcissus, violet, lily, iris, lotus	Rosebush
20	Material	Marble for pool	Not mentioned
21	Function	Mostly royal and governmental, some personal	Not mentioned
22	Revenue and Taxes	Mentioned	Not mentioned

mention cypress trees along water channels, aligning with Heravi, while others note multiple buildings or building components absent in Heravi's account. Some features, such as types of flowers or trees, contradict Heravi's descriptions. The lack of complete alignment with Abu Nasri Heravi's model suggests the flexibility of Chaharbaghs in meeting local and governmental needs. Assuming Heravi described an idealized Chaharbagh explains these discrepancies. The influence of Heravi's geographical context on his ideal model should not be overlooked. Descriptions of flowers and trees, as in Herat's Jahan-Ara, became more prominent in the 9th century AH. No evidence was found for a specific, particularly quadripartite, external geometry. Several Chaharbaghs were located on the city outskirts, possibly due to limited urban land or better access to

water sources. The most frequent elements in the texts are governmental functions, pools, and fruit trees, indicating their role in power and aesthetic expression. Many Chaharbaghs served residential-governmental purposes, while some had cultural significance, such as poets' gatherings in Samarkand. Mythological ties, like Kabul's Chaharbagh, and religious roles, like Mashhad's, highlight their importance in popular culture. As the term "Chaharbagh" later acquired a new meaning (e.g., Chaharbagh Street in Isfahan), understanding its essence requires attention to the cultural context of Greater Khorasan.

Declaration of No Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest in conducting this research.

Endnotes

1. In direct quotations, {} indicates corrections made by the original author, and [] indicates corrections made by the researchers in the text.

2. "We headed toward the Chahar Bagh and reached the base of its wall. {Amir Qavam al-Din Ja'far} placed his foot on my shoulder, climbed up the wall, and pulled me up after him. Both of us entered the garden by scaling the wall. When we approached the building [...], they led me to an upper chamber—three stories high, so tall that even the tops of the cypress and poplar trees couldn't reach the edge of its roof. They threw me into that room and locked the door. A group of people slept outside on the veranda [...]. I wandered around the room like a madman, running my hands along the walls. I discovered that it had four doors—three facing the Chahar Bagh and one toward the alley. I opened the door facing the alley; behind it was a window. I had a European knife and used it to pry the window open. But its height was such that I couldn't throw myself down from it. In the lower part of the room, there was a silk rug [...]" (Wasefi, 1970, Vol. 2, 270).

3. "Salman:

*The king's palace, in every way, surpasses the highest paradise;
There is no debate on this matter for it is that very paradise.*

This is a masterful verse firm, delightful, elegant, and lofty

In his poem, he has pledged the supreme heaven as its guarantee. The surroundings and environs of that place are adorned with life-giving gardens and sky-reaching buildings, its landscapes reminiscent of Khurna'q and Sadir, dazzling with vitality and encircled by the heavens. The elevated portico of its palace has veiled the roof of Saturn, and the upright cypress trees stand as pillars holding up the canopy of the skies. The delicacy of its enclosed pools has spilled the pride of the celestial Nile upon the earth in shame, and the amber-scented breeze has scattered musk of Khata and ambergris of Sara across the dusty carpet. The freshness of its crimson tulips has etched the burn of longing upon the heart of paradise's poppies, and the charm of its cheerful blossoms has cast flames of embarrassment into the gardens of Ridwan. From the brilliance of its gilded pools, the azure sky flutters like a fish stranded on dry land, and from envy of its melodious birds, the peacocks of the heavenly realm writhe like serpents. Out of jealousy for the purity of its Salsabil-like streams, the fountain of life has sunk into the dark earth, and from yearning for its emerald displays, the green-clad heavens have plunged into madness" (Esfazari, 1959, Vol. 2, 316).

4. *The meadows now mirror the gardens of paradise,
And the triumphant king has attained all he desired.*

*With cypress, pine, willow, and plane trees,
Every stream is adorned on all sides.*

*The colorful fruit-bearing trees are beyond count,
More abundant than imagination can grasp.*

*From peaches, apples, pears, and quinces—
No fruit in the world can rival their delight.*

*If the tongue were to describe them in full,
It would water at the thought of juicy peaches.*

*When I yearn for apples and pears in longing,
I bite my own lips in wistful desire.*

*The quince—what a marvel of color and scent:
One hue for the lover, one fragrance for the beloved.*

*The rose bears the likeness of a beloved's face,
From which soul and comfort flow into the heart.*

*The grapevine is a wondrous sugar-laced branch,
Revealing the very essence of the water of life.*

*Wine is the water of life, and Khidr the cupbearer—
By this water, Khidr remains ever-living.*

*So intoxicated and enraptured is the pen by wine,
It places its foot where its head should be*

(Samarqandi, 1993, Vol. 2, 1008)

5. "[...]By royal command, the construction of the Garden of Morad was undertaken, which after some time came to be known

as the Garden of Jahanara. Skilled architects and expert engineers designed a vast chaharbagh (four-part garden) spanning 440 jarib (a traditional unit of land), along with a lofty palace of utmost elegance and beauty. Master builders and capable workers began the task, and in matters of refinement, delicacy, dignity, and cleanliness, they showed the highest dedication and care. In a short time, the Garden of Jahanara became worthy of imperial presence, and the world-conquering sovereign relocated from the Garden of Crows to this new paradise. For the rest of his life, he devoted himself to the adornment and restoration of this auspicious and noble garden. As a result, its spacious atmosphere bloomed like the fields of paradise, filled with flowers and sweet herbs, and its soul-refreshing air—like the breeze of the month of Ordibehesht—brought joy to sorrowful hearts. The lushness of its sacred gardens made the green meadows of the sky blush with shame, and the purity of its sweet waters caused the Fountain of Life itself to sweat with embarrassment. Verse:

A gentle and delightful climate,

A blessed dwelling, a fortunate place.

Trees stood tall like idols,

Each one outshining the other in beauty.

The cypress saplings, as if informed by paradise,

Inscribed the line "tūbā lahum" on every leaf.

The majestic cornices of its architecture mocked the grandeur of Khurna'q and Sadir, And the empty palaces of the seven-domed heavens paled in comparison. Couplet:

Among its constructions, one sees depicted

The dome of the nine heavens and the palace of Sadir"

(Khvandamir, 2001, Vol. 4, 137).

6. "[...]The gathering was arranged in the village of Parzah, half a farsakh from Herat, where Khwaja had built a Chaharbagh. It was such a garden that the paradise of Iram would place a finger of astonishment upon its lips in awe of its beauty and delight, and the architect's imagination stood bewildered by its delicacy, strangeness, and craftsmanship. Within it stood a pavilion like a crystal sphere, outshining the glory of Khornak and Sadir, modeled after the exalted palace of Mashid, with the sky placing its lofty foot upon the foundations of its celestial towers. Time had seen no equal to it except in the mirror-like depths of water, and the heavens could find no likeness but in the eyes of the cross-eyed.

A pool so deep lay in the garden's heart,

Like the soul of the wise and the spirit of the eloquent.

It was set like the sea and the Kawthar divine—

Deep as the ocean, pure as the sacred spring.

Silver-faced fish swam within its flow,

Like crescent moons drifting through the rounded sky

Along each stream stood cypress trees, straight as the imagined form of a beloved seen by the eyes of lovers beside the brook. At every flowerbed, nightingales lamented like heartsick souls mourning the absence of their rose-limbed companions. In the lap of wild tulips, the green grass sprouted like the alluring script of beautiful ones. Basil grew in the shade of chaste willows, rising like sweet sugarcane. Violets lay scattered across the lawn like the disheveled locks of Herati beauties, each strand flowing in a different direction, and narcissus flowers, like intoxicated eyes, gazed from the edge of the stream. Nimble and agile attendants stood before the iwan of this sky-ranked building, which outshone the celestial canopy. They raised brocaded awnings and gold-embroidered tents that mirrored the verse: 'He merges night into day', like heavenly domes. They spread foreign camphor-patterned carpets and seven-colored, illustrated curtains across the ground. [...] Before the iwan, a marble basin was placed that rivaled the spring of Salsabil and shamed the pool of Kawthar. It was filled with sugar syrup—reportedly made from eight hundred sugar loaves. Master confectioners arranged countless syrups, confections, fruit preserves, and delicacies beyond enumeration. Sultan Husayn Mirza's head cook, Abu al-Malih, famed for his

culinary skill, prepared forty different dishes for the feast—none of which anyone could name (Wasefi, 1970, Vol. 1, 403). [...] In short, on the morning of Thursday, the first of Jumada al-Akhir in the year 897 AH, Amir Ali-Shir, along with the great nobles, respected dignitaries, elites and commoners, headed toward {Mirak}'s chaharbagh [...] When everyone had taken their place, Amir Ali-Shir asked, 'Where is the esteemed Mawlana Abd al-Wasi?' He is not present in this gathering [...] A group was sent to find Mawlana and bring him to the chaharbagh. As they entered the garden's alleys, news arrived that Mawlana had been found and was on his way. Mirak instructed: 'Let no one offend or disturb him, for without his delight, none shall be pleased.' Mirak had a footman named Shir [...] He was told: 'When Mawlana steps into the threshold of the gathering and enters the chaharbagh [...]' (ibid., 408).

7. "[...] In short, the servant led us into the Chaharbagh and took us to his house in a corner of the garden. He lit a candle and locked the door behind us. [...] He said, 'Look at this door—at a single blow, I could scatter each of its planks across the world and fling every piece to a different place; [...] He told me, 'Do not separate from me,' and headed toward the gate of the Chaharbagh, with me following behind. Suddenly, a dark figure appeared before us. Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad turned back, {intending to return to the house}, but in the darkness we lost our way and wandered down another path. An iwan appeared, with a large dome above its entrance. We stood inside the iwan and saw that the dark figure was approaching it. Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad said, 'I've found a tunnel like a tent,' and curled himself up, hiding in a corner of the iwan. I, bewildered, ran in every direction seeking refuge. By chance, a thin-bread oven had been placed in the corner of the iwan; I threw myself inside it and made it my shelter. Suddenly, a person emerged onto the carpet of the iwan and approached the door of the dome [...] a voice came from within the dome [...] while they were speaking, a light appeared from the garden gate, and its rays fell upon the corner of the iwan. In short, we threw ourselves over the garden wall and fled" (ibid., Vol. 2, 235).

8. "[...]Kaykāvus's Chaharbagh is such that even Paradise bears a wound in its heart from envy. Its serenity surpasses the loyalty of beloveds, and its air is more beguiling than the coquetties of charmers. The pool, brimming with water, reflects pure essence, and its surface—like a mirror—captures the forms of birds and trees, resembling a pictorial scripture. The eloquent nightingale, perched upon the pulpits of its trees, interprets [...], the perceptive narcissus gazes around its streams [...] and the fruits proclaim the verse: "In both are fruits, and date-palms, and pomegranates" (Quran), The flowers of this paradise-like garden, overcome with laughter, fall backward in mirth, purging bile. The buds of its meadow, like shy brides, suppress their giggles and bury their heads in their collars. Perhaps they had heard the breeze's description of the heavenly garden, or sipped saffron-infused delight from the silver tray of the narcissus's violet eyes, and so they bloomed with joy. The blood-red tabarkhūn tree boiled with crimson fervor,

and the cloud-phlebotomist, with lightning's lancet, opened its veins at the joints. The willow tree, in its effort to cure jaundice, cast a hundred thousand fish-like reflections of its leaves into the flowing water. It was as if spring's master architect had scattered violet-colored ash along the garden's edges to sketch a wondrous building, or the bridal chamberlain had unfurled blue (lambskin) cloaks to air them in the breeze. Perhaps the lily buds had spoken of the garden of Iram before the flowers of this meadow, and the rosebuds, stirred by the breeze, had struck their mouths shut like indigo-colored blossoms. Everywhere, a thousand camphor candles bloomed from iris buds, and every blue petal resembled a lotus flower laid down. The fresh grass along the stream resembled the delicate lip-line of rosy-cheeked beloveds. The cypress and arar trees around the pools of this soul-nourishing paradise stood like the graceful forms of houris beside the Kawthar pool. Whoever stepped through the gate of this Eden-like garden would hear the heavenly herald proclaim: "This is the Garden of Eden—enter it to dwell forever." Its fruit-bearing trees, heavy with abundance, bent like aged elders, and like the celestial tree, their skirts touched the earth from every side. Its flawless apples, recalling the dimples and silver chins of beloveds, offered color and fragrance that revived the spirits of the ailing.

*I likened the apple's hue to my beloved's chin
It blushed red and lit up the garden with its glow
The apple is like a radiant lamp on the tree
A lamp seen in daylight atop a branch.*

Its pomegranate tree, with fiery leaves and fruit, recalled the verdant flame of Khalil's miracle, and like the tree of the sacred valley, bore signs of divine fire, echoing the verse: "He brings forth fire from the green tree."

It was as if the treasurer of fate had wrapped ruby pomegranate jewels in silk paper and stored them in Yemeni agate boxes as a sacred trust—or the goldsmith of time had cast gems into the furnace to test their essence.

Ibn Yamin composed a riddle about the pomegranate that was exquisitely apt [...], Its juicy peaches were full of allure [...], Its Chinese pears, sweet as sugar syrup, seemed like nectar bottled in tin flasks by the confectioner of time—or like flasks of the water of life brought by Khidr from the darkness of nonexistence. Or perhaps the divine confectioner had made miniature candy flowers for spring's children, wrapped them in Baghdad silk, and hung them from the branches like a perfumer's wares. Its quinces, better than the fruits of paradise, with soul-refreshing scent, strengthened the hearts of the sorrow-stricken. They seemed like ascetic mystics, pale from austerity, or patients in the infirmary, their faces veiled in the dust of exile. Its golden oranges outshone the delicacies of paradise; even the citron of Eden salivated at their memory, drinking the waters of longing. Strangely, though its color was always yellow like those with bilious temperaments, it cured jaundice from within. Its peerless figs, with poppy seeds nurtured in sugar syrup, were laid upon leaves and offered to the garden's guests—or like candy-coated pills of millet, placed upon the palm of sincerity for companions of the garden" (ibid., Vol. 1, 298).

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HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Akhlaghi Sharif, M. J., & Jeyhani, H. (2025). A comparative study of Timurid Chaharbaghs' features in Persian texts of the 9th and 10th centuries AH with Abu Nasr Heravi's model. *MANZAR, The Scientific Journal of Landscape*, 17(72), 6-15.

DOI: [10.22034/manzar.2025.527011.2356](https://doi.org/10.22034/manzar.2025.527011.2356)

URL: https://www.manzar-sj.com/article_227731.html?lang=en

