The Influence of Art Philosophy on Chinese Classical Garden Landscape Design

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Abstract: In the modern design concept, it is necessary to pay attention to what design principles, as well as the current problems in the process of Chinese classical garden landscape design. The root cause is that modern designers do not have enough learning and understanding of art philosophy, which leads to the discussion of art philosophy. Through the analysis of ancient Chinese philosophy, the influence of Confucianism, Zen, Taoism and Buddhism on Chinese classical gardens is sorted out, and the guiding role of art philosophy in Chinese classical garden landscape design is further clarified.

Keywords: Art philosophy, Chinese classical gardens, Landscape design innovation.

1. Development status of Chinese Classical Garden Landscape Design

The development status of Chinese classical gardens is like a historical book, similar to other classical cultures, which can be divided into germination period, formation period, maturity period, peak period and downturn period. The germination period of Chinese gardens is probably from the Zhou Dynasty to the Han Dynasty, represented by royal gardens, which are large in scale but have enclosure nature; in the Wei Jin Southern and Northern Dynasties, the garden became a kind of ornamental art; until the Sui, Tang and Five Dynasties, gardening art reached a new level. Literati participated in gardening, and brought the concept of poetry and painting art into the garden. At this time, the garden as an art form reached a mature stage; in the Song Dynasty, gardening activities were unprecedentedly high, and the theory of poetry and painting further influenced gardening, which was considered to be the peak period of Chinese classical gardens. After the Yuan Dynasty, due to foreign rule, gardening activities entered a downturn; followed by the Ming and Qing Dynasties, gardening activities became active again, and mature gardening theories and works appeared, forming another peak. Until the modern Republic of China, Chinese classical gardens have always played an important role in traditional culture.[1]

1.1. Types of Chinese classical garden landscape design

Chinese classical garden landscape design types can be divided into four categories.

The first category is the natural garden.[2]The characteristics of the natural garden are good at using the scene and good at borrowing the scene. Natural garden, also known as landscape garden, landscape garden or irregular garden, is generally planted in the plain area, and the planting design adopts the non-determinant planting in the garden. Its imitation of natural landscape, scenery, scenic spots, mainly in the pursuit of natural form, generally no obvious axis, the main body is not necessarily the building, the main body on both sides do not require symmetry, Chinese classical garden.

The second category is the temple garden.[3]The temple garden mainly relies on the natural landscape to construct the landscape, and has accumulated extremely rich design techniques to deal with the relationship between the building and the natural environment. The temple garden has a large space capacity, a broad vision, and a profound and rich landscape and spatial level, so that the near view can be seen at hand, and the distance can be borrowed from a hundred miles in front of the eyes, forming a strong contrast between the distance, size, height, dynamic and static, light and shade. The subjective environmental space often accommodates a large number of pilgrims and tourists.

The third category is the royal garden.[4]In addition to the general characteristics of Chinese classical gardens, the royal garden also has the following characteristics: 1. the guiding ideology of garden design reflects the feudal centralized consciousness, reflecting the idea that the emperor is rich in the world and includes the sea; 2. Location of the site is free, operating capital and wealthy, both can include the original mountain lake, can also be piled up to dig like a natural mountain lake and sea and the construction of various types of garden buildings; 3. the overall layout of the garden is magnificent, the architectural decoration is magnificent and rich, the function is complex, listening to politics, living, watching drama, worshiping Buddha, fishing and hunting and so on.4. The royal gardens are located in many northern regions, and are influenced by the north in architectural tradition, decorative color, and greening planting methods. Although the gardening art imitates the famous gardens in the south of the Yangtze River, it can still show the special style of the north.

The fourth category is private gardens,[5] the first is to take a flexible approach in the layout. First of all, the layout of the building does not use the traditional regular form of axisymmetric symmetry in the traditional palaces and temple courtyards, but adopts flexible and irregular layouts. According to the needs of functions, different forms of halls, pavilions, pavilions and boats are interspersed. Secondly, among these buildings, many tortuous and curved roads are used instead of connecting with straight roads. The roads have open stone paths, trails, and corridors for sheltering from rain. The second is to be good at imitating the image of natural
landscapes. Natural landscapes are free of their own ecological image. Now they should be reproduced in the environment of private gardens. Instead of reducing the size in proportion, they should be recreated by summarizing and refining the natural image. This requires gardeners to observe, study and summarize the form of natural landscapes, extract their rules in modeling, and reproduce them according to the needs of gardens, so as to see the big from the small and get the charm of nature.[6]

1.2. Chinese classical garden landscape design principles

1. According to the principle of local conditions, the local landscape design, as far as possible to protect his natural landscape, ecological environment and biodiversity, as far as possible to reduce the man-made landscape design of natural ecological damage.[7]

2. The economic principle, the same garden green space, using the same design scheme, due to the use of different the construction materials, different specifications of seedlings, different labor standards, the construction of the garden investment costs are very different, the designer should play in the current limited investment conditions design, to create the most ideal works.[8]

3. According to the principle of sociality, gardens belong to the category of superstructure and reflect social ideology. Garden construction should serve the spiritual and material civilization construction of the broad masses of the people. Therefore, garden designers should create a beautiful, hygienic, comfortable and healthy garden space according to aesthetic requirements, activity rules and functional requirements, and create a return to nature after people work as much as possible. The environment is beautiful and practical.[9]

4. Scientific basis: The design needs to combine the original terrain to plan the terrain and water body of the garden, and have a detailed understanding of the hydrology, geology, geomorphology, groundwater level, the depth of the freezing line in the north, soil conditions, etc. The planting of flowers and trees needs to meet the requirements of the growth law of plants.[10]

1.3. There are some problems in the landscape design of Chinese classical gardens.

1. Overemphasis on scale, ignoring the unity of landscape design elements and the surrounding environment; in order to highlight the scale and magnificent style of classical garden landscape design, large-scale design shows a sense of ‘ tall mountain’, but ignores the details. The landscape design elements are incompatible with the surrounding modern environment or the living environment of residents, without violating the sense of harmony, and losing the unique elegant, exquisite, quiet and harmonious atmosphere of classical gardens.[11]

2. Lack of innovation, blind worship of Western design, plagiarism is serious, while ignoring the true meaning of Chinese classical garden landscape design. The classical garden is based on the traditional Chinese garden landscape design as the theme, highlighting the design concept of ‘ harmony between man and nature’, through the use of natural elements, as far as possible to create a harmonious and unified design concept and design system between man and nature.

3. The practicality of social attributes needs to be strengthened; landscape designers should be aware of the needs of the masses of the people for the activities of the garden, and need to create a garden suitable for the needs of tourists of different ages, different interests and different cultural levels.

4. The Chinese landscape design is superficial and confused, and the problems of planarization and faulting are serious. The design concept has deviated from the classical garden landscape design concept. The classical garden landscape design is different from other designs. It needs to take the traditional culture and social development status such as historical and cultural characteristics, regional cultural characteristics, national cultural characteristics, local customs and practices as the basis and background of design creation. Simply copying will violate the meaning of its own existence.[12-16]

2. Artistic Philosophy in Chinese Classical Garden Landscape Design

In the works of art, many philosophical thoughts are infiltrated and integrated, and the combination of art and philosophy forms the philosophy of art. Chinese classical garden art is extensive and profound. It is one of the richest heritages in the world landscape design book. He not only combines a variety of art forms, such as ink painting, calligraphy, architectural design, landscape design, horticulture, etc., but more importantly, they are all guided by the philosophy of art, reflecting the traditional Chinese philosophy. The types of Chinese classical garden landscape design are formed by the influence of different periods. Among them, the most profound ideas affecting the landscape design of Chinese classical gardens are as follows:

2.1. The influence of Confucianism

In the history of Chinese philosophy, Confucius founded Confucianism, which is a theory of cultivating one’s morality, regulating one’s family, governing the country and pacifying the world. These thoughts, which we can call ethics, were also widely circulated at that time and in modern society, and were used as the ‘Analects of Confucius’ for learning classics, known as Confucian classics. In ancient times, the emperors of various dynasties mainly used Confucianism as the philosophical criterion, which still has a far-reaching impact today. Today we see the royal gardens, Suzhou gardens and other parts of the building is the philosophy at that time under the influence of the construction of the landscape and architecture, their design is natural, layout specification, can reflect the characteristics of the times. For example, the Humble Administrator’s Garden and the Master’s Garden at that time were all hidden from the world, and they returned to their hometowns from officialdom to build gardens. Wang Xianchen, the owner of the Humble Administrator’s Garden, was falsely accused by the East Factory and frustrated to return to his hometown, and applied for the design and construction of the garden. Master of the net garden, Qing Qianlong Guanglu Temple Shaoqing Song Zongyuan tired of the officialdom, returned to his hometown to build this classical garden, borrowed the name of the original site Wanjuquatang ‘ fishing hermit ’ , compared himself to a fisherman, with the ‘master of the net’, indicating that he was only suitable for river fishermen. Confucianism is also an abyss of influence on ancient literati. The poems created by poets are all natural landscapes. Nowadays, everyone is looking forward to life. Confucianism affects people’s
thoughts step by step, creating an atmosphere and social attributes for classical gardens.[17-19]

2.2. The Influence of Zen Thought

Zen is a major sect of Chinese Buddhism. Zen advocates 'outside the way of preaching in written language, through the method of' Zen '(a way to explore people’s hearts), people can directly know the nature of the world', also known as Buddhism. The natural garden can provide them with the display of the society, but the heart is as quiet as water, to find the inner quiet and silence, the garden is to provide them with a bird 's whisper, plus the pool, frogs, cicadas, bridges, running water and so on. The garden expresses the emptiness and silence of Buddhism and renders the atmosphere of Zen to the garden. Therefore, there are temple gardens in the classical garden landscape types, which cause people to meditate. The poem "Heaven and Earth are like a big garden, and time and space are infinitely circulating" by Song Shi Dao can depicts the extraordinary artistic conception brought by the classical garden landscape, which gives people spiritual comfort and close to the "empty" realm. It can be seen that garden life provides a practical way for Buddhist belief and suitable adjustment of people's mentality. From the understanding, we can study the landscape elements and the philosophical guiding ideology in the landscape, in order to obtain useful enlightenment.[20]

2.3. The influence of Taoist thought

If Confucianism and Zen philosophy affect the social attributes of classical gardens and the purpose of construction, then Taoism directly affects the design ideas and techniques of Chinese classical gardens in art philosophy and aesthetics. The ingredients in classical gardens are free, scattered, and not artificially modified. For example, there are no neat street trees, flower beds, hedges, trimmed grasslands, landscapes, rocks, etc. All the elements of the garden are their original appearance. The buildings in the garden are also set up freely according to the taste of the landscape art, which echoes the natural landscape and punctuates the artistic taste of the natural landscape. This natural landscaping technique is affected by Taoist thought. He is different from the western regular geometric landscape. The reason is that Chinese Taoist thought deeply affects the landscape art of Chinese classical gardens. Taoism advocates the return of all things to the root of nature, and the creation of human beings and society must return to the original state in order to achieve the harmony of all things.[21-22]

3. Complimentary Close

The philosophical thoughts of Confucianism, Zen and Taoism have a far-reaching influence on the landscape design of Chinese classical gardens. It can be summarized as 'Tao' 'is the pursuit of nature and an outward-oriented behavior. The 'nature' of Tao provides a visual basis for Chinese gardens and expresses that although the design of classical gardens should keep the natural harmony and beautiful state as much as possible. The ideological realm of 'self' and 'emptiness' pursued by "Zen Buddhism" is an introverted thinking, which provides the possibility of abstraction for Chinese classical gardens. The reason why Chinese classical gardens can achieve a balance between the two is that the Confucian 'doctrine of the mean' thought provides a suitable limit for the two. Therefore, under the common infiltration and influence of Lao Zhuang philosophy, Buddhism and Taoism, Confucianism and elegant poetry, Chinese classical gardens formed their own unique personality and created a unique Chinese classical garden aesthetics, which not only guided and influenced the design of Chinese classical garden landscape by artistic philosophy.[23]

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