

Investigating Aesthetics Manifestations in Persian Gardens and their Comparison with Western Gardens

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Abstract

Beauty is an eternal attraction and art can be considered as the bridge between beauty and humans. Garden building art is one of the oldest Iranian art and it has been also mentioned in writings of the Greeks, Torah, etc. In the context of Iranian art and culture, garden is a mirror that indicates the people's creative imagination and capability. Ideal garden, a piece of earth which is positioned an example of heaven under our feet with all its farness. This article investigates the effects of aesthetics in the Persian Gardens and compares it with Gardens of three Western countries including Britain, France and Italy. The research methodology of this study is descriptive - analytical. The results show that while aesthetic manifestations in Persian Gardens are overlapping with each other, influences from the monotheistic worldview and Iranian traditional culture have created unique and specific works throughout the history.

Keywords: Aesthetics, Persian Gardens, Western Garden

Introduction

Beautiful is something that in addition to coordinating and exciting, should be acceptable for physical and mental sensitivity and for high aspirations of human. A union is obtained from the beauty between opposite concepts, such as substance and nature, outside and inside, visible and invisible, sensible and reasonable, finite and infinite, that has realized and created a new impact. At the same time, beauty meets the amenities, profitability and physical and mental satisfy (Kaviyani, 2001).

Nature is the first inspiration and source that human can achieve the "beautiful" and "beauty" in dealing with it. Therefore, "beautiful" has mind-independent existence which stimulates our aesthetic affection (Kaviyani, 2001).

Garden is one of human's works which plays role as identity factor and visual representation of the beliefs of community. One of the inevitable consequences of garden making is beautiful creation, according to the close relationship of Persian gardens and beauty, it is important to identify its governing principles (Naghi Zade, 2013).

On the other hand, creating green space is pleasant in the garden and this is because of the innate motivation, interest and attraction to the flowers and plants. Garden building in all over the world is influenced by aboriginal culture and climate conditions which is developed in line with various targets. Therefore, gardens in different countries have different characteristics, but flourishing and beautiful nature is shared between them. With regard to the close relationship of the Persian Garden and beauty, identifying principles governing the beauty of the Persian gardens and its foundations, investigating the magnificent beauty of these gardens and comparing it with Western gardens is the purpose of this study.

Beauty

Beauty and relevant topics such as "the significance of beauty", "beautiful aspects", "beauty and the related concepts", "beauty and synonymous concepts," "beauty and similar concepts", "levels of beauty", "beauty paradox", "origins and characteristics of beauty in literature", "fundamental differences of beauty in the past and in contemporary era" and " the definition and recognition criteria of beauty "have been relatively discussed in detail elsewhere (Naghi Zade, 2002).

Background of Aesthetics

History of aesthetic discourse is as old as the history of the miracle holy book. The first aesthetic theory orientation refers to the order of the holy book that was introduced by Ibrahim Ebne Sayar known to the Nezam (224 AD). He knew the West's oratory issue and he was literati of his era and knew how Arab has domination in poetry and prose. This question that how Arab could not bring something like the holy book engaged Nezam, he proposed the theory of Sarfe miracle to indicate that the holy book in despite of being multiplicity and documentary, has special order and miracle and has given a special beauty to this book which is non-resistance.

Jahez (225 AD), his student also followed his master's work, although, he did not accept his master's view about Sarfe, he wrote the book of Nazmol Ghoran to remind that the prominence and characteristics of the holy book is not because of the external factor like Sarfe and this book is unique (Zarkeshi, 1997).

In a stage after proposing this theory, another scientist, Abo Soleyman Hamd Ene Muhammad Khatabi Basti (388 AD), with an emphasis on rhetoric of holy book, knew the centrality of sweetness and gravity of holy book in its words and finally its effect on human's soul reveals its miracle.

Aesthetics

Aesthetics literally means "to recognize the beauty that is a field of psychology which aims to introduce the beauty and art and discuss about a set of inner feelings and beauty and ugliness, joke, etc. Elmol-Jamal" (Dehkhoda,1998). In the past, aesthetics was a branch of the philosophy and in the contemporary era it is a blend of philosophy, psychology and sociology of art so, pays attention to the principles of human sensitivity to different forms of art and its relation to other issues of culture (philosophy, morality, religion, science and industry) and tries to discover these communications. The term aesthetics was emerged during the eighteenth century (1750-58) by the German philosopher, "Baumgarten, Vienna" from Greek origin of Aisthetikos which means "sensory perception" and entered into other European languages. "Asttekiz means the theory of liberal art, religion, knowledge of subordinate, art of beautiful thinking, art of deductive reason, and the knowledge of tangible science" (Dehkhoda, 1998). Topics related to perception and its ranks among Muslim mystics and sages have a long history. Muslim scholars consider the perception ranks of beauty appropriate to the ranks of existence, the beauty of the sensible world which are the lowest order of nature is as the lowest level of understanding rank (sense).

By observing and understanding of this beauty, human should realize higher levels of beauty like the the creator of beauty. In fact, if the eyes, ears, skin and other senses understand the apparent beauty, insight and intuition and revelation and knowledge by education and practice should understand the higher level of beauty and preception and these orders are understandable by eyes of the heart. Enjoying from beautiful things (by sages theosophist) is to the amount of the relation that has with the absolute beauty and in other words, the beauty of everythings is to the extent that to be able to express the absolute beauty (Naghizadeh, 2003).

Beauty from the prespective of Islamic philosophers

Islamic philosophers have proposed the nature of beauty in their discussions about holy person and his attributes, issues related to the creation and inspired by Neoplatonic sources (Black, 2005).

Farabi in the utopia has considered the beauty theory and believes that: "beauty in everything has two ontological aspects: each creature, whatever to be closer to its perfection, become more beautiful, and thus argues that its existence that is the most excellent, is more beautiful. The beauty of Allah is eternal and because it is in its nature not lateral, unlbiike the beauty of creature.

Ibn Sina's in "Treatise on Fi Al Eshgh" talk about the beauty. He allocates four principles to loving beauty. In the fourth principle, he defines beauty as the theme of love for both "rational soul" and " animal spirit ": beauty is in order, combination and symmetry. In the animal spirit, loving beauty is only natural and arises from simple pleasure of sensible understanding, but in the rational soul, the love of beauty is more reflection and ultimately is based on the close understanding of the object with favorite subject to holy person namely, the first love.

He believes that the aesthetics sense is internal for each sanity that this sense has tendency to perceive beauty. He says that tangible beauty is valuable for rational beings insofar that has subjugated the animal aspects and could prevail perception over emotion (Fahimifar, 2009).

Table 1- Aesthetics comments in the West (the authors)

Plato knew beauty as qualities, symmetry and size and interpreted it in contrary to the art because art is an imitation of nature and believed that one can not reach to the beauty by imitation (art).
Aristotle, according to the notes of Plato in the poetics, consider beauty as the tragedy derived from melody and weight. In his opinion, epic is the greatest form that can accommodate a beautiful soul.
Socrates was looking for spirit beauty and knew it from individualities of pious people. Therefore, beauty is achieved through active human activity.
St. Thomas Aquinas considers three conditions for beauty, truth or perfection, proper fit or coordination, brightness or clarity.
Kant distinguished two types of beauty from each other. Free and dependent beauty, dependent beauty implies a kind of inner purpose and from this aspect is useful for purpose. Judgment of taste is pure when it is resulted from pious beauty.
According to Hegel, beauty and truth are not in conflict with each other, yet are not limited to the imitation of nature

Garden in the Encyclopedia






The word "garden" is used in various combinations, including innovative garden means paradise, Siavoshiyan and Shahriar garden are the name of two Nova in the Iranian music, and sweet garden which is Alhane Barbodi and some cultures have been considered it as the fourth tone, but in the Khosrow and Shirin of Nezami it is mentioned as the thirty-first tone (Moein, 1992).



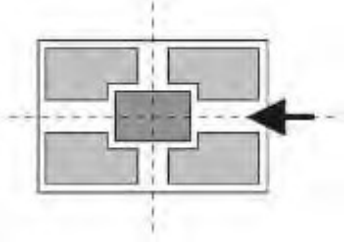

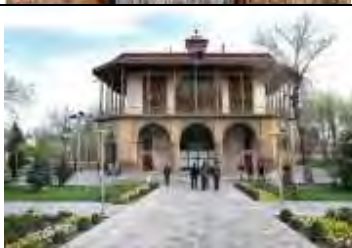
Definition of Persian Garden

Persian Garden is a phenomenon of cultural, historic and skeleton in Iran and usually is in the form of confined area in which the plant, water and building are combined together in the specific architecture system and creates a favorable, safe, easy environment for human.

Aesthetic manifestations in the Persian Garden

Table 2. Aesthetic manifestations in the Persian Garden



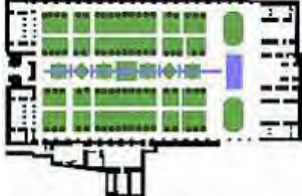
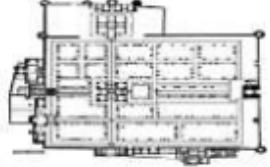

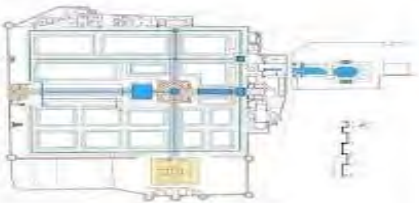
Properties	Aesthetic manifestations	Image
Symbolic language is created by taking advantage of the natural elements that points to the knowledge and truths and spiritual beauty. Considering that there is no doubt in encrypted-oriented of mystics. As a result, there is no ambiguity in their utilization from nature and natural elements as symbols and mysteries.	High symbolic and spiritual meanings	
Since ancient times, Iranians have had specific and high ethical characteristics, and these characters have had significant impact on the adjustment of relation with the nature and their living method. Self-esteem, contentment, coexistence with nature, hard working, lack of waste, avoidance of idleness and cancellation, being free from greed have been Iranian traits that all these features affected the works and ways of life and human communication and contact with nature.	Inductance of moral values	
There are three main kingdoms for relaxation: the first relates to the field of psychology and, indeed, mental, emotional and intellectual relaxation are intended. Other refers to the physical comfort or welfare which is concerned with the human physiology. Comfort conditions are regulated to the temperature, humidity, light, shadow, light intensity and air flow, the third territory is the mental relaxation and calm which is provided by noticing, stylized rigidity of human and man's relationship with the divine revelations.	Soothing	
The relation and connection of human with Iranian gardens is as historical works and spaces, a sense of connection with the past and link with the future in the human. In addition to the need of and desire of people to communicate with his past and in other words, responding to human need "having root" gives significance to the nature and proposed comments about it, by contacting with his past will feel beautiful.	connection with the history	
Persian gardens are described as simple. Simplicity does not mean, easy to understand, meaninglessness or univocal. Understanding the unique similarity of gardens to each other that after familiarity with a few of them, with establishing the certain perception in the human mind, and the perception of other Iranian gardens is possible easily. Another reason for the appearance of this simplicity refers to the specific and few application of these gardens and those who enter	Simplicity	

<p>into the garden would have been allowed to appreciate the garden, and in fact, the garden is visible to them.</p>		
<p>In the Persian garden, planting methods caused gardens have no serious differences with pristine nature in terms of beauty and simplicity, being verse and noting , and their beauty to be synonymous with the natural beauty and not just the beauty of art. Additionally, some plants, such as cypress, olive, mulberry, sycamore, rose, jasmine, etc. among the Iranian Mahan have their own high value, that their presence constituting a beautiful garden.</p>	<p>Manifestations of plants</p>	
<p>Generally, narrow alleys of gardens had separated Iranians gardens and often waterways flow from the middle or the edge of them and enclosure walls or short hedges around the gardens had shaped their range. Alleys with waterways in their middle (like the blood vessels which are the cause of life) show the unity of the city.</p>	<p>Alleys of Iranian gardens</p>	
<p>Undoubtedly, the geometry form of Persian Garden is one of the most significant features of it. This particular form of geometry, although has its roots in ancient history of Iran, other reasons can be cited for its formation. Perhaps, the main reason refers to the common irrigation system in Iran that is done through waterways networks and flooding. The necessity of this irrigation system is to create a checkerboard network and observing issues related to the slope of the land makes easier the creation of this system. Other reasons can be stated for the particular geometry of the Persian Garden, that refers to the morale, discipline and simplicity of the Iranians life that have been predominated on all the works of Iranian Muslims.</p>	<p>Particular geometry of Persian Garden</p>	
<p>Symmetry, balance, coordination, door and gateway and diversity of perfectionism</p>	<p>Facial features of garden</p>	
<p>Persian Gardens have architectural elements in itself and around the garden that in addition to observing the principles of Iranian architecture, have distinctions with it. The most obvious distinction of these works refers to their extraversion that opens to the nature. Maybe it is better to use the interpretation of inside and outside unity instead of the word extraversion.</p>	<p>The beauty of architectural elements</p>	

According to the Islamic encyclopedia, Garden means "often confined and human-made area with taking advantage of the flowers, plants and trees and water and special structures that are based on geometric rules and beliefs" (Chegini, 2002).

Investigating the aesthetic manifestations in Persian Gardens

Table 3. Investigating the aesthetic manifestations in a number of Persian Gardens

Characteristics	The name of garden	Site Plan
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Specific system 2. Simple and harmonious composition 3. The straight and perpendicular to each other lines 4. Having four total section 5. linking different parts of the garden by the water axis 	Eram Garden of Shiraz	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having four streets 2. Having four pools surrounding 3. Having an octagonal building in the middle 4. Having a regular and simple geometry 5. Having the symmetry and balance 	Garden of Jahan Nama	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having regular and symmetric geometry 2. Having palm and orange trees. 3. Dividing garden into two parts by a longitudinal axis of the water. 	Narenjestan Ghavam	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having four defensive towers in four directions 2. Dividing garden into two parts by a longitudinal axis of the water. 3. Having symmetry and balance 	Arg of Karim Khan Zand	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The passage of the water from the edge of the green space 2. Regular planting cypress, pine and sycamore trees 3. Placing the building in the middle of the garden 	Golshan Garden	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The regular rotation of water in the garden Fin Kashan 2. Having regular and simple geometry 	Fin Kashan Garden	

Evaluating garden making style in Western countries

French gardens feature (Figure 1 and 2)

- The creation of regular geometric shapes, symmetric with straight lines which leading to the formation of perspective with point escaping at infinity
- Giving order to the chaotic nature and its shaping in regular form and smooth lines
- Putting axes as the basis in the design
- Creating great water channels in gardens that allow rafting
- Cutting nature to the vast and endless views
- Using star forms that was created by collision of different paths in a point
Using water stairs
- Paying attention to the myths and legends, and using them in gardens
- Garden as a symbol of power and endless
- Pieces of green (trees and shrubs) are formed as the grass walls and door. The idea of living walls
- The importance of exotic plants
- Using multiple terraces (Hashemi, 2010).

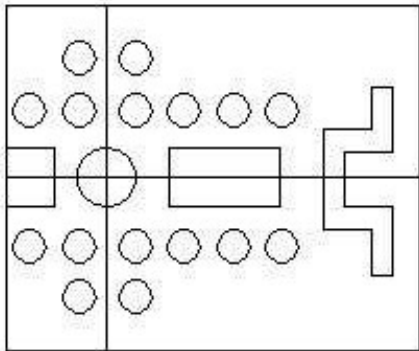


Figure 1. The relationship between nature and building in France



Figure 2. Versailles Garden in France

Features of UK garden (Figure 3 and 4)

The influence of the thinking of Romantic German and French philosophers and poets in garden shaping

The inspiration from landscape painting of French painters

The existence of passion, feeling, personal emotions and analysis-oriented

Reflecting the exciting, emotional and mythical and imaginary issues

Considering the medieval garden making

Rejecting all absolute values

Paying attention to the rural beauty and pristine nature

Constructing the landscape gardens.

The combination of morphology land, water, trees and architecture in garden building

Reconciliation between science and nature (Hashemi, 2010).



Figure 3: Hyde Park in London

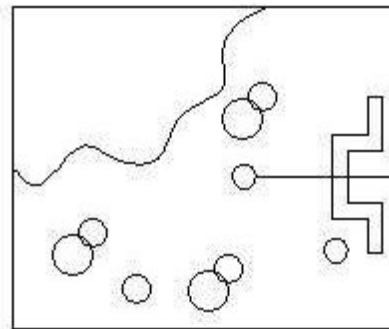


Figure 4: The relationship between nature and building in the UK

Features of Italian gardens (Fig. 5 and 6)

- The formation of "villa-garden-view" with regard to the concept of beautiful landscape
- Using terraces, stairs, fountain, sculptures and enjoying the Art-Topiaria technique
- Unity of space through perspective by determining a central point escaping
- Having regular and rational and logical system
- Geometric shape of gardens, governance on nature and its control through logic
- Encountering human with nature and the relationship with nature
- The entrance of using diagonal movements in gardens
- Passages covered with plants
- Using the Belvedere or pergola in the the garden (Hashemi, 2010).



Figure 5: Borgheys Villa Garden



Figure 6: Taranto Villa

The comparison of aesthetics manifestations in Western and Persian Gardens

Designing Iranian garden makes it different from the Western Garden. Iranian garden has always been designed at odds with the desert and love for Persian garden was a kind of afraid of the desert and desert itself in the Iranian human mind (associated with the death of the without water and grass desert, thirsty and the residence place of jinns and demons). But, the question is whether European man and Iranian people love garden because of the same reason or not.

The similarity between the Persian garden and paradise can be found in the literature of holy book in which the idea of heaven as tidings was initially given to the servants of Allah by Muhammad (PBUH), and then was expanded by mystics, scholars, poets and architects. In holy book, heaven is described as following:

1. The eternal river of clear water that is not stopping any time.
2. The river of milk that its taste does not never change.
3. The river of wine that its quality has special flavor for a person who drinks it.
4. The river of pure honey.

Iranian garden has three basic elements from the perspective of architectural analysis which including fence and center

3. Plan Chaharbagh, which later became the third factor of garden's name. - In the Charbagh, we always have two X perpendicular to each other that this division is mainly carried out by water rivers and including North to South X and East to West X that is always in a third plane.

- From symbolic perspective, number four means four parts of the world and the center of the garden with its items resembles the navel of the world. Well, four rivers in the garden that after their base end to a center represents four main directions, which resemble the representative of the blessing and time.

The number four in Comology namely Islamic cosmology is interpreted in the following meanings as Natural elements (cold, warm, dry and wet), the four basic elements (water, air, earth and fire), four main directions (North, South, West and East), and four elements (metal, plants, animals and humans) while the main elements of Western gardens are sculpture, cave, labyrinth , and mythical images.

At the end, the religious conflict of two elements of western and eastern garden was studied. There is sculpture in the West Garden something that is inconceivable in the East Garden, because the image is forbidden in Islamic architectural elements. Cave in the West Gardens is the symbol of virgin nature, while paradise is the symbol of the East Garden.

Conclusion

As indicated by conducted studies in this paper, garden has comprehensive picture in the Iranian mentality, to the extent that it has been as an inner vision for centuries and it is considered as a part of their culture. Aspects of this inner garden which is shapped by landscape, historical features, religious, and especially deep-rooted tradition of poetry and mystical thought are evident at all levels and aspects of our life. Aesthetics in Persian and Western Gardens has different elements, Western gardens show the war with their surrounding nature where trees and shrubs are in regular patterns, while the Persian Gardens always and everywhere have been in a fight with strange world and free from life. These gardens that were built in different times and places, have many differences with each other but their interface refers to the emergence of regulation and intelligent and precision design in irregular and chaotic environment around them. Also, destruction of these two, slow or fast, has been done in different way.

In the West, the influence of weeds, scrub and car plants in the deserted garden will leads these spaces once again plunge into the forest. In Iran, the influx of rubble and sand convert remote and forgotten gardens into the pile of the soil where there is no life

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