

The Sensible and Insensible Value of the Shazdeh Garden of Mahan

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Abstract

Persian gardens are well known for the integration of indoors and outdoors. Shazdeh Garden reflect the profound metaphysical importance of natural beauty in Persian culture. There exists the special relation between sensible heritage and insensible of the humane spirit of the garden of Shazdeh. The Garden was not only a sensible invention but also an important carrier of the Iranian traditional culture. The Garden of Shazdeh showing the people to pursue the profound spiritual comfort of the living environment also were interrelated to the local custom. The Insensible heritage of humane spirit is a good example that the people and nature are in perfect harmony. Also it is impacting on the sensible and spiritual requirements of today.

Keywords: Shazdeh garden; Persian; Culture

The Shazdeh Garden

Shazdeh Garden means the Garden of the Prince and is located around 6 km from Mahan in Kerman. Kerman is the capital city of Mahan district that is located in kerman province. Two of the most popular places in Mahan are the Shazdeh Garden and the tomb of Sufi leader Shah Ne'emat Ollah-e-Vali. Shah Nur-eddin Nematollah Vali, a poet, Sufi, sage and the father of dervish order lies in a tomb that is covered with turquoise colored tiles in its minarets [1]. The tomb alone was constructed by Ahmad Shah Kani, whereas the rest of the building was built during the various reigns of Shah Abbas I, Mohammad Shah Qajar and Nasser-al-Din Shah. Shah Nematallah Vali had spent most of his lifetime in central Asia learning and perfecting arts of spirituality. He then chose to spend the last 25 years of his life in Mahan that is located around twenty miles from the Kerman Province. He established a Darvish order that still exists and is utilized in the art of spirituality at a great extent till the day he passed away in the year 1431. The dome shaped burial vault at Mahan was built by Ahmad Shah Bahmani, and one of Shah Nematallah's disciples and was completed in 1437 [1].

The garden was constructed in the 1900s in a very traditional manner and contained terraced pools. It has been said that upon the news of the Governor's demise, the builders had stopped their work and therefore, bits of the entrance gate is still unfinished. The location of the garden was a thought out decision as it was placed midway between Kerman and Bam Citadel [2]. Apart from the residential area at the upper end, the garden also consisted of a two storey building at the lower end in which the second floor was utilized as living areas and a place for welcoming visitors. There are also smaller utility rooms that have been placed along the garden's sides. Some of these rooms have side entrances which are connected directly to the garden [1]. The Shazdeh garden consists of water fountains that flow to the lower end from the upper end of the garden. The fountains are not just aesthetically pleasing but have also been cleverly constructed in a manner that utilizes the gravity to help the water flow. The use of the natural environment to aid the design is a typical element of Persian gardens [3]. Furthermore, the Shazdeh garden is filled with pine, cedar, elm and other trees that contrast with the dry climate of Iran. The height of the garden is around 20 m with a length of 207 m and inclination of 6.4%. The natural slope has led to the garden dividing it into the upper and lower end. The water from the Qanat starts from the upper end and irrigates all the plantations as it flows downwards on both the upper and the lower end of the garden, there is a pool whose function is to collect the residual water. In total, there are eight levels of the path that the water flows through [4].

The Shazdeh Garden is spread over 5.5 hectares, with a boundary wall and is in the shape of a rectangle. The upper end of the garden consists of two residential complexes whereas the lower end is the entrance gate. The space between the lower and upper end is decorated with the use of water fountains that follow the natural inclination of the ground. The garden of Shazdeh is considered to be one of the prime examples of Persian gardens that take advantage of the natural climate to enhance its designs. The Shazdeh Garden was originally constructed for Mohammad Hasan Khan Qajar Sardari Iravani ca.1850, and 20 years later it was given to Abdolhamid Mirza Naserodollehand, the governor of the Qajar dynasty. However, the building was unfinished following the demise of Abdolhamid Mirza in the early 1890s [5] (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Shazdeh garden location (Google Map).

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Methodology

The current study will use credible sources and study Persian garden through descriptive, the Shazdeh Garden of Mahan will be measured as an original and living Persian garden.

Features of Shazdeh Garden

Gardens are seen as a fragile carrier of culture for various reasons; the main reasons are wars and natural disasters. Only a few of the original gardens have all the features of a Persian garden. For instance in Iran, even those gardens with magnificent history attached to them such as the royal garden of Shazdeh, have only a few number of surviving gardens such as the summer palace (which was repaired in the later years). Therefore, the garden of Shazdeh that is currently being maintained and preserved has become the symbol of traditional Iranian gardens and is being preserved in order to help people study the tangible and intangible aspects of the Iranian heritage [6]. The existence and preservation of the garden of Shazdeh is a reflection of the Iranian actual civilization including the economy, culture, and politics. Shazdeh contains a plethora of historical values, the main being the garden whose construction itself is an area of study in social science. The gardens that exist today in Shazdeh are maintained well hence preserving its structure. Therefore, Shazdeh garden can be used to study and comprehend the Iranian botany, environment, and architecture. The garden also allows researchers to understand the heritage, the culture, communities, and people. Furthermore, the garden is also a useful source for understanding how the Iranian gardening methods had influenced world gardening and botany, especially in East Asia [7].

The garden of Shazdeh symbolizes a cultural form and phenomenon with a combination of old and new gardening together with cultural aspects. This garden represents the human mindset of developing an environment in order to stay connected with nature. Looking into the history of the garden, it can be noted that those garden that have achieved great heights are the epitome of modern gardens and landscape architecture. Contemporary architects draw inspiration from this garden. The garden of Shazdeh can be seen as the inexhaustible asset of human civilization [6]. Thus, given the significance of the Shazdeh garden particularly in the study of Iranian history, it is important to consider what aspects of features of the Shazdeh garden actually depict this role in order to ascertain the degree of representation of the Shazdeh garden to the Iranian history, culture and religion. This section therefore takes a look at the features of the Shazdeh garden in order to see how it relates to the features of a Persian garden and the Kerman Folk-Custom.

The garden of Shazdeh also serves as a residential unit. In addition, the architectural spots of the garden add on to the beauty of the residence. These spaces precisely mirror the lifestyles, the social systems, and traditions of Kerman city. Kerman people are well known for their high-class way of life in Iranian history. Both tangible and intangible aspects such as the architecture and the handicrafts have been influenced by Kerman lifestyles. Shazdeh garden provide a platform for interlinking the lifestyle of Kerman people and even changes the royal way of life [8]. The architecture of this garden reflects the life of traditional families. Although the Kerman architecture design required authentic styles, the pavilion is arranged in a systematic manner from north to south and factors such as location, furniture and fitment are arranged differently based on the desires and favourites of the owner. This mirrors the nature of the community of that age such as patriarchal, clan-based, their ethics and social ranks, etc.

The design of the garden pavilion begins with the sedan hall and followed by the main hall, the male guests' hall, and finally the female guests' hall. All three halls are conjoined through an axis. The elevation and plane architecture of the main hall is much higher as it was occupied by men. The female hall, however, is much lower and darker [1]. It was in this female hall that the hostess attended to the female guests as this was the way society worked during that time period. The gate hall is occupied by the servants who wait to be called or given work. It is visible by the structuring of these halls themselves that men were more respected than women in that age. Gardens were architecture spaces that reflect the beauty of nature within its space. Gardens were also used by the owners to practice the art of poetry. It also facilitates family get together and parties that are held mainly for entertainment, as well as emotional communication purposes. The garden of Shazdeh serve as a place to live, for viewing as well as sightseeing. The garden also plays a significant role in fulfilling the daily needs of water. In addition, the garden is extremely graceful and can be appreciated at the same. In fact, the presence of the garden makes ordinary lives seem poetic and artistic amidst the art surrounding the garden. The owners that lived in this garden were so poetically involved that the global political affairs had no meaning to them as they preferred their artistic way of life. Gardens were a fulfillment of owners' desires to live a life of elegance [9].

Gardens have special places for reading as well as for listening to Nightingale sound and listening to the sound of waterfall and sound of rain. In Persian gardens, voice and audio are seen as important and hence are reflected in the civilization of Iran [2]. Therefore, equipment is also set up around at various parts of the Shazdeh garden in order to recreate this creative tranquillity. Another customs in peoples' life are the act of drinking tea over a thousand years or so. This started with kings, who began to treat this as an art form and developed separate factors to facilitate the action such as tea sets, water to make tea, various liquids and so on. In addition to these customs included the drinking, moon appreciation, enjoying nature and many other traditions [10]. Today these forms of customs are seen as a way of entertainment. The garden of Shazdeh is filled with cultural references. These entertainment customs are related to the idiographic buildings in the garden. Therefore, one can see the elegant lifestyle not only encompasses recreational activities but also in a very artistic and poetic manner, making it the ideal life to dream. The owners of the garden not only had a strong economic foundation but also had to be strongly rooted spiritually, sentimentally and culturally [11].

Traditional Craftwork

Many artists including poets, intellectuals, architects, calligraphers and so on have at one time contributed to the civilization of the Persian people. The set of achievement by these people are still preserved today in the garden of Shazdeh as a memorial of their traditional craftworks. The garden of Shazdeh is considered the heart of traditional artworks. Kerman has always been the economic capital of Iran. Therefore, at the era of craftworks, Shazdeh was not only leading in terms of industries but also in the number of craftsmen and artists. The garden of Shazdeh is well known as the carriers of the memories of craftwork and culture [11].

Every nation in the world will always respect and value their own cultural and hence historical relics which show the country's old traditions. Relics can also be used for research and to remember cultural history [12]. In fact, the 21st session of the World Heritage Committee appreciated and applauded the garden of Shazdeh for its excellence in the preservation of the Iranian culture, heritage and

nature. This garden also serves as a useful foundation for various studies and researches [11] (Figure 2).

Heritage of Historical Culture

The existence and preservation of the Persian garden is a reflection of the Iranian actual and religion [13]. It is important to treasure and protect irreplaceable cultural memories and relics in library treasures and archive collections. Countries all over the world preserve these cultural art effects in order to retain their cultural memories. Historical memories are precious and valuable as they are the only remains and evidence of the existence of a cultural heritage. Basically, by looking into the past of human history, one can understand the evolution of culture and the meaning of the future of mankind [12]. In Persian garden culture is a basic method to design [13]. The existing World Cultural Heritage Shazdeh garden is an excellent example in terms of the design of the garden. From its spiritual value perspective, both in terms of its tangible and intangible heritage, makes the garden of Shazdeh a historical memory of ancient Iranian heritage and a symbol of that era. The most valuable aspect of the garden is that it represents both tangible and intangible historical memories. Indeed, there is considerable scope for detailed research and development of this garden [14].

Discussion

There are many certain smaller buildings located further away from the delicate courtyards. This creates quietness and a peaceful atmosphere within the garden, and which is significant to the garden city. The influence of the Shazdeh garden in modern life is beyond estimation, which goes to show that those traditions and cultural elements are still of high value today. Secondly, respecting traditions and values is in fact, a psychological aspect of the human being [2]. Through the development of the garden of Shazdeh, it has undergone a reunification process, creating many tourist sightseeing spots, which was however later shut down as they lacked any cultural references to them. Today, people can understand the degree of importance of the cultural, religious and traditional values that lies within this garden. More so, the trees of Shazdeh blocks, has further added value to the garden, making it an invaluable relic and witness of the original beauty of the garden.

Conclusion

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cultural heritage. Basically, by looking into the past of human history, one can understand the evolution of culture and the meaning of the future of mankind. The existing World Cultural Heritage Shazdeh garden is an excellent example in terms of the design of the garden. From its spiritual value perspective, both in terms of its tangible and intangible heritage, makes the garden of Shazdeh a historical memory of ancient Iranian heritage and a symbol of that era. The most valuable aspect of the garden is that it represents both tangible and intangible historical memories. Indeed, there is considerable scope for detailed research and development of this garden.

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Figure 2: Shazdeh garden tiling.