

# Cultivating Sentiment and Soul and Poetically Living

## The Creation Thought and Aesthetic Features of Ancient Chinese Garden Architecture

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**Abstract**—Ancient Chinese garden architecture is an important part of Chinese architectural art. It incorporates the aesthetic characteristics of Chinese classical philosophy, literature and painting and calligraphy. It is entrusted with the life ideals and humanistic feelings of the literati of the dynasties, showing the distinctive humanistic artistic characteristics and the rich beauty of the form.

**Keywords**—garden architecture; design concept; creation thought; aesthetic characteristics

### I. INTRODUCTION

Ancient Chinese garden architecture is a masterpiece of ancient Chinese architectural art. It is a model of architecture in which human beings are in harmony with nature. It is also the place where ancient literati lived in poetically and cultivated sentiment. It integrates landscapes, flowers, trees and architecture. It combines the functions of living, swimming and appreciation, unique creation ideas and vivid artistic aesthetics. It has a wide influence in the history of architecture in China and the whole world.

### II. THE RISE AND PROSPERITY OF ANCIENT CHINESE GARDEN ARCHITECTURE

The history of ancient Chinese garden architecture dates back more than 3,000 years ago. As early as the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, there has been a "Yuan" that encircles the vast forests and stocks wild beasts for the king to hunt for fun. Zhou Wenwang once built the famous "Ling yuan". During the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period, the rulers of various vassal states competed to build the "Yuan". First emperor of Qin once built the "Shanglin Yuan" in the south of Lishui, which built the famous Epang Palace. The Jianzhang Palace in the western suburbs of Chang'an in the Han Dynasty has a Taiye pool with three islands of "Penglai", "Fangzhang" and "Yingzhou". The layout of this "one pool and three islands" has an important impact on the later generations of gardens. During the Wei, Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties, some literati who were dissatisfied with social reality began to build their own small houses and opened the first of private gardens. In the Tang Dynasty, the society flourished and the garden construction entered a prosperous period. In addition to the imperial gardens, the famous princes and scholars also built their own private gardens. There are more than a thousand private gardens in Luoyang. Influenced by poetry and painting art, the garden art of this period began to pursue the artistic conception of poetry

and painting. During the Song Dynasty, gardens were further popularized in local cities and general gentry homes. The Ming and Qing Dynasties were the heyday of garden construction. There were more than 90 royal gardens in Beijing, and it was more than 20 miles wide. During this period, the private gardens in Jiangnan also achieved high achievements, and many famous garden landscapes appeared.

### III. HISTORICALLY FAMOUS GARDENS OF VARIOUS DYNASTIES

During the period from Shang Dynasty to Tang and Song Dynasties, ancient Chinese garden architecture experienced the development period from Yuanyuan to royal gardens and private gardens, and many famous garden landscapes appeared. Among the relatively famous royal gardens are Xiyuan in Luoyang in the Sui Dynasty, Furong Garden in Chang'an in the Tang Dynasty, Genyue in Dongjing in the Northern Song Dynasty, and Yvyuan in Lin'an in the Southern Song Dynasty. The private gardens include Wang Wei's Wangchuan Bieye, Bai Juyi's Lushan Caotang and Li Deyu's Luoyang Pingquanzhuang and so on. Entering the Ming and Qing Dynasties, garden architecture entered the heyday of gardening, and both royal gardens and private gardens flourished. Among them, the relatively famous imperial gardens include Beijing's "Three Hills and Five Gardens", which mainly include Wanshou Mountain Summer Palace, Yuquan Mountain Jingming Garden, Xiang Mountain Jingyi Garden, the old Summer Place, Changchun Garden and Chengde Mountain Resort. In the Jiangnan area, there are a large number of private gardens, among which the more famous ones are Suzhou Humble Administrator's Garden, Liuyuan Garden, Net Master Garden, Yiyuan Garden, Lion Grove, Yangzhou Ge Garden, Shanghai Yu Garden, Wuxi Jichang Garden, and Nanjing Zhanyuan and so on. Although the styles of different garden landscapes are different, they all show a high level of art and simple, natural and elegant humanistic features.

### IV. THE DESIGN CONCEPT AND AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ANCIENT CHINESE GARDEN ARCHITECTURE

Influenced by Chinese traditional culture and art, ancient Chinese garden architecture incorporates the creative ideas and aesthetic characteristics of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism and poetry and painting art, presenting distinct aesthetic characteristics of humanistic art:

#### A. *Adapting to Nature and Seeking Development According to Local Conditions*

Influenced by the "man is an integral part of nature" of Confucianism and Taoism culture, the ancient Chinese garden architecture is mostly adapted to local conditions. It is good at using the surrounding environment to lay out the relationship between landscapes, flowers, ponds and buildings. Try to avoid the traces of artificial carving, and pursue the natural artistic conception of "although it is made artificially, just like the nature." Therefore, in the design of Chinese gardens, the environment with mountains and water and lush vegetation is used in the design, and the design is perfected and supplemented on the basis of the original landscape wood and stone. For example, Wuxi's Liyuan Garden draws on the natural scenery of Lihu, and the Lion Grove in Suzhou draws on the local Lake Taihu to create a landscape of layers of forests and chaotic mountains. Its landscape is naturally twisted and twisted, the flowers and trees are high and low, and the terraces are dense and dense. It has the natural and harmonious mountainous interest.

#### B. *Enriching the Space by Dividing the Space and Using the Surrounding Environment*

In order to enrich the spatial level, ancient Chinese garden architecture often adopts the methods of "borrowing, separating, and dividing" to create a rich visual level and beauty. For example, the natural landscapes outside the park are used to enrich the visual level; the walls and pavilions are used to separate the uncluttered natural landscapes and form a number of independent spaces. Or open the moon door and the leaking window on the wall and the house, and introduce the outdoor scenery into the room, so that the vision is smooth and the space is continuous. Suzhou Humble Administrator's Garden piled up a rockery on the wall and built a "Liangyi Pavilion". Sitting in the pavilion, you can see the inside and outside of the wall, thus breaking through the limitations of the wall. This is the "borrowing" approach. The milestone corridor in the Summer Palace separates a lake and two halves. On one side is a vast lake and on the other side is a mountain and pavilion. Visitors can look at both sides and form different visual impressions. This is the method of "dividing". Wang Wei has a verse "through the window, the clouds seem to be on the clothes, the mountain springs are reflected in the mirror", that the outdoor scenery is introduced into the room by means of the window and the mirror. In addition, the chiseling pool in the garden is also used to borrow scenery and enrich the level of scenery. In the Ming Dynasty, Ji Cheng said in the "Yuanye" that "high windows can see the vast scenery and the transformation of the four seasons", which is the natural interest created by the garden.

#### C. *The Art of Poetry and Painting Enters the Environment and Expresses Its Feelings*

Influenced by classical poetry and painting art, Chinese garden design requires "poetry and painting in the landscape" to pursue the artistic conception of poetry and painting. Its landscapes and flowers and ponds, seemingly natural and casual, are carefully laid out, showing a rich picture layer and a strong poetry everywhere. Good garden design not only needs to be able to enjoy from different angles, but also has a fresh

and elegant poetic beauty, which can reflect the elegant realm and feelings of the owner. Therefore, in the design of famous gardens in the past, the construction of poetry has become an important aesthetic standard of gardens. Many garden landscapes often directly reflect the poems of previous people to reflect the beautiful artistic conception. For example, in A Dream in Red Mansions panoramic showplace, "The restaurant is in front", that is, borrowed the artistic conception of Du Mu in the Tang Dynasty "Where to ask where the restaurant is, and the shepherd boy refers to the Xinghua Village". The "Wuling's Spring" of The Old Summer Palace is based on Zhang Bai's "Wuling's Spring is good, that has Twelve Restaurant Building".

### V. CULTURAL CONNOTATION OF ANCIENT CHINESE GARDEN ARCHITECTURE

As an important part of Chinese traditional culture, ancient Chinese garden architecture incorporates the aesthetic characteristics of classical philosophy, literature and art. It embodies the artistic talents and wisdom of literati in the past, and presents extremely rich cultural connotations.

#### A. *Garden and the Culture of Confucianism and Taoism*

The ancient Chinese garden architecture was deeply influenced by the traditional Confucianism and Taoism culture. It has a clear cultural imprint in terms of form and content: Taoism advocates the philosophy of "man is an integral part of nature, and advocating nature" and pursues the natural beauty without artificial traces. Confucius puts forward that "the people of kindheartedness and wisdom like mountains and rivers", and integrate the landscape with the character of human nature, and the character of the mountains and rivers is high and clean. Therefore, in Chinese classical gardens, the construction of mountains and water is an indispensable element, and it presents the pursuit of nature, elegance and bleak interest. In the history of the development of gardens, the literati of the past dynasties pinned their attachment to the natural landscapes on the gardens, and received the peace and emotional comfort of the soul, which also gave the unique spiritual connotation and implication of the garden.

#### B. *Garden and Poetry*

The garden is the spiritual home of the literati in the past, and the poetry is the carrier of its enthusiasm and the ideal ambition. Therefore, since the birth of the garden, it has been inextricably linked with the poetry. In the Qing Dynasty, Qian Yong said in "The Fuyuan Conghua": "Creating gardens and writing poems will make a regular turning. Before and after the comparison, the garden itself contains poems. Then it is decorated and used poetry to express the garden. Such a garden and poetry and poetry are combined into one, which is considered a good garden structure." Therefore, we say that the design and construction techniques of gardens are deeply influenced by poetry and poetry, and the poetry texts are contained in the plaques, couplets and travel notes of gardens, and become an inseparable part of the garden. In the beautiful scenery of Ambra, there is poetic poetry everywhere, and traces of poetry can be seen everywhere. In the process of garden appreciation, the literati have left a large number of poems and couplets, adding new cultural connotations to the

garden, enhancing their cultural character and promoting the circulation and development of the garden.

### C. Garden and Love

In traditional Chinese culture, gardens are the birthplace of good love and the carrier of sincere emotions. "The drop of flowers makes people cry, the birds' flying away make people be scared." The spring flowers and autumn moon, the water sings and songs in the garden, all affect the infinite heart of lovers, leaving many romantic stories. In the classical Chinese drama "Peony Pavilion", there are two scenes of "touring the garden" and "frightening in the dream". With the beauty of the garden, Du Liniang's girl's desire for love is described. The protagonist came to the garden to play, facing the beauty of the spring of "sunrise and sunset, as well as the wind and rain, the lake, the boat", did not cause the joy of the soul, but it caused the feeling of cherishing the spring and the spring, no one to spend the time together. Euphemism expressed the yearning for and pursuit of good love, and laid the foundation for the story that happened later between the lake and the mountains. Shaoxing has an ordinary private garden, Shen garden, but it has been passed down through the love story of Lu You and Tang Wan and "Chaitou Feng". Lu You was a patriotic poet in the Southern Song Dynasty. When he was a teenager, his cousin, Tang Wan, became his wife. Later, due to the mother's intervention, the two were divorced and the lovers were separated. Ten years later, Lu You traveled to Shenyuan, and then he met Tang Wan, who had already remarried to others feeling that the old man was still the same, and the personnel was wrong then used the pen to write the famous "Chaitou Feng" on the wall. Tang Wan also wrote a poem after reading it, and soon died in melancholy and sentimental. Shen Yuan has also become a place where Lu You and Tang Yu Wan lived and died forever. In the next 40 years, Lu You went to Shenyuan several times to write a mourning poem for Tang Wan. By the time he was 79, he once again came to Shenyuan in his dream, and when he woke up, he left Chaitou Feng. By the age of 84, Lu You had come to Shenyuan for the last time, leaving the poem of the spring tour, and died in the second year with a lifetime regret. These touching poems have also become a rare spiritual wealth of Shen Yuan, which has been passed down from generation to generation and presents an eternal charm.

## VI. CONCLUSION

As an important part of Chinese architectural art, ancient Chinese garden architecture not only incorporates the aesthetic characteristics of Chinese classical philosophy, poetry and painting and calligraphy art, but also entrusts the life ideals and feelings of the literati. It presents the beauty and form of "natural, harmonious, poetic and artistic". Nowadays, to appreciate the ancient Chinese garden architecture, it is necessary not only to feel the external form and landscape beauty of the garden, but also to experience the rich cultural elements and humanistic spirit contained in it, forming a comprehensive and diverse understanding of garden architecture, and inheriting the beauty of its culture and art better.

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