



Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
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The Chinese traditional garden and its influence on Western gardens

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Degree Project in landscape planning , 30 hp

Masterprogramme Urban Landscape Dynamics

Självständigt arbete vid LTJ-fakulteten, SLU

Alnarp 2012

The Chinese traditional garden and its influence on Western gardens

Den traditionella kinesiska trädgården och dess inflytande på Västerlandets trädgårdar

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Credits: 30 hp

Level: A2E

Course title: Degree Project in the Masterprogramme Urban Landscape Dynamics

Course code: EX0377

Programme/education: Masterprogramme Urban Landscape Dynamics

Subject: Landscape Planning

Place of publication: Alnarp

Year of publication: 2012

Series name: Självständigt arbete vid LTJ-fakulteten, SLU

Online publication: <http://stud.epsilon.slu.se>

Key Words: garden ideas, Chinese garden, European landscape garden, influence



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Abstract

This paper has two aims. The first is to explicate Chinese traditional gardening and landscape theory and to give a more in-depth analysis of Western landscape thoughts, garden creation ideas, landscape development, landscape layout, gardening factors and enlightenment in order to acquire an objective understanding of how Chinese's classical landscape might have influenced the ideas of Western landscape and gardens. Therefore, I will explore how Chinese garden ideals might have influenced, with a particular focus on the period of the enlightenment and the romantic era, the development of the "informal," "romantic," "natural," "landscape" garden in the Europe. The second aim is to relate traditional gardening and landscape theory to contemporary concepts, such as that of *place*, which are of importance to urban and regional planning.

This thesis focuses on following questions: - Why has Chinese landscape design attracted attention for such a long period of time? Is it possible to comprehend how Chinese culture differs from other countries culture and if so how has it drawn attention elsewhere the world? In order to try to answer these questions, I will compare and discuss the developmental course of both the European landscape gardens and Chinese traditional gardens according to different historical process. The Chinese traditional garden, beginning with its primitive form, has gone through various periods and dynasties, finally forming its unique style, and it has later been welcomed by many western countries. Its special characteristics and ideas will be the key of discussion, which may be the answer to the question raised previously.

Since the Renaissance period, European countries have undergone a series of cultural and economic changes. The idea of gardening has also gradually improved and absorbed new gardening ideas from other countries and cultures. Different countries have different ways of gardening but there has also been interaction between them. At the

time Chinese culture came into Europe we can discern that the Chinese elements have been applied in the different types of European gardens. There is evidence that the appearance of Chinese elements and ideas changed the European idea of gardening, paving the way for the landscape gardens. Here, I will seek to explain how the Chinese traditional garden might have influenced the European landscape garden.

Introduction

The question of the Chinese cultural impact has been an issue within different fields. Why has it attracted attention for such a long period of time? Is it possible to explain a Chinese cultural form that differs significantly from other places, and if so how has it draw attention elsewhere the world? The Chinese traditional garden and its cultural value have also led to international debate from time to time. Inspired by this issue I came up with the idea of exploring the historical and cultural background behind it in order to better understand the influence of the Chinese garden.

This thesis begins with a discussion of Chinese gardens and the philosophical connotations of the Chinese traditional garden. It compares the developing course of the Western garden and the Chinese garden in order to give a more comprehensive interpretation of the evolution of gardens. I will there examine the social change and cultural shocks the different gardens have experienced in the same period in order to speculate on how far the influence from China might have reached and how much the Western and Eastern elements might have merged together, etc. Many questions will be generated, but we can hardly give firm answers to these questions, but by taking a historical perspective and examining the development of garden art, we still can attain a deeper and overall view of the influencing process.

Purpose, objective/aim and approach

As previously noted in the abstract, the main purpose is from the garden history and philosophy perspective to acquire an understanding and development of how Chinese classical landscape possibly influenced the idea of European landscape gardens. By reviewing the developmental course of gardens I will interpret the transition period of European landscape that took place during the Enlightenment and the early romantic era in order to illustrate the relationship between Chinese traditional gardens and European landscape gardens thus from a deeper level to reflect the cultural impact behind it.

- **Objective/aims:** The ideas of both Chinese traditional garden and European landscape garden.

- **Purpose:** To discuss and give a conclusion as to how and when the Chinese traditional garden might have influenced the European landscape garden in order to answer the previous questions.

- **Approaches:** To discuss and compare the development of the Chinese traditional garden and the European landscape garden by studying the history of both garden types;

To compare different Philosophical origins and Inspiration;

To discuss the culture encounter and Transition course

All the reading materials were collected by myself or provided by my tutors Kenneth Olwig and Anna Jakobsson. Discussions from a tutorial course on Chinese and Western garden history also contributed to my thesis as well.

Part1: Introduction of the Chinese traditional garden

I will start my discussion with introducing the Chinese Garden history, with the Chinese traditional cultural background and philosophy included. As it may appear as new knowledge for readers, I will explain it in details in order to give a general interpretation of the Chinese culture.

1.1 Origin of gardening in China

Professor Weiquan Chou (Beijing Forestry University) wrote in his book *The Chinese Classical Garden* that “Garden-making is a significant activity in man's pursuit for a happy life. East and West alike, over thousands of years, different peoples had been performing this practice, which has formed an individual subject of art and science”(Chou, 1993, Preface). The emergence and development of gardens are regarded as the crystallization of human wisdom, and the gardens are also important symbols as they in different ways reflect material and spiritual life for different people, as well as for their respective cultures.

1.1.1 The cultural origin of Chinese garden

(1) The Chinese philosophy and Fengshui theory

Speaking of the Chinese philosophy, it is necessary to introduce the “Dao” and the “I Ching”, both of which were the theoretical basis for all the activities in ancient China. These two theories composed the Chinese Fengshui theory.

"Dao" (Tao) originally means to have a road which leads to a certain direction. When it comes to Fengshui, everything in the universe attaches to "Dao". The “Dao” here is the core of Chinese ancient philosophy (Lao, 516 B.C., as translated and annotated by Pr. Gu Zhengkun, 2006, preface). The interpretation of "Dao" from the perspective of Fengshui basically derives from the "I Ching," the book of changes, which emphasized dealing with nature and society. The "I Ching," is also named "Chou Yi," as a philosophical work used to

make a profound influence on Chinese thinking from ancient times (Fu and Chou, 1066 B.C., as translated and annotated by Xu, Peng & Zhang, Xinxu, 1992, p.7). Generally, it provides a guideline teaching people to understand and to properly take advantages of nature in their daily life. It was summarized by the Chinese ancient sages, who made a long-term observation on natural phenomena and a variety of social activities.

The primary goal of "I Ching" is to create a suitable living environment and to achieve the harmonious coexistence of man and nature (Fu and Chou, 1066 B.C., as translated and annotated by Xu, Peng & Zhang, Xinxu, 1992, p.29). The traditional Chinese-world view is rooted in myth. Nevertheless, to a large extent, it derives from primitive experience. Myth is not, however, a thing of the past. It has gone beyond the understanding of man. So the traditional Chinese world-view represents a direction of desire to get to the perfect balance of the universe. To be livable, nature and society must show order and display a harmonious relationship. Based on this ideal, people required a place where they not solely could get guarantee for their health but also an ordered society (Tuan, 1977, pp.85-88). The Chinese geomantic theory developed upon Taoist philosophy, trying to foster positive aspects and to avoid weaknesses.

In accordance with the foregoing remarks, the general principles ruling nature should deal with the laws of the physical universe. To understand it aright we must keep in mind at the outset the Chinese people look upon heaven as the ideal landscape. Here we may cite what Ernestj. Eitel said: "*The Chinese philosopher, looking at the beauties of nature, the variety of hills and plains, rivers and oceans, the wonderful harmony of color, light and shade, sees in it but the dim reflex of that more splendid scenery frescoed in ethereal beauty on the Heaven's starry firmament*" (Eitel, 1993, p.9).

Fengshui, or Chinese geomancy, can be literally translated as "wind & water," as represents the foundation of Chinese geomancy in terms of natural elements. It focuses

on the relationship between humanity and the universe (Li, 2010, p.3). **Fengshui** theory has been prevalent in China for over 3500 years and must be understood in the context of humanistic geography; it gradually integrated geomantic theories in many aspects: spatial experience, spatial worship, mythology and religion. It considerably relies on Taoism and consists of **Yin-Yang** and the five elements (the gold, wood, water, fire, and soil).

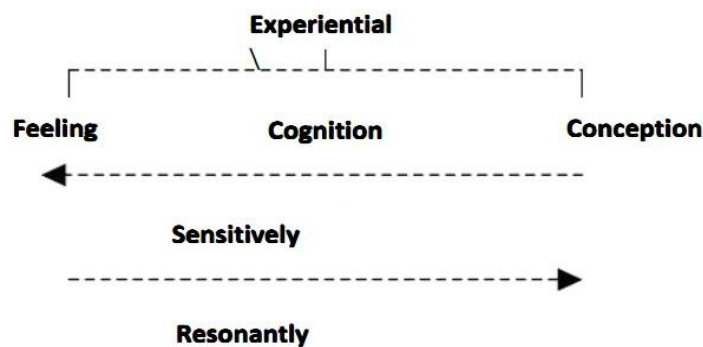
Chinese traditional **Fengshui** theory is the product of culture, and is also a form of social space constructed by geomantic theory. As a unique part of the Chinese culture it represents the Chinese people's endeavor of understanding nature, conforming to nature, altering nature, and harmonizing with nature (Liu, 1995, p.11). It emphasizes neither the human being nor the natural environment, but rather a balance (Liu, 1995, p.24).

Yin-Yang developed from the observations of astronomy and geography. Originally, *Yang* referred to the sun; and the rest were conceptualized as *Yin*. It is noticed that no matter in the sky or on the earth, living beings are in an opposite and complementary unity (Fu and Chou, 1066 B.C., as translated and annotated by Xu, Peng & Zhang, Xinxu, 1992, pp.47-83). Gradually **Yin-Yang** has become the important part of the Chinese traditional philosophy for exploring the source of world and the mechanism of change. Because of **Yin-Yang**, everything in the universe grows naturally and changes internally. Additionally, for the sake of practical and functional purpose, **Yin-Yang** has been widely embedded practicality and technically in many fields such as astronomy, geography, and Chinese medicine for centuries.

In fact, the Chinese traditional cities, villages, palaces, residences, tombs or gardens, all of them are representations of **Yin-Yang**. Even if they are constructed for various purposes they are controlled by **Yin-Yang**. **Yin-Yang** as a tool has been used by the ruling class in their site selection of and city construction for thousand years.

(2)Environmental Perception -- Chinese society was, in ancient times, feudal and was

dominated by agriculture (Liu, 1995, p.35). This means that people usually were living within a very limited area in which they only had the nearby farmland for their production. However, outside the rural area they knew nothing about the world. Their consciousness and awareness of space seemed not sufficient to explain the phenomena occurring within their home places. Being confined in their own places with poor accessibility to further destinations, people's spatial cognitive ability was fairly inadequate. Therefore their sense and knowledge of place could be regarded as superficial due to limited experience.



The German philosopher Martin Heidegger argued that *"'place' places man in such a way that it reveals the external bonds of his existence and at the same time the depths of his freedom and reality"* (Heidegger, 1958, as referenced in Relph, 1976, pp.319-339). And the professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota and a former Dean of the College of Liberal Arts Lukermann believed that a place is not the where of something; it is the location plus everything that occupies that location, seen as an integrated and meaningful phenomenon (Lukermann, 1964, as referenced in Relph, 1976, p.3). The concept of place can also be summarized as an indispensable link in the chain of knowledge (Prince, 1961, as referenced in Relph, 1976, p.1). The foundations of geographical knowledge lie in the direct experiences and consciousness we have of the world within which we live. Furthermore, geographical reality is, first of all, the place where someone is and perhaps the places and landscapes which they remember -- formal concepts of location, region or landform are subsequent (Relph, 1976). Geography is initially a profound and immediate experience of the world that is filled with meaning, and also the very basis of human existence (Dardel, 1952, as referenced in Relph, 1976,

p.5). Yi-Fu Tuan indicated that *"Formal geography is a mirror for man, reflecting and revealing human nature and seeking order and meaning in the experiences that we have of the world"* (Tuan, 1971, as referenced in Relph, 1976, p.4). Experience is thus a dominant issue with regard to people's sense of space and world view (Fig.1). This can thereby explain why an anthropocentric world view prevailed in human perception in the early stages of society.



Figure 1: relationship between nature, culture and man

When we focus on the relationship between people and environment, we can also sense the different experiences and feelings while standing in different spaces. Place and space are objective. However, people have subjective initiative to form a bond linking with people and the objective environment closely. People with a different view will act differently in similar places and circumstances, and this also figures prominently in dreams of an ideal world: *"The furnishing of an ideal world is a matter of removing the defects of the real one. Paradise has a certain family likeness because the excesses of geography are removed. In all of them, plants and animals are useful and friendly to man abound"* (Tuan, 1977, p.247).

1.2 Development of the Chinese classical garden

The two Chinese characters "yuan"(in Chinese it is “苑”, in English it means garden) and "you" (hunting ground, in Chinese it is “囿”) appeared in a very early time of the ancient China (Chou, 1993, Preface). During this time royal gardens, private gardens, temple

gardens and public natural-retreat gardens were already developed. The Chinese classical garden came into being and gradually matured under specific geographic, economic, political and cultural conditions. It has distinctive characteristics and occupies a unique position in the world, and its influences can be found in many Asian and European countries.

1.2.1 Types of Chinese gardens

In the long process of development, three types of gardens were formed in China: imperial gardens, private gardens and natural retreat gardens. According to the distance from the imperial palaces, the imperial garden could be subdivided into the following types: Yuyuan (royal gardens or gardens within the imperial palaces. See Fig2), Jinyuan (forbidden gardens outside the imperial palaces and Linggong (gardens of the temporary imperial palace in the city suburbs) (Chou, 1993, p.3). Private gardens were usually attached to the residence, and many of which are well-known gardens passed on for generations. They were built by scholars, so they received the name of "scholar garden" as well. In the area of the south of Yangzi River, scholar's gardens were mostly built in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces; and the best example were the gardens in Suzhou. In northern China, gardens were centered on Beijing, but most of them have become ruined due to the vicissitudes of the history, and can no longer be found.

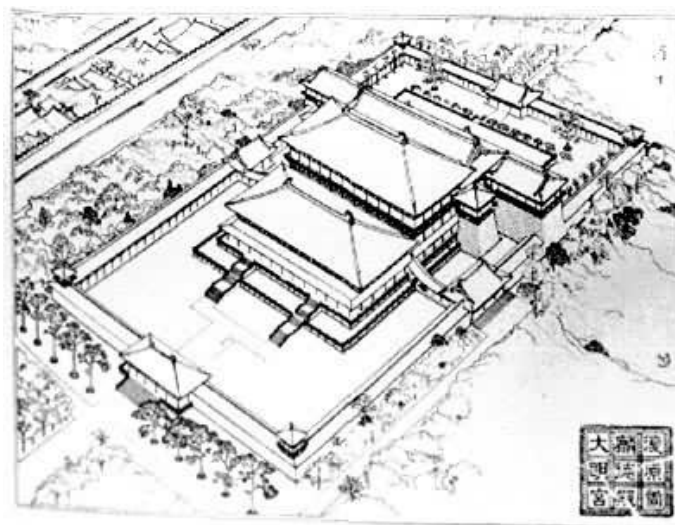


Fig2: The Yuyuan (Chinabike [online 2011-12-01])

1.2.2 Development of the imperial gardens

The imperial garden firstly emerged in the last Shang Dynasty in the 11th Century B.C. when large-scale “You” (囿) (imperial bird and animal farms) were set up for hunting. The “You”(囿) is an open field surrounded by fence where birds, rodents, deer, bears are raised inside. The field can be a pasture or a forest. Up to the Qin and Han Dynasties in the 3rd Century B.C., imperial gardens in a true sense came into existence after a long period of evolution. Such imperial gardens could be represented by the Shanglin Garden and indicated by the Shenxian (Fairy's) Island (Fig.3). But during that period the beauty and natural scene of the imperial garden have not been taken into account. Those gardens kept the original appearance of wild forest and as enclosures protected with wooden fence. When entering the Wei, Jin period (221-589 A.D.), in the Southern and Northern Dynasties, these gardens changed their rather simple appearance. The succeeding emergence of the luxurious garden proved that various functions like entertainment, has been taken into account; meanwhile the hunting activities gradually subsided. In the Sui and Tang Dynasties, the imperial gardens began to emphasize the creation of beautiful and natural scenes, which later have been represented in the Xiyuan Garden built in the Sui Dynasty (Chou, 1993, pp.5-6). Because of the rapid development of literature and art in the Song Dynasty, the imperial gardens reached to an artistically high level of pursuing refined and condensed beautiful scenes. Consequently, these gardens payed more attention to plant figuration, rock setting and water-scaping, which characterizes the gardens in the Jin (265 A.D. to 420 A.D.), Yuan and Ming Dynasties. The imperial gardens entered their final and most brilliant period in the Qing Dynasty. The Yuanming Garden (Fig.4), the Summer Palace (Fig.5) and the Chengde Mountain Retreat are famous for the impressive gardening skills (Fig.6).



Figure3: The concept of Shangling Garden (Xianyang [online 2011-12-01])

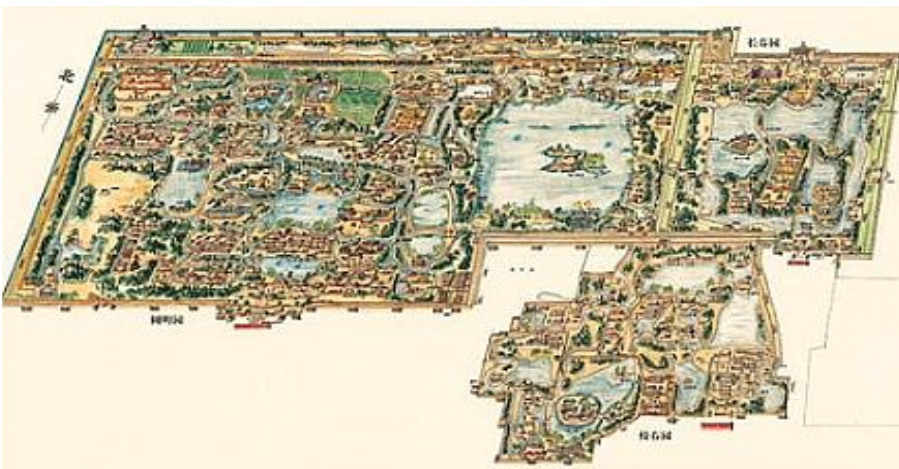


Figure4: The concept of Yuanming Garden (Uutuu [online 2011-12-01])

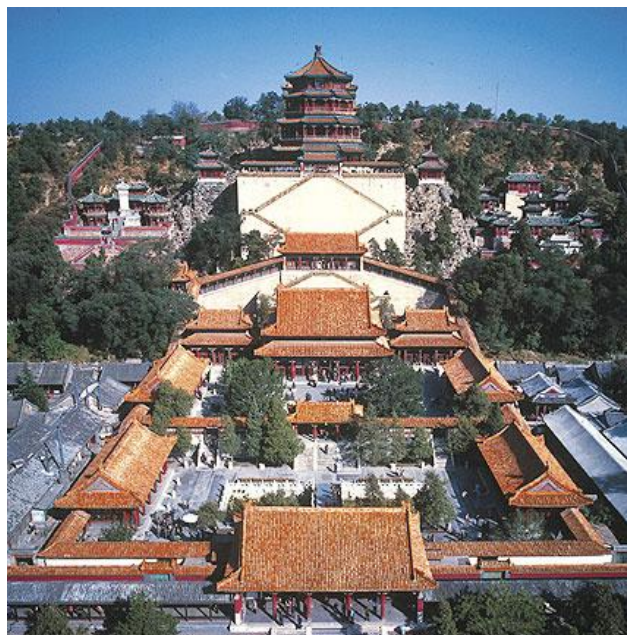


Figure5: The Summer Palace (Sach [online 2011-12-01])

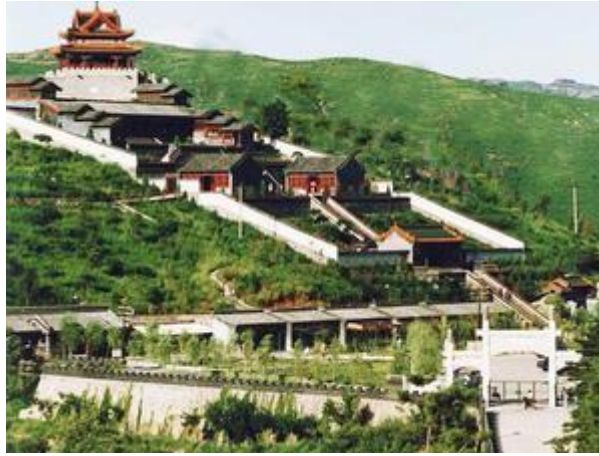


Figure6: Chengde Mountain Retreat (Hudong [online] 2011-12-01)

1.2.3 The Development of scholar's gardens

The scholar's gardens originated from ancient hermit ideology. In the Jin Dynasties from the 3rd to the 5th Centuries A.D., a number of scholars and notable nobleman moved their homes to natural retreats in order to evade cruel political struggles (Chou, 1993, p.226). As a result, many large beautiful villas came into existence, in which the owners lived a self-sufficient life. On the other hand, intellectuals and bureaucrats began to build small gardens, simulating natural scenes. Later on they were promoted into miniature gardens, which were perfectly using the themes of lakes and mountain. In the Tang Dynasty, the scholars began to blend poetic and artistic themes with gardens. The trend of garden making was generally active in the Suzhou City, and the technology in building gardens was almost perfect, as can be seen from the representative works of the Zhuozheng Garden (Fig.7) and Liuyuan Garden (Fig.8).



Figure7: The Zhuozheng Garden (Baiké [online 2011-12-05])



Figure8: The Liuyuan Garden (China [online 2011-12-01])

1.2.4 Development of the natural retreat gardens

In this section I will expand upon the concept of the "natural resort/retreat". In China the most typical natural landscape is usually called "scenic landscape". The word "scenic," however, comes from the "theater," which means stage scenery or background. It is meant to be experienced by the eye alone (J. B, 1980, pp.67-75). The Chinese natural landscape does not only refer to a certain scene, as if it had been used as a background, but the experience of landscape will also include the feeling of being within the landscape. It is said to hear the wind, to breathe fresh air, to feel green and to touch hard rock -- all of which aim to give an overall feeling of being part of nature. For precise definition, I would not use the word "scenic," but "natural retreat".

The essence of a natural retreat is public nature open for everyone. The origin might be traced back to ancient folk customs regarding people's recreational activities. In ancient times, water-side natural retreats and gardens mostly came into existence for construction of the irrigation and navigation facilities. The West Lake in Hangzhou, Daming Lake in Jinan, Jinhua Pool in Kunming and the Lean West Lake in Yangzhou are all examples of this (Fig.9). In the same period, public buildings such as Buddhist monasteries, Taoist temples, ancestral halls and academies of classical learning were often constructed in noted natural areas. All these factors promoted the formation of

the natural resort gardens of later dates (Chou, 1993, p.19).



a



b



c



d

Figure9: a, The West Lake (Lvyou114 [online 2011-12-05]);
b, The Daming Lake (365000 [online 2011-12-05]);
c, The Jinhua Pool (Ayican [online 2011-12-07]);
d, The Lean West Lake (Tupian99 [online 2011-12-07])

1.3 Aesthetics of the Chinese classical landscape

1.3.1 The genius loci of geomantic site and essence of place



Figure10: Typical Chinese garden layout (Chla [online 2011-12-01])

The Norwegian architecture scholar Christian Norberg-Schulz has in his theories about "place and spirit" stated that the most original idea of the spirit of the place comes from ancient Rome (about 8th Century B.C) (Christian, 1980, translated by Shi, 2010, pp.138). According to Roman belief, each independent entity has its own soul. The soul gives meaning to life, and it always accompanies both the individual and the place; meanwhile, it also determines the essence of nature. Norberg-Schulz considered that place is not something inorganic or unchangeable. On the contrary, place as a whole is composed of substance, texture, form and color and the sum of these materials determines the characteristic traits of the environment. This appearance is thus the essence of place, it meshed with the core ideas of Taoism that "the man belongs to the heaven/nature" and "The harmony between human and the heaven/nature" (Lao, 516B.C., as translated and annotated by Pr. Gu Zhengkun, 2006, p.37). According to this Chinese belief, everything in the universe has its own unique characteristic, and is essential for life's existence. Therefore, different places have special momentum and life

vigor.

The geomantic place can also be understood as a "zero place". It is an empty place where everything has possibility to happen (Olwig, 2006, pp.171-192). The concept "zero" stands for invisible life vigor and favored potential, both of which are prepared for flourishing development in Chinese philosophy. Thus, it can be seen that one of the advantages of Chinese geomantic culture is to use its geographical methods to find the special "zero place" for people to create miracles and to carry out a better life.

The aesthetic meaning of Chinese geomancy is the beauty of order, the charm of the rules of nature. The most intense aesthetic experience of nature is likely to the feeling of surprise. Providing the viewer with visual effects of beauty can for instance be one way of arranging surprise.

The following paragraphs are well-known characteristics of the traditional Chinese garden.

(1)Close and surrounded

The ideal landscape should be surrounded by mountains as to create the wonderland, far away from the noisy world. This concept is closely linked to the tenet of "return to nature" (Taoism), "born of philosophy" (Buddhism), and utopian ideals of the social and aesthetic point of view.

(2) Basic framework with balanced distribution

The physical layout, the geometry and hierarchical ordering of forms are architectural means to express an ideal of the cosmos and of society (Tuan, 1977, p.197). Symmetrical and asymmetrical patterns of balance represent the perfect natural balance in terms of achieving favorable factors. They are constituent elements of the ideal landscape.

(3) Space comparison

In traditional gardens it is quite common to divide space through using spatial contrast. Two spaces for different purposes next to each other can borrow contrasting characteristics from each other. For example, when enter into large space from small space; there will be a feeling that the large one seems even bigger because illusion of comparison. In order to create an atmosphere of "big of small" within a limited scope people used to consciously arrange the small space before the entrance into the bigger one. That is a way to borrow the contrast scene to highlight the main garden. Another example is the entrance to the Liuyuan Garden in Suzhou City, which is abnormally twisted, long, narrow and closed. Before you enter it your visual field is excruciatingly compressed, and a depressive feeling may at the first glance be generated; but when coming into the main yard of garden, the open vision suddenly eliminates the depressed feeling; which immediately is succeeded by the sense of enlightenment (Fig.10).



Figure11: Layout of Liuyuan Garden (YIstudy [online 2011-11-20])

(4) Hidden

The Chinese traditional garden art is based on the belief that the visible scene in a garden is shallow; so if you want to get a deep feeling of landscape it is necessary to hide some parts of rocks, plants or buildings (Chou, 1993, p.179). In order to pursue a deep artistic conception, gardeners used their acquired skill to uncover and to put the wonderful parts at the end, or to hide them in remote places, between rocks etc. Regardless of the size of the garden, gardeners try to avoid heading straight to the point by taking everything in one glance; they rather leave traces of the scene partially, and make them flicker.

This kind of arrangements at the garden entrance is commonly used for making good effects. As a result, the entrance of a garden generally is constructed to be compact, simple, and elegant (Zhang, 2004, p.74). The atrium area is often set with screen walls, rocks or artificial mountains to distract the sight from the core scene. This type of design is not only used to deal with the entrance. It is also commonly involved in large-scale architecture and small pavilions. The Chinese people believe that the visible scene is less profound and long lasting than the invisible scene; however, the deep impression of a scene should attract the viewer to explore more. It is a composition which also can be found in the Pot Garden in Suzhou City.

(5) Composition with artistic conception

When realistic three-dimensional space is represented on a two-dimensional surface through the linear perspective, viewer's sight is directed towards the external world. The centric ray of a scene moves from the eye to the vanishing point. Space is measured and calculated by this line, and the rest within the frame is fixed by the infinite space of the rays. Visual space is changing space. A simple movement of the head, such as closing the eyes or turning away may lead to the change of composition (Cosgrove, 1984, pp.48-49). On the one hand, this shows not so much what the landscape needs to be like, but in

what position you observe the landscape (Rees. R, 1980, as referenced in Cosgrove, 1984). The Chinese geomantic model, by contrast, aims to achieve landscape experience from a holistic point of view (Zhang, 2004, Preface). The linear perspective with mathematical rigidity has never been used. The viewer is not included in the scene; on the contrary, the viewer is isolated from the landscape. As we can observe there is a certain model, where we are standing is outside the model itself. Like the earth from Sky-overlooking, no matter how drastically the visual angle changes, the whole model stays still.

Elements in the landscape are set in random patterns where sights are free to move from one angle to another. From the place where the observer stands he or she can see mountains at different distances and thus also experience the various senses of spatial depth. This geomantic pattern fits well with the artistic conception of "far, deep, and high", and corresponds to the effect of an aerial perspective (Chou, 1993, p.135).

1.3.2 The artistic conception of the typical Chinese traditional garden

The artistic conception of Chinese landscape has been considered as important characteristic of Chinese aesthetics since ancient times. No matter if it is in literature, painting or architectures, this conception is highly required.

Firstly, the Chinese conception of landscape has multiple meanings. In the religious context it is a spiritual space. This space has both an invisible and a visible side. The invisible side corresponds to inexistence; the visible side corresponds to the existence. In Chinese they are called "Xu", "Shi" and "You", "Wu". The concepts of "Xu"(invisible, in Chinese it is 虚) and "Shi" (visible, in Chinese it is 实); "You" (existence, in Chinese it is 有) and "Wu" (inexistence, in Chinese it is 无) are four features in Chinese aesthetics. If a garden is to be regarded attractive enough, then these four features are necessarily required (Chou, 1993, p.317). In Chinese philosophy, the first one who suggested to use the spatial concepts of "existence" and "inexistence" is "Lao Tzu" (Lao, 516B.C., as translated and annotated by Pr. Gu Zhengkun, 2006, pp.247-256). The "Existence" comes

from “inexistence”, things generated from nothing (Fu and Chou, 1066 B.C., as translated and annotated by Xu, Peng & Zhang, Xinxu, 1992, p.2). This conception is similar to the one of “zero place” discussed previously. They depend on each other but oppose to each other. The Chinese traditional garden created the unlimited view in the limited space by using these four features in a smart way. It aims to break through the internal limitation of pavilions, to transcend the border of a garden fence, to cancel the narrow space of thinking, and to eliminate the spiritual limitations. This is a way to imitate the boundless nature; on the other hand, it creates the feeling of being in nature by setting free visual feeling and aesthetic imagination.

Regarding internal and external space, the Chinese traditional garden put more efforts into making use of features in external space. Only if an outside scene has high ornamental value it can be brought into the internal space; otherwise the outside scene should rather be blocked completely. However, for the internal space, it is worth noticing that the openness is also important in dealing with space (Chou, 1993, p.321). The general layout of the Chinese garden requires a deep depth of field, and adjacent parts need to possess visible and invisible features. Scenic partition and hidden scenery are necessary ingredients in satisfying the requirement of both recurrence and endlessness. In a limited space, unlimited artistic conceptions can be created. Regarding the aesthetic interest, landscape is more similar in spirit than in appearance.

As a natural landscape the Chinese garden pursues natural interests. It unifies natural beauty and artificial beauty, integrates both artistic conception and actual life as a whole. Social life, natural environment, people's taste and ideal beauty naturally comes together constituting a “real” place where one can walk, sit, appreciate and live. The idea of the Chinese traditional garden requires the gardeners to possess profound knowledge of nature, and this knowledge is needed to be fully reflected through making gardens. It is the great creation of recognizing, using and transforming nature. Here we have the belief

that the typical Chinese garden should have “Clear water gives natural lotus pure beauty without decoration”, “Natural one is always at the top grade”, “Even made by people, but still looks natural” (Chou, 1993, p.17). The Chinese garden is like poetry depicting natural beauty, and it can be imagined as a stereo landscape painting creating the feeling of traveling inside. It is a crystallization condensed by painting and literature.

In Chinese landscape, spiritual, cultural ecology and natural ecology are complementary merged together in symbiosis (Chou, 1993, p.62). The traditional garden has the function of aesthetic purification, which is clearly embodied in different garden spots. For instance: in Su Zhou, Changyuan there is a place named "clean my dust sleeve"; Yiyuan has places like "dust screen" and "embrace of green"; Liuyuan has "delightful cloud, heart-cleaning spring"...etc. In Beijing, the Summer Palace is named "travel in painting", Beihai park "Meditate room"; the Forbidden City "cultivate the one's taste"...etc (Zhang, 2004, p138). Various examples have shown the characteristics of "green revelation" from both cultural and ecological aspects: the poetic revitalization, the unadorned aesthetics, the abundance of spectacle, the deepness and permanence of philosophy and superiority of green. This revelation attracts people stepping into the beauty and ideal realm as well as helps them to avoid or to eliminate the spiritual alienation brought about by the violations of society.

The Chinese geomantic theory focuses on finding an animate place, which is sheltered but has its face to the sun, close to a green mountain and clear water and where the air is filled with songs of birds and fragrance of flowers. This point of view actually coincides with the core of eco-architecture, and with the sense of psychological factors. It depicts what geomancy provides to make correct choices and to avoid misfortunes.



Figure 12: The ideal Chinese geomantic model (Ddyuanlin [online 2011-11-20])

The ideal geomantic model visually demonstrates the relationship between place and space. The special place embraced by mountains and encompassed by a river. Fronting water and with hills on its back the Chinese traditional garden is a specialty of such a geomantic place, where a semi-enclosed spatial pattern distinguishes the ideal piece of land from other ordinary space. Space and place are endowed with idiographic features. Thereby, its intrinsic spirit can be conveyed (Fig.12).

Part2: Brief history of the European landscape garden

In this section I will briefly describe the European landscape garden history. By introducing the garden history here to give the clue of “when and how has the Chinese gardening idea been introduced to Europe and what the social background was”.

2.1 Origins of the European garden

In "The Biblical Old Testament" there is a description of the Garden of Eden. The Lord God in eastern Eden had built an enclosed garden for Adam and Eve to live inside. The description of Eden is based on a legend and there is no obvious evidence. However, it

suggests that in the infant stage of humanities, people had the desire to live in a beautiful natural environment. This might be the earliest ideal model of garden in Western society.

Concerning the primal source of the landscape garden, the famous British gardening expert Geoffrey, A, Jellicoe, used to say that, “the three major origins of world garden in the history are China, West Asia, and ancient Greece”. These three types represented splendid cultures in human history (Jellicoe, 1960, p.29). With the development of societies, the vicissitude of time provides opportunity for new culture; therefore the Chinese culture can thus be recognized and developed in other countries.

Here, I will focus on the question of what happened when the Chinese gardening idea was introduced into Europe. Firstly it begins with the Renaissance period.

2.2 Development of the idea of European landscape Garden

Taking an overview of European landscape garden history, the ancient gardens were basically enclosed by buildings with an atrium in the centre of the layout. From the spatial perspective, the courtyard is closely connected to the buildings. After Medieval times, during the Renaissance period in Italy, gardening also developed from the atrium type into the platform type, and then developed from a closed form into a more open form. Generally the space of garden has been opened in a free way; but from a conceptual perspective, it is still under the domination of buildings (Jellicoe, 1960, p.2).

2.2.1 The Renaissance period

(1) Early Renaissance

The Renaissance in Italy is a momentous period for garden design. Gardens in that time have been considered as “unique opportunity to examine the response of the human mind to geometry” (Jallicoe, 1960, p.2). The life philosophy in the Renaissance is built on the belief that man is the centre of the universe. The Renaissance movement put this conception into practice with a variety of forms (Jallicoe, 1960, p.3). This highly controlled

geometrical pattern made certain impacts on nearby countries.

Since the period of the Crusades (1096-1291), Italian transport within the Mediterranean Sea had become highly developed with the strengthening trade with Oriental countries and many domestic cities flourished (Shokichi, 1977, p102). In contributing to the collapse of the old feudal system, the local ruling class and middle-class later developed. Under the new circumstances, the ancient culture began to emerge as a rebirth, as the so called Renaissance. Famous scholars and artists gathered to discuss scientific and artistic issues and meanwhile the interest for beauty of nature, the eagerness to interpret nature and the appeal of pastoralism was growing. To meet this desire, the royal family and nobles began to develop secluded villas in the suburb of Florence, with which the upsurge of garden making started.

(2) Midst of the Renaissance

In 16th century the Renaissance reached a peak. The Pope Julius II (1443-1513), who highly supported and protected humanists and their works, contributed to make Rome the core of the Renaissance. Influenced by his power, churches and gardens entered a rapidly developing period and other types of culture and arts in Rome had made great progress as well. The Architect Donato Bramante, who used Rome as his point of departure, created a new gardening form of architectural terrace, which later has acted as a transition of Italian gardening development (Shokichi, 1977, p.108). At the heyday of Italian gardens, architects paid more attention to the overall layout control, in which the orderly axis and pattern were emphasized. Consequently, the Roman gardening type later was accepted by the French, and then was further developed into the great layouts of the reign of Louis XIV ((Jallicoe, 1960, p.7).

(3) Late Renaissance (Baroque)

In the beginning of the 16th century, the cultural center moved from Florence to Rome,

where the story of Italian villa buildings culminated in success. When the Renaissance gardening culture was at its peak, the closely related architecture and sculpture began to transform to a Baroque style, which also affected gardening styles and resulted in the emergence of the so-called Baroque Garden (Shokichi, 1977, pp.128-134).

2.2.2 The French landscape garden and its influence on other European countries

The Renaissance in France was originally influencing the garden movement a lot. The French garden received influence from Italy and later experienced a continuous process of development. In the end of 17th century, the emergence of Le Notre's Garden (from 1613-1700) marked the end of the period when there were no more simple imitations of the Italian gardens. Le Notre was the outstanding royal gardener who gained the title of "king of royal garden" in the gardening history of Louis VX reign. His garden style was the French essence of Renaissance period, and it replaced the Italian terrace by setting new fashionable trend for European gardens (Shokichi, 1977, pp.159-175). In the same way as in France the Renaissance impacted Netherlands in the early 16th century. The Netherlands introduced Le Notre's Garden style to build small-scale gardens (Shokichi, 1977, pp.203-205). During the War of Spanish Succession in Spain, the building and gardening style obviously showed the French characteristics (Shokichi, 1977, pp.203-206). In Sweden, the Queen Christina in the Mid-17th century took the lead in introducing the French gardening (Shokichi, 1977, p.207). Landscape gardens in Denmark have developed on the same basis as in Sweden and both types have the characteristic of typical French style.

The history above shows that after the Renaissance, the French garden style has become the mainstream of European landscape garden forms; and that the idea of garden design has evolved as well. But both before and after the Renaissance period these ideas still adapted to the geometrical pattern in varied ways until the English landscape garden was arisen. We may say it could be a chance that the emergence of the

English landscape garden gives more choices of garden design to people with new attitudes towards nature. When this change began, the question is in what way the English was influenced when the Chinese traditional garden ideas started to spread?

"It is a good starting-point for deliberation on world affairs, for its lead on to a question of the most startling and challenging nature. It is now possible to create a garden of universal appeal, a paradise not for one way of life, but for all ways of life...." (Jallicoe, 1960, p.28).

Part3: The Chinese influence on the European gardening ideas

The development of the European landscape garden is thought to have been inspired by the Chinese traditional garden, but to better understand the influence it is necessary to understand the historical background for the development of the European interest in China.

3.1 The entrance of Chinese culture into Europe

The ideas of Chinese traditional gardens initially spread to Japan and later reached Europe (Jellicoe, 1960, p.29). The early traces of Chinese influence on Europe can be traced back to the Sui and Tang Dynasties. Owing to the influence of the reports of the Italian traveler Marco Polo, towards the end of 13th Century, Europeans began to hear stories of the unique beauty of the Chinese palaces and gardens. From the 17th Century until the early 19th Century the overseas trade with China developed and European missionaries and businessmen then began to visit China and returned with reports revealing a new image of China to the Europeans.

The Chinese garden was firstly introduced to Europe in the 17th century. Louis Lecomte, one of the first missionaries to China designated by Louis VI, found that the outline of the Chinese cities was basically geometrically rigid but the layout of the gardens was curving and irregular. In France the cities were quite the opposite with circuitous patterns but the

gardens were regular and ordered. In order to represent the power of the monarchy in ruling the country anywhere and anytime, the Chinese city was always built in a regular shape. It was an inevitable outcome of the Chinese Feudal autocracy (Yang, 2001, pp.24-35). In feudal China the literati and officialdom sought to live in seclusion where monarchical power could not reach (Yang, 2001, p.37). As representatives of such idyllic life, landscape and gardens were arranged with curves and invisible elements. By contrast, many of the medieval cities in France with irregular layouts were the products of a less centralized regime, whereas the standardized gardens were formed in late feudal society along with the development of the modern centralized state that began in the Renaissance. The English statesman and essayist William Temple (1628-1699, has been considered the first man who mentioned the horticultural irregularity in England. He talked about the beauty without order in Chinese traditional gardens in 1685 (Liu, 2008, pp.3-7).

In 1696, Louis Le Comte published his memoirs from his time in China. Here he expressed his appreciation of China's irregular style of gardens and explained his understanding of Confucian theory (Li and Zha, 2006, pp.66-73). The law of nature has according to the doctrine of Confucianism been put forward and regarded valid for all the groups and it consists of the basis of human activities (Yang, 2001, p.40). The statement to follow the law of nature was proposed by Francois Quesnay (1694-1774), who was the originator of the reform movement in France, and had a strong interest in Confucian theory (Siren, 1950, p.12). Among the most influential representatives of Confucianism in Europe there were many philosophers who saw China as an ideal model of the world (Siren, 1950, p.12). Nevertheless the Europeans of this time period still knew very little about China at this time. When entered the 18th century, literature about China became more widely disseminated, and people who were interested in China have opened a flow of learning from the Far East (Li and Zha, 2006, p.75). At this time China was considered to have been founded upon the law of nature and was rooted in nature as seen from the perspective of

the humanities.

3.2 Possible influence and later development

3.2.1 How has the Chinese idea of the natural garden been developed by the Europeans?

The notion of the Chinese garden in England derived partly from the publication of Jesuit missionaries, reports of travelers, the tales of the seafaring men and travel notes of visitors (Siren, 1950, p.15). The cultural expressions of China were brought into England through a variety of forms and art works. From Liu Yu's book, the *Seeds of a Different Eden---Chinese Gardening Ideas and a New English Aesthetic Ideal*, we can see that there was already since 18th century a debate about the "Far East as the origin of the new English garden design" (Liu, 2008, p.2). Some English poets and other artists have found the similarity between the Chinese natural garden and the new English garden. When William Chambers, the famous British architect and gardener was young he worked for the Swedish East India Company. During that time he traveled to China four times in 1740s (Liu, 2008, p.11). He saw that the Chinese landscape garden imitated nature, but did not abandon all artificial polish. The imitation aims to create different types of scenes to satisfy various purposes. In 1757 and 1772 Chambers published the books "Chinese architecture design" and "Eastern gardening introduction" which made a profound impact on European landscapes. In 1772, he published his "Dissertation on Oriental Gardening", which both introduced the Chinese garden, and then he also advocated the idea to absorb the Chinese style in scenic gardening (Chambers, 1773, Preface). Chambers was consequentially the one who introduced Chinese garden to England. It is however hard to exactly define the form of the Chinese garden in that time, but a lot of changes represented this development. The strict regular routes and flower patterns were gradually replaced by natural wind routes and random plant groups. The Chinese form was not only developed in England but also acted as new aesthetic ideal for garden layouts, tastes and relationship between man and nature in other European countries.

From the very beginning the Chinese type of gardens was a sign representing the pure nature, but to some extent the similarity of using irregular form had also become the aesthetic principle for gardening. Since 1739, the garden in Stowe was somehow preserved and its boundary had been replaced by rows of trees and the Ha-ha ditch (Siren, 1950, p.13). The change of the fence depicted that the outside landscape could be part of the garden composition, and thus the natural environment also could contribute to the garden construction. These garden traits were used in the Chinese garden in order to borrow the outside scene and in this way enrich the inside scene. This type of design was firstly carried out by William Kent, who was an eminent English architect, as well as a gardener and a furniture designer. He embraced irregularity in his painting, within which also the assimilation of Chinese horticultural naturalism can be found (Liu, 2008, p.34). In this way the natural form was gradually favored by the Europeans.

In the 18th century, the English landscape garden style, in contrast to the declining interest in the formal style of the Le Notre garden, has spread throughout Europe and supported by the success of the British industrial revolution. Its democratic system of government and the increasing colonial power of the British Empire boosted the prevalence of English landscape garden. When the British gardens contained elements taken from the Chinese garden, the French called it the British-Chinese garden (*Jardin Anglo—Chinois*) or Chinese garden (*Jardin--Chinois*) directly (Shokichi, 1977, p.162). The Chinese impact was, as noted earlier, based on knowledge gathered from people who had been in China. The French Jesuit painter Jean Denis Attiret went to China in 1737 and was given the title "Painter to the Emperor" by the Qianlong Emperor, who insisted on using Chinese painting methods and styles (Dou, 1979, p.28). Attiret's painting eventually became entirely Chinese in its style. Most of his works were paintings of subjects such as trees, fruit, fish and other animals. He praised what he saw and he insisted that such a way of composition is the basic principle of Chinese landscape as well. It presents the simple appearances of villages, mountains and rivers; rather than the highly proportioned

palaces. The landscape is unadulterated and no matter if it is the winding routes or the changeable riverbank, every component is clearly distinguished from the component which has been used in the European regular garden (Dou, 1979, p.29). Boosted by the enthusiasm of the Chinese landscape art, the French began to understand and to appreciate the Chinese traditional gardens. The French Romantic writer Victor Hugo argued that "*There is a miracle somewhere in the world; the miracle has a name of Yuanmingyuan Imperial Garden*" (Dou, 1979, p.28). All of this could bear evidence of that the Chinese garden art had been gradually welcomed by the Europeans, very much because it did express its profound traditional philosophy and aesthetics in gardens.

3.2.2 The imitations of the Chinese buildings and garden arts

In this section I will give examples to support my arguments about how the Chinese gardening idea has impacted the European gardening work. In some of those cases where the Chinese gardens have been imitated we can see that the Chinese characteristics have become part of the European garden.

Evidence that Chinese elements were combined with European architecture can be found in the Mid-17th century publications. Even so, it is obvious that in many of these referred examples, the Chinese elements were no more than ornamental details. Basically, the main structure was still European style with unchangeable structures. Anyway, it is an indication that the traditional formal plan had taken the irregularity into account, and not just completely borrowed the Chinese style. The attempt of imitating the Chinese garden was somehow successful, nevertheless, the knowledge and experience of imitation was limited. Of course those imitated works more or less would have discrepancies comparing with the original one.

Early re-creations of the Chinese model could show elements such as mounding piles of hills, folding rocks, the adornment with some random bushes, twisted views layers of scenic landscapes, variation in water routes, several arch bridges and small lakes with

scattered islands and stones. Roads were intentionally built to pass through these rockeries, mounds, streams, and trees. Generally, buildings are subsidiary to the landscape, and caves and rockery are located on slopes or beside water. Compared with the adornment of imitated details in the early 18th century, the Europeans eventually had started to build more intact architectural settings in their Chinese gardens. Partly inspired by the Chinese garden art, the influential poet and essayist, Alexander Pope (1688-1744) helped to develop the prevalence of the natural gardening style. As a result it eventually had the effect that the Europeans were leaving the idea of geometrical gardens behind. Later on, during 1718-1723, Pope reconstructed his own garden according to the principles of natural layout, here containing a hill stack and caves introduced from China. He compared and discussed European regular garden and Chinese irregular garden in the book "Upon the Garden of Epicurus" (Dou, 1979, p.34).

During the 18th century there were already some famous buildings in London, such as "Pavilion in Ranelagh" inform 1751, "The Chinese Tower on Lord Radnor Estate at Twickenham" in 1756 and the Confucius house in Kew garden (Li and Zha, 2006, p.105). Some small Chinese constructions such as bridges, waterside pavilion, and towers were getting popular. Without doubt the Europeans had started to express enthusiastic interest in Chinese culture and after the Renaissance, the traditional Chinese architecture were arranged together with some classical buildings in Gothic and Renaissance style. In 1761, William Chambers built a tower and a pavilion in the royal botanic garden at Kew, which both were successful imitations of Chinese garden (Siren, 1950, pp.2-9). Following these examples, a large number of Chinese small buildings emerged in the late 18th century. In this way the knowledge and cognition of the Chinese garden was gradually accumulated and the European gardeners began to accept the Chinese gardening more directly and specifically.

With the spread of the Chinese garden ideals the large Chinese palaces were no longer acted as the core of imitation, because at this time much smaller gardens were raised.

After the British-Chinese garden had become fashionable, Germany, Italy and Sweden constructed typical Chinese buildings or gardens. The Chinese traces could for instance be found in the "Bergpalais, Schloss Pillnitz" in Germany, "Japanese Palace" in Dresden, the tea house of "Sans-souci" in Potsdam, and the Chinese House of "Drottingholm Garden (The Drottingholm Palace in Stockholm)". The latter was a summer house, built as a present for a queen in Sweden. They were not completely the same as Chinese architectures, but the Chinese elements were more or less marked.

Regarding the most typical Chinese architecture, it was especially difficult to imitate the buildings and the slight distortion of imitation sometimes led to weirdness. As a result, in the late 18 century, Chinese architectural styles were mostly disordered, imbalanced, incondite and inflexible. Once the flow of imitating the Chinese traditional gardens had passed, these buildings were left behind. At the end of 18th century, the upsurge of Chinese architecture and garden art finally faded away.



Figure 13: The Chinese Tower in Chanteloup 1755-1778, France (Architecturalwatercolors [online 2011-12-05])



Figure 14: The Chinese Tower in Kew Garden (Planta [online 2011-12-05])

After the peak of Chinese gardens in Europe the Americans started to borrow the gardening skills from the British-Chinese garden. America was also the first country to establish national parks (Zhang, 2004, pp.24-26). In this way nature became the apparent designer of landscape parks, and this might be regarded as the ultimate conclusion of the Western infatuation with “nature” as it had been perceived in the Chinese garden.

3.3 Discussion and comparison

In this section I will discuss possible reasons why the Chinese culture and gardens are welcomed to the Europeans. As described in the first part, the Chinese traditional garden art is an art based upon the Chinese philosophy that man is part of the nature. The nature cannot be controlled or changed; the nature has its own law and its ongoing track. The basic characteristics of the Chinese traditional gardens do emanate from the original, untouched nature.

3.3.1 The difference may act as the attraction for introducing ideas from China

(1) The different national view---the attitude towards mountain

The traditional Chinese value is built on the view that a natural mountain is the symbol of sacred nature. It is powerful and invincible. Ancestors of ancient China thought that the mountain is the place where deities live. So the mountain should keep its original form which cannot be changed or disturbed. However, since the early Middle Age, literature and paintings in Western countries usually have described the natural mountain as a desolate and horrible place; With the development of the Romantic Movement, Europeans began to appreciate the natural beauty of the raw mountains and rocks (Bernbaum, 1990).

As the mountains in the Chinese traditional garden are mostly rockery (Chou, 1993, p72), thus it became highly popular to stacking rocks in a freely pattern to simulate the mountains and to present the original natural landscape.

Before the 18th century, gardeners in the Western society rarely used natural rocks for construction. Until 18th century, Influenced by the Romanticism, the new appreciation of nature raised the enthusiasm of the wild nature. And because of the impact of Chinese gardens, British gardeners began to use natural rocks to make independent landscape (Jellicoe, 1991, p.12).

(2) The different philosophy

An explanation for why the Chinese garden produces such attractive charm and aesthetic joy lies in Chinese philosophy. *"Taoism and its philosophy as well as Confucian ideology provided intellectual conceptions for the design and creation of gardens"*(Chou, 1993, Preface). Secondly, Chinese arts and literature, especially paintings, played a key role in enriching the connotations and expressing techniques of the landscape (Chou, 1993, Preface). This is a major reason why Chinese landscape has acquired its elegant poetic quality. Thirdly, species richness and species diversity in China have served as a cherished source for the cultivation of Chinese landscape. From its design and shaping, the landscape became a highly livable part of housing areas, providing attractive "natural" spots for public enjoyment. The characteristic wooden structural form has been found expressed in many buildings. Here is the point: the garden and its architecture is man-made, it seeks to make naturalistic appeal, and provides all kinds of living and recreational spaces for the users.

The Chinese ancient philosophy gradually became a source of inspiration for some of the Western leading philosophers; additionally, the decorative arts were accepted as models for corresponding artistic creations by Europeans (Siren, 1950, p.3). The Chinese traditional garden has been considered as an original source for the transition from the formal style of gardening to an informal style based upon the so-called rediscovery of nature (Siren, 1950, p.10). This nature not only acts as a source for artists but also as a link connects natural science and gardening skills. Carl Linnaeus, the Swedish botanist, physician, and zoologist, had a scientific interest which extended over very wide areas, both in the literal and figurative sense of the term. His way of describing nature was a most prominent representation with a more romantic feeling for "wild" landscape, and a longing to flee from the artificial life to the heart of untouched nature (Siren, 1950, p.10).

In England, Alexander Pope used to praise the idea that the taste of nature should be unadorned with simple expression derived from the sense of art (Siren, 1950, p.10). One should provide a variety of surprise but not allow the full beauty to be seen at the first glance. The one who highly advocated this attitude towards nature was Anthony Ashley Cooper, known as the Earl of Shaftesbury and regarded as an enthusiastic interpreter of wild nature (Siren, 1950, p.16). Additionally, the Chinese wisdom focuses on the necessity and possibility of the unified relationship between man and nature. Meanwhile the core meaning is a generalized ecological, thought which has been of concern in Western society. Along together with sky and earth a garden life typically reflects the current particularly valuable Eastern wisdom of survival. It has become the contemporary life dream, not only for Westerners but also for Easterners themselves.

(3) The different art model

As previously introduced, the Chinese painting is lively. It gives the feeling of "being in the wild"(Jin, 2005, p.4). The major form of the Chinese traditional garden is an impressive landscape garden, which is presented in a three-dimensional space of the reality. Not only does it give people the spiritual satisfaction of meeting the various non-polluting cities, but it also gives many non-polluting physical satisfactions. Compared with the Chinese landscape painting, Chinese garden is the top priority of eco-art. Moreover, this environment is so close that people can have easy access to the wild nature. The Chinese garden is often known as the "urban forest"(Jin, 2005, p.13). It is a condition which maintains the quality life, while abandoning those non-ecological environments, which are filled with noise pollution. Nature seems to be part of people as people also seem to be part of nature. This "naturalization of man" is the true sense of return (Jin, 2005, p.13).

Usually people like to use the "figure/ground" relationship (Toth, 1988, pp.193-201) to describe the difference between the East and West models in landscape representation. The western goes directly to the "figure", while the Chinese model turns to the ground for

location, image and function of the figure. The former may concern "inside," while the point-line-area model stresses "look from above," or a "scanning over" in a more logical or mechanical way of description (Yu,1994, pp.320-337). The western model is grounded on precise geometry, which may be easy for exploration and expansion. However, the geomantic landscape is where man enjoys his peaceful sedentary life without rules or restrictions.

(4) Different views in comparison

The different view between European landscape style and Chinese landscape style originally derived from the diversity of Eastern and Western philosophy. During the Renaissance, the ideal gardening thought sprang from Italy and then moved to France. It gave rise to the geometry and symmetry, both of which became the representative of formal gardening style. The Westerners considered that a straight line depicts to obtain the maximal benefits directly by taking minimal costs. Therefore, the line and geometry have been thought as the aesthetic standard. However, the Chinese believed the philosophy of man and nature are united as one where the human being should respect nature. They worship to use the curve to represent irregular beauty of nature and believe there is no straight line in nature. They do not think the strict proportion could be the best representation of nature.

In Europe, the Landscape comprises the visible features of an area of land. It includes the physical elements of landforms and water bodies, such as rivers, lakes and the sea, but also living elements like indigenous vegetation and human elements like different forms of land use, buildings and structures, and transitory elements such as lighting and weather conditions. Combining both the physical origins and the cultural overlay of human presence, landscape reflects the living synthesis of people and the place where they live. The character and quality of landscape help to define the self-image of a region. It is the dynamic backdrop to people's lives. The design of outdoor and public space aims to achieve environmental, socio-behavioral, and aesthetic outcomes. It involves the

systematic investigation of existing social, ecological, and geological conditions and processes, and the design of interventions will produce the desired outcome.

From a general perspective, the landscape in China is considered as the second nature, created by people to compensate the segregation between human beings and the real nature (Chou, 1993, p.1). It does not provide essential materials for existence but to some extent it satisfies physical and psychological needs instead of real nature.

Enlightenment and thinking

Throughout the comparison of how the Chinese/European landscape gardens have developed, from the initial center of art to the attention of nature and respect for human activities, recent garden making industry for the times shows a strong sensitivity and responsibility. The garden making in the studied century, has undergone successive changes. The development of the design idea has been promoted by generations of designers. No matter if the Chinese classical garden is grounded in poetry or literary form, or the Western rational thinking in the geometric motif, both are transmitted from a variety of cultural heritage and aesthetic values. It is a design idea adapted to the changes, and it is the key to self-improvement. It is an art focused on overall perception of plane and three-dimensional art form (Dou, 1979, p.218). Regardless of the ancient time or modern period, Chinese or Western, an idea of design which aims to take the essence and discard the dregs will always be the principle adopted by garden designers (Yu, 1994, conclusion). The combination and the conflict between Chinese and European culture are forming a complicated and vibrant transition. The advocating of applying Chinese geomantic culture by western countries and the increasing attention to natural space are, to some extent, continuing to remind us that it is important to pay attention to the relationship between people and the environment, between various space and places, and between different countries, especially in the modern urban plan and design.

4. Concluding remarks

By comparing the different development course of both the Chinese traditional garden and the European landscape garden, I hereby think I can give answers to my questions that the Chinese traditional garden to some extent has influenced the European landscape garden. Around 17th century, the appreciation of Chinese natural landscape and the appearance of Chinese elements in the European landscape gardens have proven that the European had more or less obtained inspiration from the Chinese idea. When time went by, they came up with new attitudes towards nature and gradually took new elements to enrich, or to give new meanings to gardens. The British may have a lot of conception in common with the Chinese garden and showed great interests in it, whereas they still have their own understanding about nature and gardens. They opened a new period for gardens with a natural arrangement, which is just not as real as the Chinese one. Both of these two garden types depicted similarities of advocating nature and return to nature. Such similarities later had an impact on other European countries.

The difference between the Chinese traditional garden and the European landscape garden probably has some major similarities in the way they attract European attention. The various views of nature and of environment were born to be there without God making. That is to say, landscape garden making is not only an art but also a lifestyle. Diverse history, philosophy, aesthetics between the Chinese traditional gardens and the European landscape gardens make aesthetic distinctness and therefore bring a possibility of a mixture. The Chinese traditional garden is a place for people to enjoy the soul independently and feel life peacefully. Through them a profound and harmonious life is poetically expressed (Chen, 2007, abstract) and in history its totally different thinking and unique charm is obvious. All of this is combined in overseas colony, capitalism development and enlightening movement in the century of the 16th and 17th centuries. It has deep social, economic, cultural and psychological reasons, which help to answer questions raised at the beginning of Thesis. The influencing course is still going on from

the poetic, free and simple aesthetic, mysterious symbolic religious spiritualistic perspective.

Nowadays, the Chinese traditional garden form has interacted considerably with the European landscape gardens. Both of them have been more or less been integrated with each other. Now the idea of garden making has developed more virtue, more nature and more harmony. How it has developed varies from one culture to another, but in essence, it seems to draw on two antipodal images: the garden of innocence and the cosmos. We move from place to place seeking for a point of equilibrium that is not of this world (Tuan, 1977, p.248). It is necessary to realize the combination of both East and Western ideas to organize our information and knowledge and therefore to orient our observations. The integration of different ideas might lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the pre-scientific and experiential landscapes, as well as the scientific and analytical landscapes.

As landscape architects, we do have the responsibility of possessing different types of garden ideas to create a harmonious environment. However, since the start of my own experience of study in Sweden, I realized that not only simple geography and geomantic theory is used, but from a general point of view, we are supposed to possess broad knowledge of space, place and landscape; besides to take account of diverse relationships between countries.

Here, we may raise new questions:

Exactly, how can we balance the relationship between the European modern design and the Chinese modern design? We may not answer it for its changeable process but the Chinese garden design of today is embracing the world trend that a new style can represent new ideas, new concepts, and also act as the new-age task. We are looking for

answers from history; we are exploring directions from where we are standing as to look forward to the future where Chinese modern landscape architecture and landscape art can replay brilliance in the world with evident national characteristics and spirit of times. This will be a new topic which continues my thesis, and it will be something I would like to take up in the future.

5. Acknowledgement

My deepest gratitude goes first and foremost to Professor Kenneth Olwig, my supervisor, for his constant encouragement and guidance in my Chinese landscape study course. He has walked me through all the stages of the writing of this thesis and provided important reading materials for us. Without his consistent and illuminating instruction, this thesis could not have reached its present form.

Second, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Anna Jakobsson, who also is my supervisor. We had a lot enlightened discussion on the study group and she also gave me great help with my structure and content of thesis.

Last my thanks would go to my group members Yang Wang and Junying Pang. We had a wonderful study time together. They gave me their help and time in listening to me and helping me work out my problems during the difficult course of the thesis.

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7. Figures

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