

Guidance and Application of Chinese Classical Gardens in Modern Gardens

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Abstract As a representative of Eastern gardens, Chinese classical gardens have always held an extremely important position in world gardens. They not only carry the profound cultural and ideological connotations of China, but also have great aesthetic achievements that are worth exploring. In the process of urbanization, the construction of urban gardens is also progressing rapidly with the development of the city, and modern gardens are reflected more. Gradually, people began to realize that the aesthetics of Chinese classical gardens can collide with the design concepts of modern gardens, in order to conform to the current development trend of the new era. This paper compares and analyzes the differences and connections between Chinese classical gardens and modern gardens from three aspects: gardening concepts, gardening elements, and gardening techniques. Combined with relevant cases, it studies the practical application of Chinese classical garden design techniques in modern gardens, and explores and promotes the art of Chinese classical garden design.

Key words Chinese classical gardens; Gardens; Element; Application

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Landscape architecture, as an important component of urban planning and design, can create ecological value while creating a place for communication in public activity spaces. With the progress of human development, people's living standards have significantly improved. At the same time, the emphasis on ecological and living environments has correspondingly increased. Through repeated and in-depth research on Chinese classical gardens, past design elements and techniques can be reasonably drawn on and applied in modern garden design, providing more beneficial development ideas for modern garden design while ensuring the inheritance of cultural heritage.

1 Feasibility and significance of applying Chinese classical garden design elements in modern garden design

The various stages of Chinese classical gardens reflect the changes in people's lifestyles and thoughts under the influence of different periods and environments. At the same time, Chinese classical gardens also demonstrate the profound connotation of Chinese culture and record the historical process of the Chinese nation. In the process of garden development, the differences in geographical and cultural conditions, the diversity of artistic development, and the continuous integration and mutual reference of different material elements in different environments have gradually formed distinctive garden art forms that are in line with and adapted to the local conditions.

China has a vast territory, superior geographical conditions, and a large population. In ancient times, different forms of gar-

dens were developed in different regions based on their local geographical, cultural, and political conditions, such as the northern royal gardens and the Jiangnan private gardens, which have distinct regional characteristics. At the same time, the best way for classical gardens to be inherited in the era is to constantly blend new and old elements in their development, and to explore the characteristics and reference content of different design elements and art forms in that specific environment. In summary, whether it is royal gardens, private gardens, or public gardens, they are all the sediment of historical and cultural development and can play a guiding role in modern garden design^[1].

2 Aesthetic category of Chinese classical gardens

2.1 Based on nature, higher than nature The core of Chinese classical gardens is to take inspiration from nature, and the site selection is in a location where various elements are highly advantageous. In the later stage of design, it is not just about directly utilizing or one-to-one restoring natural elements to the site, but also endowing the site with new life according to its own connotation, transforming and processing the site, and extracting a more exquisite garden. These designs are also based on the condition of not violating the laws of natural growth, and mountains, rivers, and plants are basic elements of gardening^[2]. For example, the Summer Palace in Beijing replicates the natural large-scale landscape gardens (Jiangnan gardens) on the site, allowing northern gardens to experience the charm of Jiangnan private gardens on the site. From this, it can be seen that the characteristic of Chinese classical gardens being based on nature and higher than nature is mainly reflected in the expression of design elements such as mountains, water, and plants. British gardens are also natural

garden landscapes. Different from Chinese classical gardens, they emphasize realism and present the landscape in a one-to-one manner, while Chinese classical gardens focus more on freehand brushwork and the creation of artistic conception. Subjective freehand brushwork expresses a subjective feeling of the landscape in front of us, emphasizing the creation of a summarized landscape environment which preserves natural ecology, such as the design pattern of one pond and three mountains in Jianzhang Palace^[3].

2.2 Fusion of architectural beauty and natural beauty In a soft natural environment, architecture appears as a straight line character, posing a challenge to the overall naturalness. In Chinese classical gardens, regardless of the function of the building, such as residence, pavilion, corridor, *etc.*, it will be integrated into the entire garden landscape without being separated from the landscape plants, thus forming a harmonious and organic picture. As depicted in the Summer Palace in Beijing, standing in Zhongxiangjie of Mount Wanshou to overlook Kunming Lake, one feels refreshed and joyful. While rowing in Kunming Lake, and looking up at the halls, terraces, and pavilions of Mount Wanshou, it is like a fairyland. There are many techniques involved, such as corridors. In Chinese classical gardens, corridors are used to connect individual buildings and divide architectural spaces. For example, a pavilion, as a carrier of scenic spots in space, plays a role in both seeing and being seen, allowing people to both stop and enjoy the scenery while walking along the line of motion. Buildings in gardens can serve not only as scenic spots, but also as the center of scenery. They can also be used as a stop to enjoy other scenery, including borrowed scenery inside and outside the park. Another is the transition of space formation, which involves the combination of different forms of architecture and other elements to create different spaces—natural spaces, semi architectural spaces, and architectural spaces. Through the changes in space, a rhythmic garden space is formed, and this is also a common approach in Chinese classical gardens. By transforming from architectural space (i. e. hard landscape) to semi hard and semi landscape, and then to natural landscape space, the transition of space is not rigid. There is no trace of connection and transition between architecture and nature, thus achieving the fusion of architecture and nature, and exuding the vitality of nature everywhere^[4].

2.3 Charm of poetry and painting In the development process of classical Chinese gardens, the extraction of artistic conception and elements began from literature and painting, and the refinement of elements was carried out in different art forms, so that the garden space contained the charm of poetry and painting from the overall to the local. Participants walking in the space also had the opportunity to have unlimited imagination about the scenery. For example, the application of poetry and prose in garden spaces—naming scenic spots, building plaques, and so on, served as key themes for various parts of the garden. In many garden designs, the creative techniques in literary works such as prelude, beginning, climax, turning point, and ending are often used, which are smooth and undulating. This is the spatial sequence technique in Chinese classical garden design, which has guiding

significance for the division of space size, the first fall and then rise and the orderly change of scenery. The application of painting works involves directly replicating and reproducing scenes from ancient paintings.

2.4 Connotation of artistic conception The connotation of artistic conception refers to subjective ideas and emotions, as well as objective life and scenery. The application of artistic conception in Chinese classical gardens is also extensive. Firstly, it involves abstracting and refining the natural landscape, while using landscapes, plants, architecture, and other elements to simulate the scenery within reach. In the expression of artistic conception, one is to first set the theme of the artistic conception in advance, and then use the objective lens composed of mountains, water, architecture, and plants to express the set theme. Another way is to summarize the artistic conception based on the characteristics of the existing objective lens after the garden is built, such as the name of the scenic spot, plaques, *etc.* The application of artistic conception runs through the development of Chinese classical gardens.

3 Landscape elements of Chinese classical gardens

The four elements of Chinese classical gardens: mountains, water, architecture, and plants. The different combinations and expressions of these four elements can be used to represent different scenarios according to different needs, thus constructing a rich and colorful landscape. Similarly, the basic elements involved in modern garden design are also the same. The difference lies in the design techniques and connotations. Through the analysis of techniques, the connotation and essence of the element combination of Chinese classical gardens can be scientifically and reasonably analyzed. Combined with the concepts of modern garden design, the two are integrated reasonably. It is no longer a simple replica of classical gardens in modern gardens, but more in line with the development needs of modern garden design.

3.1 Building mountain Building mountain is one of the main elements of gardening, and the rocks in the garden are an artistic representation of the natural environment. The creators extract and summarize the natural landscape, and use earth mountains, earth stone mountains, stone mountains, *etc.* to build the mountain. At the same time, it is imitated and created in the garden. While building mountains, there are also differences in size. For example, the mountains in Jiangnan gardens are reduced and modeled as small mountain spaces. In garden spaces, in addition to ornamental functions, there are also obstacles and opposing effects, and the scenery interacts with each other. Stacking mountains and stones was well utilized in the Jianzhang Palace built during the reign of Emperor Wu of Han. Firstly, it was water diversion, and water of the Kunming Lake was led into the palace to form the Taiye Pool. At the same time, in order to extract the scenes of mythological stories, three immortal mountains, Penglai, Fangzhang, and Yingzhou, were built in the pool. This led to the later garden model of one pool and three mountains, which was presen-

ted in Chinese classical gardens such as Chengde's Imperial Mountain Summer Resort, Old Summer Palace, Summer Palace in Beijing, Humble Administrator's Garden, and Linger Garden. Garden designer Ji Cheng in the Ming Dynasty recorded 17 types of mountain rocks in his book *Yuanye*, which has made indelible contributions to subsequent garden designs. When designing modern gardens, it can also draw on the experience of stacking mountains and stones in Chinese classical gardens, using artistic techniques to explore the charm of mountain shapes, and adding flavor to the garden with thin, exposed, wrinkled, and transparent rockery spaces.

3.2 Managing water Chinese classical gardens emphasize imitating nature. The form of natural landscapes is imitated while following the laws of nature, in order to create an artistic conception of natural landscapes. In the water management, there are four major principles: large division and small aggregation, concealment, twists and turns, and combination of movement and stillness. Based on these principles, four techniques for managing water sources are developed: dredging source, dynamic and static interaction, following the curve to form a square, and spatial combination. Natural landscapes such as springs, waterfalls, streams, rivers, lakes, ponds, *etc.*, are simulated, and combining different waterscape can enrich the levels of gardens. The landscape in the garden appears indirectly in the water surface space, adding interest to the space. The forms of water bodies in Chinese classical gardens are relatively diverse, and the expression forms of water bodies in gardens developed in different regions are also different. Among them, the royal gardens in the north are presented in large and concentrated water surface spaces, occupying a more dominant position and having a more stunning visual effect. The private gardens developed in the Jiangnan region have narrower and more winding water surfaces, emphasizing the contrast effect of space. There is also a distinction between movement and stillness in water bodies. In different scenes, the atmosphere of the scene can be created by the movement and stillness of the water body, adding rhythm and melody to the space. In modern garden design, traditional garden techniques can be used to design water bodies for different scene requirements. It should grasp the relationship between the whole and the parts, connect water spaces with various spaces, and integrate them into the entire garden space^[5].

3.3 Plant The plants in Chinese classical gardens are usually planted in a natural style. When arranging the plants, emphasis is placed on reflecting the seasonal changes of the plants, thus achieving scenery at all times. Plants, as the foundation of gardens, can be endowed with different qualities through their various hues, forms, scents, and other factors. They can be personified to display their symbolic meanings, create the artistic conception of gardens, and convey the combination of natural and humanistic beauty. Plants in gardens not only have the function of purifying the environment, but also create different spatial sensations, bringing people different spatial experiences. There are many techniques for plant cultivation, such as solitary planting, cluster planting, group planting, row planting, and opposite planting. Solitary and

cluster plantings are commonly used in classical gardens, focusing on expressing the spatial hierarchy of plants. This has a certain reference value in modern gardens, which also involves the selection and combination of plant varieties, sizes, heights, *etc.*, and plays a significant role in presenting the overall effect. Prioritizing local tree species during selection not only affects plant growth but also increases maintenance costs in the later stages. Suitable local tree species can ensure landscape effects while controlling economic costs. Most importantly, when arranging plants, attention should be paid to the beauty of tree shapes, changes in density, height, and the coordination of overall environment, in order to create a good landscape effect.

3.4 Architecture In Chinese classical gardens, in order to meet the requirements of not only being observable, but also being feasible, observable, livable, and touristic, buildings such as corridors, windows or doors, pavilions, terraces, towers, and cabins have been developed. These are mainly wooden buildings, which are not only used for daily needs, but also participate in various spatial requirements of the landscape, and are an important component of the garden landscape. The architecture in gardens is different from traditional architectural forms, with richer forms and exquisite shapes that blend and coexist with the surrounding environment, achieving a unified landscape element. The different forms of garden architecture are related to their different building functions^[6]. In classical gardens, due to the influence of politics, economy, and culture, the royal garden architecture in the north is mainly based on a central axis layout pattern, showing the solemnity and solemnity of the royal family, and overall reflecting a sense of order, with the connotation of royal rule. Other types of buildings in gardens tend to be flexibly arranged, and the site selection of buildings also needs to be reasonably organized with the relationship of mountains, water, and plants to form a harmonious and unified whole. In modern gardens, the changes in architecture are relatively significant. Garden architecture has developed into an open style with clear functionality, and the importance of architecture in the overall garden space has been weakened. In this regard, it is related to the social development, and the nature of gardens has changed. Classical gardens are mostly private or have limited user groups, while modern gardens are completely open to the public. The audience has changed accordingly, and garden architecture has also undergone changes. So, the extraction of architectural design content from classical gardens in modern gardens can be focused on aspects such as form, structure, and materials. A more important point is the relationship among architecture, landscape, and plants in classical gardens, and the unity of the entire site is important^[7].

4 Differences and similarities between Chinese classical gardens and modern gardens

4.1 Similarities Modern gardens are more of a product of meeting the functional needs of current residents and being influenced by modern Western gardens. Although there are many differences between classical gardens and modern gardens, there

are still many inherent connections between them. It is not difficult to find that more and more landscaping techniques in some new gardens have borrowed from traditional garden techniques and endowed them with more emerging vitality, making the Chinese garden system more rich and colorful.

4.1.1 Landscape design concept. Both focus on ecological benefits, putting nature first and emphasizing the harmonious coexistence between humans and nature.

4.1.2 Layout. Many venues focus on the relationship between landscape patterns, rather than simply treating them with large lawns and water surfaces. The setting of the venue also revolves around the water space, designing the space through design elements and grasping the overall spatial rhythm.

4.1.3 Gardening elements. Both still focus on the four major elements of gardening, and emphasize the relationship between each element and the overall site.

4.2 Differences The difference between the two lies more in the openness degree of the garden. Classical gardens are more private and enclosed, and in most cases only open to the owner of the garden. Therefore, the personal preferences of the garden owner are mainly taken into account when designing, to symbolize their noble sentiments. And modern gardens, influenced by modern Western gardens, have gradually developed into public gardens that are open to the outside world. In garden design, the preferences of the public are more emphasized, and the functions also meet the needs of the public.

5 Application of Chinese classical garden design techniques in modern gardens

5.1 Appropriate site selection Garden cities are advocated by current social development and people's expression of their desire for a healthy living environment. The site selection for building gardens needs to have many advantages and be able to build a comfortable and pleasant site on the existing basis. For example, many venues nowadays are located in areas with mountains, forests, and lakes. In the later design, the activity venues are designed around mountains and rivers, integrating them into the city and achieving the concept of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature^[8].

5.2 Reasonable layout Nowadays, more and more gardens adhere to the design work of using mountains and waters as the framework. If there is no advantage of site selection from the beginning, artificial construction is carried out in a range of sizes, from large lawns and large lakes in the past to designs with spatial patterns, reproducing the landscape pattern of Chinese classical gardens and the concept of "learning from nature and drawing inspiration from the heart". The landscape space of Dong'an Lake Park in Chengdu is one of the typical cases, which practices the traditional landscape construction of "filling the lake with water, borrowing water to form mountains, and mountains and water to form scenery", and creates an open park with both traditional landscape architecture and modern functionality.

5.3 Application of borrowing scenery techniques There are many techniques of borrowing scenery in classical gardens, including close borrowing, far borrowing, neighboring borrowing, mutual borrowing, upward borrowing, downward borrowing, indirect borrowing, etc. For example, the "True Meaning of Lake and Mountain" in the Summer Palace in Beijing borrows the West Mountain far away and the near Yuquan Mountain as the background. When the sun sets and the sky is filled with sunset, the scenery is extremely beautiful. Wuhan Donghu Park introduces the distant city skyline into the scenic view of the park through the open lake surface, thereby expanding the boundary of the landscape effect and achieving the integration of the garden and the city^[9].

6 Conclusions

In summary, over the long course of history, Chinese classical gardens have continuously formed rich cultural connotations and are treasures of human artistic civilization, laying a solid foundation for future development. Whether it is Chinese classical gardens or modern gardens, the core concept of their gardening is to pursue the mutual integration and coordinated coexistence of humanities and nature, which is the commonality between the two. The application of Chinese classical garden design elements in modern garden design should start from pursuing its spiritual core and garden design techniques. It should embody the core of being based on nature and higher than nature, so modern gardens can be used to promote the excellent culture of the Chinese nation and create a landscape environment that meets people's needs through modern materials, forms, and traditional internal core.

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