PERSIAN GARDEN BETWEEN PERMANENCE AND INNOVATION FROM ANCIENT TO CONTEMPORARY PERIOD

ANTİK DÖNEMDEN GÜNÜMÜZE KALICILIK VE YENİLİK ARASINDA İRAN BAHÇELERİ

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ABSTRACT
The Persian garden, as a perfect structure, demonstrates a close relationship between cultural and natural backgrounds. In the past, the Persian garden would help reveal latent potentiality of the environment and perceive its intricacies. The Persian garden, a demarcated and surrounded place with its own mysteries and enigmas, includes a natural background, a cultural background, and the capacity of the environment which encircles it; and far beyond a merely anatomical and objective nature, it is associated with a relationship with the cosmic order. This way, the garden, this domesticated nature, possesses aesthetic, exalted, and fruitful values. The art and tradition of constructing gardens in Iran has a long history and is one of the main gardening schools in the world. The creator of the garden would rely upon his own experimental knowledge to create a place, additional aesthetic and fruitful values which brought about the survival and dynamism of the natural background.

This paper tries to identify the primary pattern and the continuity of garden elements in Persian gardens reviewing from the ancient through the contemporary period. Impact of culture and nature on permanence or alteration of garden elements was investigated.

The changes in Pahlavi era resulted in the transition of Persian garden to the urban parks which led to cultural transformation in Persian gardening.

ÖZET
İran bahçeleri, kusursuz planlamının örneği olarak kültürel ve doğal arkaplan ile bağlanı sırlarını kooraklıdır. Geçmişte, kendi gezem ve sırları ile belirlendi ve sınırlandırılmış olarak doğal, kültürel arkaplanlara sahip olmakla berab-
ber onu çevreleyen ortamın anatomik ve nesnel doğasının çok ötesinde kozmik bir düzenle de ilişkisinde.
Bu şekilde bahçe, bu evcilleştirilmiş doğa, estetik, yûce ve bereketli değerlerle sahiptir. İran bahçe tasarımında
ki sanat ve gelenek, büyük bir geçmişe sahip olmakla beraber dünyanın belli başlı bahçe ekollerindendir.
Bu çalışma, İran bahçesinin birincil öğesi ve antik dönemden günümüzine deguşme bileşenleri tanımlamaya çalışmaktadır. Kültür ve doğanın, bahçe bileşenlerinin sürekliliği üzerindeki
etkisi araştırılmıştır. Pehlevi dönemindeki değişimler, İran bahçesinin kamuya açık parklara dönüşmesine ve
İran bahçe tasarımında kültürel değişikliklere yol açmıştır.

INTRODUCTION

Persian garden is a place surrounded with mystery and restricted by codes and secrets, a place and
position of memory and fantasy which does not remain within its boundaries, its scope expands beyond its walls and limitations, including the natural and cultural basis and the potentials of the
environment that is around it. It means more than its tangible and objective characteristics and also
associates and recalls its relations with universal order. Garden, this tame nature, enjoys the aesthetic, high, transcendent and utility values all at the same time.

Royal Gardens in Ancient Persian

The Achamenian royal city of Pasargadae was located and built in Marqab plain, which is a high plain
at the foot hills and the mountains branching from Zagros mountain range in North West of Fars province. The Polovar River is crossing this plain. The city of Pasargadae was found and established by
Cyrus the Great founder of Achaemenid Empire in 6th century BC and was set as the capital of this
empire. Researches show that the city is based on an area between hunting gardens, palaces, gardens,
tombs and temples. The great Tal-Takht platform and its exterior rampart and battlements, royal
palaces, watercourses and the mausoleum of the Cyrus the Great can be named among the main
remains of Pasargadae.

The Pasargadae palace-gardens complex consists of a resident palace, levee palace, audience hall
and portal. There is about 200 m distance between each building. The central Chahar-bagh with an
area of 250 m by 300 m is located in the center of this complex. The watercourses, 20 cm in width
each, were made out of stone blocks and square shaped pools, with the dimension of 80 cm by 80
cm, were located within 14 m from them; that is a sign and evidence for their picturesque and deluxe
role and function because for the purpose of irrigation, unpaved watercourses would have been adequate. Researches and surveys carried out by Stronach on what remains from this organized
network of stone watercourses suggest that besides the deluxe and scenic role of these watercourses,
they have shaped the organized quadripartite geometry of the garden that evoke and recall the
order of the universe and four basic elements (water, dust, wind and fire) that shaped the whole
word. As a result of a study on Greek historian books and writings and archaeological researches,
with an emphasis on what Stronach have done, we may indicate and suggest that the garden with
quadripartite order appeared to be as a refreshing garden (Fig. 1).

This quadripartite order of Pasargadae gardens has been transferred to Timurrid gardens in
Samarkand, gardens that were created and shaped in India during Mongol empire era and Andalusian gardens in Spain.

The tomb of Cyrus the Great in Pasargadae was located in the centre of a rectangular area that
surrounded by a variety of trees and flowers (Pechere 1973). Tomb of Cyrus the Great can be considered as the first mausoleum-garden style and pattern that have inspired the religious tombs and mau-
soleum in Islamic period. Great and wide royal hunting parks and gardens that was enclosed and
walled were created besides refreshing gardens and mausoleum-gardens during this era.
Sasanians:

Like Achaemenians, Sasanians also rooted in Fars province. The Zoroastrian religion set a high value for nature, specially admiring and respecting the water that was guarded by the goddess of Anahita; its mythical role has had a great influence on palacergardens of this era. (Jackson 1906) Most of the gardens in this era were founded next to springs and ponds, like Takht-e Soleyman, Firouzabad palace and Bistun that were founded and created in attractive natural basis and in the vicinity of springs and ponds (Ghirshman 1976).

During the Sasanid era (1st and 2nd century) gardening and garden making have grown and developed widely. Sasanian kings preferred to construct and built their own palaces in a place that dominated the big pools that were filled with natural springs and fountains and in such way that manmade structures could complement the natural formation and structure. Probably these natural pools and ponds have inspired the pools in the Islamic gardens. Geometrical Variety is the most distinctive characteristic of the gardens of this age and the axial, central and quadripartite order and organization have been improved during this era (Fig. 2).

**PERSIAN GARDENS IN ISLAMIC PERIOD:**

**Timurrid Garden:**

Timure Tamerlane (Timure the Lame) chose Samarkand as his own capital after he came to power in 14th century. This city was located in a vast plain and in the vicinity of the vineyards and apple orchards; there were pastures and lawn at the extension of those gardens. In comparison to dry and arid climate of Iran, there were considerable amount of water in Samarkand. The Zarafshan River ran through the north of the city of Samarkand and the whole suburb area was irrigated by a vast number of watercourses and runnels. By his knowledge and understanding of the principles of the Persian gardens, Timure created a number of gardens around the city as a green belt which was unique and exceptional in the whole world. There is nothing left of these gardens but they have been explored and identified through travel logs, miniatures and archaeological researches. The existence of quadripartite spaces in the palace and or a seat located at its center confirms the theory of taking the inspiration of these gardens from Persian gardens. These gardens were designed and created on the basis of Persian gardens patterns, the Mongol cultural background (the nomadic tradition, summering and wintering) and climatic condition of the city of Samarkand. Timurid gardens had a considerable influence and impact in the next eras on the art of gardening. Babur, the grandson of the Timure and the Mongol ruler of India, had created similar gardens, taking inspiration from Samarkand gardens (Wilber 1962) (Fig. 3).

Taken from Persian gardens, the Samarkand gardens had rectangular and square geometric form and were organized in the forms of Chahar-bagh or on the basis of a longitudinal axis. As Persian gardens were conformed and coincided the basis of the Mongol culture, therefore this specific pattern was answering to the new circumstances and conditions of the Timurid rulers and was the most appropriate and proper space to be linked and close to the nature. Also the compact geometry of the Persian garden and the position of the palace in the point of intersection of the two main axes of the garden which divided the garden into four parts could be referred to the four Eden Rivers and also as a symbol and sign of the supremacy and power of Timure.

In 1526 Babur, the ruler of the northern part of India founded the Mongol dynasty which was the most important Muslim empire in the Indian subcontinent up to the 18th century. Babur was a poet, a musician, fond of environment and the designer of luxurious and splendid gardens. He described the gardens in his notes and diaries known as “Baburnaame” (Wilber 1962).

The choice of open spaces and broad and wide Chahar-baghs with precise structures in contrast to close spaces of palaces influenced the development of the process of gardening and garden making in Kabul and the advancement of gardening and garden making in India and Kashmir. These gardens were surrounded by high walls which protected them against progression of jungle, sands and dust.

Mongol Chahar-baghs were organized with pools, fountains, bowers and pergolas which were mostly
build on stone platforms and on the intersection of two main axes that were perpendicular to each other. The mausoleum-garden and the tombs of kings were the extension and the continuance of the mausoleum of the Cyrus the Great in Timurrid era which used geometry in the form of Chahar-bagh and quadruplicate.

**Safavid Gardens:**

Many years after the Mongol invasion, in 16th century, the central government of Safavid dynasty was founded and established and Islam was made an official religion of the country. This brought relative peace and welfare for Iran and Iranians. In the early period of Safavid era, the topic of garden and gardening was well discussed and considered in scientific, literary and historical works; during this period garden had a high value and importance as one of the main elements of reconstructing the cities.

Many researchers consider the Safavid era (16th century) as the most magnificent period in gardening and garden making in Iran since the dominance of Islam. In this period, gardens were considered as the element that formed the physical structure and shape of the city and like a green impact system which influenced the whole city (Fig. 4).

In Safavid era gardening and garden making began from city of Qazvin as the capital of this dynasty that was organized and formed as a city-garden but now there is nothing left of those royal gardens except for few buildings. In 17th century and during the Shah Abbas time, the capital shifted from Qazvin to Isfahan. By association of urban spaces, streets, squares and gardens in Isfahan, the city-garden structure and pattern of this city, which was one of the most important innovations in Safavid era, was formed.

Naqsh-e Jahan square in rectangular form, the Chahar-Bagh Street as a perpendicular axis to Zayandeh-rood River and the gardens are the three main elements that formed and shaped Isfahan. In this era the gardens in their proximity to each other and their independence at the same time has shaped the Chahar-Bagh Street which was one of the important elements of the city. The city of Isfahan which is quadruplicate was formed by the intersection of these two main axes (Wilber 1962).

This style of garden making shows organized geometry (Fig. 5). The usage of only one axis and quadruplicate form which also walled and surrounded the garden continued the organization of the water, plants and architecture. Everything followed the geometric order and organization, and was conforming and coincided. Residing garden, refreshing garden, ceremonial garden, shrine-garden, mausoleum-garden, mosque-garden and school-garden can be named amongst different type of gardens in this era (Moqhtader 1999).

**Zandieh Era**

By the downfall of Safavid dynasty and governments in the early period of 18th century, Zandieh gardens were designed and created in Shiraz according to Safavid garden pattern and style, during Karim Khan Reign. Most of the gardens built during the Karim Khan time like Delgosha garden, Eram garden and Jahan-Nama garden were actually the old gardens which were renovated and revitalized (Figs. 6-7). The main elements of Persian garden and mono-axial and or biaxial geometric order were employed in the gardens of this era with no change (Porter and Thevenard 2003)

**Qajar Gardens:**

In the late 18th century, Agha Mohammad Khan, the founder of Qajar dynasty chose Tehran as his own capital city. By creating and constructing new palace-gardens, streets and alleys, this city faced a new phase and form. During Fathali-Shah’s reign, the development of the city accelerated and being well shaped and with more order, the city earned considerable importance. Fathali-Shah was with no doubt the founder of Tehran. During this time the western culture affected all aspects of life in the royal court. It impacted not only the architecture and urban designing but also influenced gardening and garden design that could be observed in the form of constructing and creating vast and extensive palace-gardens in suburb and foothills of Alborz mountain range. The interest in garden making and garden arrangement grew so great and strong that the Qajar princes, nobles and aristocrats challenged and competed each other in garden and flower arrangement and where ever they found any new plant and or vegetation they tried to bring it into their own gardens (Serena 1883) (Fig. 8).
In this era too, gardens had geometric organization and order and their indicating elements were their axes. The old intracity gardens of Tehran also existed in the plain bed and in the form of biaxial or monoaxial, in continuity and connection with the organized and well-ordered structure and form of traditional gardens: a pool or a building was also placed at the intersection of two axes. Such order and organization could be observed in Nezamiyeh Garden, Negarestan Garden, Masoodiyeh Garden and Laleh-zar Garden. By developing the gardens up to the foothills of Alborz Mountain range in Qajar era, the possibility of watching the background and distant landscape in comparison to introvert landscape of traditional gardens might be considered as a new innovation at that time. Concerning the land slop and the opportunity that it has provided, this innovation considered the view to distant landscape in garden making and garden design.

The organization of the garden, the disposition of the axes and the location of buildings all have been chosen in accordance with the view to distant landscape. A swimming pool and or a big pond can be seen in most of the gardens of this era where, in addition to its function as water reservoir, it acted as focal point of the garden. By picturesque and deluxe role and function of water in different forms (still and flowing water) in these gardens, the man has emphasized his power over this vitalizing, clear, transparent and cooling element of nature (Docteur 1906).

Probably these changes were due to the influence of the western culture, especially Renaissance and Baroque gardens, so that the relation between the gateway and building with the main axis was not necessarily considered as it was in traditional gardens. In addition to the main element of garden structure, axis was the main factor for landscaping in picturesque and ceremonial part of garden and also it connected the residing buildings in private and inner part of the garden. This form of creating and composition of the space could be observed in some gardens including Farmaniyyeh Garden, Masoodiyeh Garden and Niyavaran (Sackville 1952, 1991) (Fig. 9).

Considering what has been mentioned before, it seems that in comparison to the introvert tradition of the gardens of previous times (especially Safavid and Zandid eras), the visual relation between garden and the distant landscape (urban landmarks, agricultural landscape and mountainous landscape) replaces the visual relation and continuity of internal landscape of the garden, along with the axis between the building and the gateway (Fig. 10). In the gardens that were located in the foothills of the mountain, the water was shown and exhibited in the form of cascades as the swimming pools and or deep ponds were used for their reflecting role as it was in old gardens (Getrude 1928).

Besides that, gradually near the end of Qajar era, it became common for the rulers and governors of Iran to import ornamental plants and to use lawn in front of the buildings and planting the ornamental plants in open spaces.

**Pahlavi Era**

In mid 19th century during the Reza Shah's time, the use of garden as a temporary protocol and ceremonial residence was taken into consideration, so that in Pahlavi's time, due to new recreational needs, the spatial arrangements of the gardens have changed to a totally different approach than Qajar era (Benjamin 1887).

Constructing and establishing new buildings inside the garden relative to different activities and programs caused a change in spatial arrangements of the garden. The entrance gateway of the garden was ignored and neglected as a result of shifting the direction of the main axis of the garden. Administrative, recreational and military buildings besides athletic fields were constructed and distributed within the whole area of the Qajar gardens as per need of royal family with no respect to the structure and organization of Qajar gardens. Vast and large open spaces that were covered with lawn and exposed to the sun light replaced the spaces that filled with deep and dense shadow of the old trees. One started forming the trees and shrubs, through pruning and trimming and planting non-native and ornamental trees in the form of massive group instead of linear planting of them in Qajar era; therefore, the type of plants and the way they have been planted caused changes in geometric order and organization and consequently changed the main and original plan of the Qajar garden. In 20th century and during the Shah time (Pahlavi the second), the space of...
the garden was segregated and separated due to recreational needs (such as swimming, tennis, horse riding and so on) regardless to traditional geometric structure and then each part was organized and ordered for a specific function and role (Fig. 11).

Different roles and functions like relaxing space (bowers and pergolas), athletic fields (like tennis courts), collective spaces for royal courtier celebrations and greenhouses for fostering the specific vegetations of the gardens were added and allocated into different parts of the garden. As a result, in Pahlavi era the space of the garden has been divided and separated according to new recreational needs.

CONCLUSION:

As a result of studies and researches that have been carried out, the geometric organization and order of the garden, besides the axes as an indicator element of the garden, was continuously present in the Persian gardening and garden making from ancient time up to contemporary times. In early Qajar era, as it was in the past times too, the axis was set and organized between the main building and the gateway in exterior part of the garden, but at the late Qajar times it was not a fixed and constant rule and principle especially when the summer gardens at the foothills of Alborz mountain range became widespread. At this stage, the axis initiated from the main building in the garden and visually guided the observer towards the distant landscapes and views (such as urban, mountainous and agricultural landscapes); therefore the axis did not function the same way as in old and traditional garden styles where it could link and relate the main building and gateway.

Different types and species of plants, especially shady trees, were planted along main and secondary axes. Using the lawn, open spaces in front of the main building were decorated and ornamented with ornamental plants and vegetation (Fig. 12-13).

At the late Qajar, and in mid 20th century, these open spaces located in front of the main building became one of the fixed elements of gardening and garden making due to increased importation of non-native ornamental plants and vegetation. During the Pahlavi era, due to development of the city of Tehran and the growth of population in this city and copying and following the western city parks along with fulfilling the recreational needs of people, public city parks were created and founded; as a result, public city parks replaced the old gardens of Tehran thereafter.

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Fig. 2. Palace-Garden of Firozabad, Sassanids (Moghatader, Yavari 1998)
Fig. 3. Model of Timurrid Garden (Herawi 1977)

Fig. 4. Garden-city of Isfahan, in the 17th century

Fig. 5. Fin Garden in Kashan (Behbahani and Khosravi 2000)

Fig. 6. Jahan-Nama Garden in Shiraz, Qajar Period, in During 18th-19th Century (The Album-house of Golestan Palace)

Fig. 7. Dolat Abad Garden in Yazd - Pahlavi Period the 20th Century (Modern Arts Museum of Tehran)
Fig. 8. The Geometrical Order of Tehran Gardens, in During 19th Century (The Album-house of Gulestan Palace -Tehran)

Fig. 9. Farmanieh Garden in Tehran-(Behbahani and Khosravi 2000)

Fig. 10. The Vista From the Garden Towards the Remote Landscape in the 19th Century (The Center for the Scripte Documents of the Tehran University's Central Library)
Fig. 11. Nyavaran Garden, Pahlavi Palace of 20th Century (Behbahani-Khosravi 2000, Tehran)

Fig. 12. Nyavaran Garden, Qajar Palace of 19th Century (The Album-house of Golestane Palace, Tehran)

Fig. 13. Nyavaran Garden, Pahlavi Palace of 20th Century (Behbahani and Khosravi 2000, Tehran)
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TÜRKİYE BİLİMLER AKADEMİSİ KÜLTÜR ENVANTERİ DERGİSİ

YAZIM KURALLARI

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YAZIM KURALLARI

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INTRODUCTION

CULTURAL STAGES

Central Anatolia

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Milattan Sonra’nın kısaltması:
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Örneğin;
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(Esin vd. 2001) / (Esin et al. 2001), (Esin 2002: 48-50), (Esin 2002: 48-50, fig. 10),

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