

A SEMANTIC APPROACH TO ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENTATION IN MONUMENTS OF PERSIAN GARDEN

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ABSTRACT

No one can deny Persian garden as a symbol of Iranian architecture in the course of time. Since the long time, Persian Garden has Constant physical characteristics that could preserve Iranian identity, more than any other Persian artistic phenomena. On the other hand, it could adapt itself with each specific part of Religious mystery. As the essence of Persian artist try to get every phenomenon mysterious and scared side to build, The Persian garden is not an exception and behind its tempting and imaginary fairness hide a sacred part. Scrutiny of Persian garden's frame work, a unique Persian Pleasant, indicates that it has been always a guest of every Iranian people, which lead us to analyze Investigation about this mysterious and sacred face.

The research would revolve around homogeny of the Spiritual Principles of Persian Garden in the point of 4 approaches such as: Quran paradise, Iranian cosmos, Persian Sufism and Iranian identity. After that, this research proposes to group the values of Persian garden based on Donald Wilber's idea on a new concept. Then, by selecting the monuments of Persian garden in a comparative study with mosques decorations, we try to unravel the mysteries of architectural ornamentations in Persian garden. We hope our endeavor stimulate your encouragement.

Key words: Iranian's garden, semantic approach, decoration, mysteries.

INTRODUCTION

Plenty of researches and articles are written on Iranian garden, investigating various sides of it, but they investigate monument thoroughly neither the framework nor the semantics of it. Since monument or building is a crucial element in interior of the garden, investigation of semantics and framework of it is of substantial importance. The hypothesis of this research is based on this point that we would have a better general realization of Iranian garden if just realize the semantic and corporeal principles

of monument. This is a practical research executed by compilation of documentary sources and investigation of case samples which finally lead to a semantic realization of monuments' ornaments of Iranian garden.

IRANIAN GARDEN IN GENERAL

Terminology of Iranian garden

From point of view of linguists, garden originates from the word bagh which means bounty and forgiveness. Bounty and forgiveness stand for mercy and generosity of God, that implies material aspect and means distributed. Generally it associates that garden is a sacred place in which God portion out his divine forgiveness to the gainers.

Next word is Paradise. In Avesta this word is in form of pairi daeza having two features, material and spiritual. Paeri means mediator, intermediary and daeza means limit or wall. Word paeeri is important here because from one hand focuses on separation and segregation from the surroundings and on the other hand its translated linkage and connection. In other words, separation from environment, surroundings and connecting to the mediating or intermediating garden or pardis (paradise) to the spiritual world are found together in this old word. In other words daeza means limited restricted and separated from the surroundings while it's connected to paeri as a suffix which means like a mediator causing contact to the spiritual cosmos and relation with the merciful (God). (shahcheraghi 93-96.2010)

What we see crystal clear here is spiritual side of sacred garden which is jailed in material form. In other words Iranian garden is material thing to reach for beyond the cosmos.

Historical Classification of Iranian Garden

Construction

General category of garden constructing periods consisting of the Timurid gardens, the Safavid gardens in Isfahan and boundary of Caspian sea, Tehran gardens and Shiraz gardens is as follows;

During the Timurid reign (1370-1506 A.D.) the ornaments of garden monuments were tiles, paintings and cloths which were in significantly affected by Chinese and Indian art. Walls of the garden were decorated with tiles, walls of monument with blue tiles and inside the monument with the artists' paintings. In this period the building of monument is several floors with column supported porches (Wilber, 2009, 19-56).

Choosing Isfahan the capital city, during the reign of the Safaviddynasty (1501 - 1722 A.D.), several gardens were constructed and the monument decoration was lithography on base of stone column using golden and blue colors, and also ceiling and bodies were embellished with mirror. Painting on the ceiling, mounting tableaux on the walls and drawing landscapes of Isfahan on lower part of the wall, and also locating various large and small pools in the southern front part of monuments porches were mostly decorative. In this period a lot of gardens were created in boundary of Caspian Sea which all had the ornaments and aspects of Isfahan gardens, there are few differences, more use of gold and outstanding patterns, different valuable stone sand painted tableaux (Ibid, P 83-128).

During the reign of the Qajar dynasty (1779- 1924 A.D.), Iranian culture was strongly influenced by the western culture and art, and ornaments were inspired by the west.

About Shiraz garden it should be mentioned that some of them were made in Pahlavi period (1924 - 1979 A.D.) and the ornaments and buildings were modeled after western architecture. The other gardens belong to the Qajar period that the ornaments are lithography (inscription), tiling, and mirrorworking (as embellishment), inlaying, carving and also painting the hunt scenes. The whole ornaments are still inspired by western culture. Another kind of ornaments in home-gardens of Shiraz is the mirror working (embellished with mirror) the whole surface of wall and ceiling, and also inlaying and carving outstanding patterns on woods (Ibid, P 150-244).



Figure 1



Figure 2

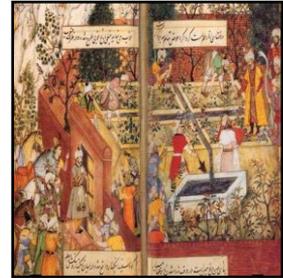


Figure 3

Figure 1 : The Chahar Timurid (Source: Alami, 2012)

Figure 2: Chehelstoon Garden (Source: Taghvai, 1999)

Figure 3: Farahabad rests (Source: GR, Haider progeny, 2004)



Figure4



Figure5

Figure 4: Golestan Palace, (Source: Mirza Koochak Khoshnevis, 2011)

Figure 5: Eram Garden, (Source: Taghvai, 1999)

Semantic Classification of Iranian Garden

The available data and theresearches in progress by other researchers conduct us to this conclusion that semantic system in Iranian garden includes 2 major categories which are as follow:

Iranian garden the exemplification of heaven

In the Holy Quran, Al-Rahaman chapter, verses 46 to 532 we read:

“And for him who fears to stand before his lord are two gardens (46) which then of the bounties of your lord will you deny? (47) Having in them various kinds (48) which then of the bounties of your lord will you deny? (49) In both of them are two fountains flowing (50) which then of the bounties of your lord will you deny? (51) In both of them are two pairs of every fruit (52).”

Seems these instances developed the initial concept of Iranian garden plan. Besides, in Quran synonym words of paradise and components of it has been repeated like 386 times that among them 81 times have described worldly paradise, and 360 times described afterlife paradise.

A lot of words that Quran applied to describe afterlife paradise are the same words and phrases used to describe worldly secular gardens and accompanying charms. Afterlife paradise is reward to those who have faith, do righteous deeds, and possess virtue, beneficence, jihad and martyrdom, patience and tolerance of troubles, fear the status of God, munificence, faith, truthfulness, obedience of god and prophet and so on in addition. Quran has mentioned the deeds that are promised to paradise.

As it was already noted, paradise, either worldly or afterlife, is described by secular exemplifications. Besides, necessary to refer to some researchers, Muslim architect, considered Quran descriptions of gardens, constructed gardens in mortal world which are true exemplification of promised paradise (Ansari, 2007, 40).

Iranian garden is exemplification of Iranian identity

The concept of Iranian garden has root in spirit and identity of the Iranian. Nature of Iranian artist always yearns to exert phenomena which go beyond physical mold grant it a sacred divine feature. In other words Iranian nature obscures the phenomena he wants to execute. On the other hand, certain trait makes Iranian artist like Iranian poet. It means that Iranian poets for each concept have always assigned a particular poem form. Rumi adopted Masnavi to express his wisdom, but for his mysticism adopted sonnet, e.g., the sonnets of Shams. Gives an example that Iranian artist has made many mosques and makes poem of mosque like Sheikh Lotf-Allahmosque, Iranian artist makes bathroom and makes poem of it like Ganj-Ali Khan. Sonnet is an implement to express spirit and identity; it's a supernatural aspect of phenomena. Architecturally speaking, Iranian garden is a sonnet that poet-architecture made with the words o water, plant and light, to sing the divine sound in the ears of human (Beheshti, 2008, 8-12).

Analyzing the topic up to now, we can infer that author believes Iranian garden as a whole, a package symbolizing

culture, beliefs, type of world view of people who, despite all ups and downs, in coordination with various imported beliefs and foreign incursion, have kept their lifestyle throughout centuries including landscaping Iranian garden. Iranian garden is people's resort of spirit and psyche, who find their peace and lost identity, and away from all secular tempts quenches the happy spirit from the fresh spring.

The bottom diagram represents various conceptual stages of Iranian garden.

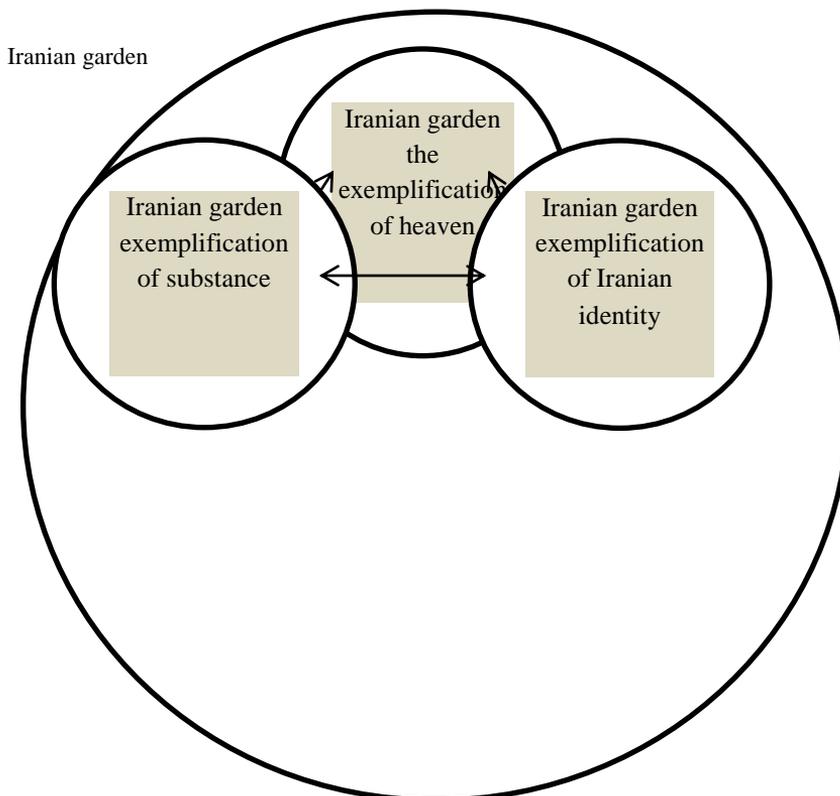


Figure 6: Iranian garden
(Source:Writers)

THE ORNAMENTS IN IRANIAN GARDEN MONUMENTS

Colour

Regarding color as an element, especially in ornaments of Islamic architecture its easy to notice that color had a symbolic format and each color in each culture suggests special case which is in accordance with the social psyche of people. For example azure and turquoise in Islamic art are symbol of endless sky and internal peace (Makinezhad, 2002, 70).

Color in Iranian garden besides the ornamentation of monuments and its variety; in type of the trees which had order and selection 4 seasons had astonishing view. Each tree batch in a particular way is symbol of a season that the color of those trees in certain season is a proof that their placement beside the ever green trees makes a fascinating paradox (Ibid).

Arabesque (Islamic art)

Some believe because Islam banned any figure, painting, and effigy, artists tended towards these patterns. Religiously speaking Muslims strongly opposed any pictorial ornaments because were considered feature of idolatry. This trend caused dramatic focus on abstract ornamentation (Burckhardt, 1990, 145).

In opinion of Muslims Islamic art not only is possibility to create art without exerting pictures but an immediate equipment to eliminate picture or whatever in correspondence with subjective system. (Burckhardt, 1990, 168)

Some theories note the point that the ornament is a solution to wipe rough and massive architectural masses, whether the ornaments are beautiful architecturally or scientifically, goal is the same which is to resolve the issue of massive masses then replacing them by a real image or a less tangible reality and its problem changes even in execution (kiyani, 1983, 9).

Architect, painter and tiler try to create a witness or reason from God. Surprisingly, creation of such works of art is in contrast with materialistic inducement because they lack self-interest. Creation of such works was motivated by religious beliefs along with artistic taste based on Islamic aesthetic sense (Makinezhad, 2002, 71)

ROLE OF MONUMENT IN IRANIAN GARDEN

Role of monument in Iranian garden could be analyzed in two aspects, one is garden geometry and the other is concept of monument that will deal with here below.

Semantic Construction of the Garden as Comprehensive Sample of Geometry

The applied geometry in Iranian garden is known as something for abstraction, to the point that its said math is a requisite for living in Iran land, the most abstract science to make applicable for scientific use. But, on the other hand abstraction transmutes materialistic world in eternality of heavenly world of thought (Dadabeh, 2009, 32)

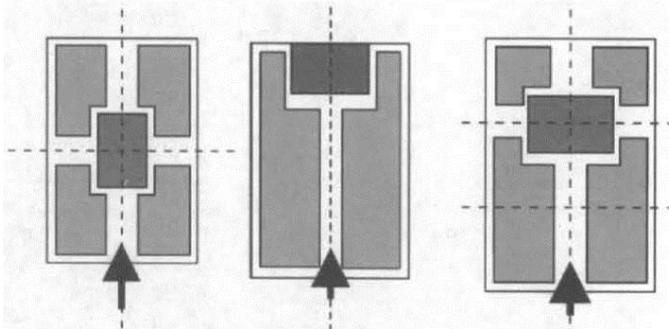


Figure 7: General pattern of the dominant trees Iranian geometric (layout location Pavilion)

Source: Abhryan, 2010.

We can say the system of geometric structure of Iranian garden, from point of view of a present viewer, creates a virtual extent that unique geometry of it brought forth all the usages of natural factors. The natural sloped applied in most Iranian garden is an opportunity to locate the monument on elevated land because when we look at high land from a low position we feel a nearer distance than we look at the same distance from a high land. This error of vision which is related to the difference of our eye angle from horizon makes the monument look closer and induces the viewer to move and go along this apparently short distance. On the contrary, when one looks at the garden from the monument the certain distance looks longer and makes the garden look larger (Diba, Ansari, 1995, 27).

To investigate sample of the assumed geometry as a case, Mahan garden in Kerman and Takhte-Shirazgarden are good evidences of this theme.



Figure 8

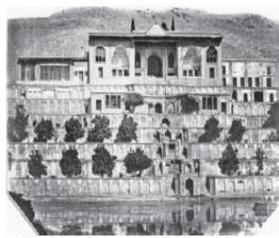


Figure 9

Figure 8: Mahan Garden, Kerman (Source: MirMumtaz)

Figure 9: Flat Garden, Shiraz (Source: Khoei, 2010)

Hasht-Behesht-Safavi not only in general design but also in concept of central monument itself reconstructs an exact paradise.

In this case Mandala qualities are clearly explained and also centrifugal move towards paradise, outside nature and also in a center oriented move from Chahar-Ivan (four porches) towards pool and waterfront, the spiritual center of the complex, is seen. Eruption of the waterfall by creation of waves getting more drops start a deliberate cycle of expansion and contraction. There lots of similar samples and each is a delicate extent. It is from the theme of final integrity of human and origin by human's relationship with nature (ardalan, bakhtiyar, 2011, 98).

POSITION OF THE DECORATION IN ISLAMIC ART

To understand enigmatic concepts of architectural ornaments of Iranian garden monuments, the painter decided to assign an element which plays a key role in Iranian-Islamic architectural ornaments, and it seems that tiling performs a major role. The best sample is tiling in the mosque for mosque is symbol of tradition and the least effected, even better if a Safavid mosque be selected for its sort of the purest type Iranian- Islamic architecture that later we survey the cryptic concepts tiling ornaments in Imam Isfahan mosque, meanwhile, we compare these ornaments with Iranian garden monuments.

Ornament in Islamic art is to express sacred environment. Defining Islamic art as ornamental, east gourmet lacked understanding of pictorial secrets and wrongly considers ornament as a loaned charming.

In Islamic art, under the influence of beliefs, there's an effort to form a relaxing, religious and spiritual atmosphere. Adornment that is assessed one of the pillars of pictorial Islamic art is an instrument or an pictorial expression to bestow honor to article, color, line, size, brick, soil, flour of tile to advance to superior horizons and get color and semantic identity, and finally get a super natural character spiritual and divine. The most prominent ornamental element Iranian-Islamic architecture is tile and the reason to use it is based on two features, beauty and strength.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, According to principles of Persian garden, conclusions are as following:

The place of monument in Persian garden is considerable from two sights: first Geometry of garden in the form of Geometry of Assumed, It has been determinant the placement of monument in Persian garden that it is a apparent approach to Persian garden. Second the Geometry that used in Persian garden, it comprehension for cultural mental beliefsas a tool.

People In Persian garden at the first time attracted to beauties of garden but when they find the main way between other byways, they will find themselves at the monument; when they stand at the main veranda of monument, now they can apprehend reality of the garden; they understood, should passed from all of those attractions and find a way for achieve The purpose of garden, and now they have deep apprehension of all of the beauties and with this they will have a deep inner peace.

In According to explanations about architectural ornamentations, ornamentations in Mosque result of traditionas the purest Architectural work. In other words tradition has a stationary principle; and the local symbol of that in Islam was Mosque. For this reason Mosque had had the least Interference, and in result of principles of construction of Mosque has close Concept with Foundations of that. In this Study with research in ornamentations of Tile work in mosques include color and Arabesques In comparison with ornamentations in monuments of

Persian garden; there are similar meanings between these two kinds of ornamentations.

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