



Chinese Civilization Series

Embody the long history
Explore the Chinese civilization

Modeling After Nature

Chinese Gardens

Seeking the lost back garden in the era of
"living in narrow dwellings"

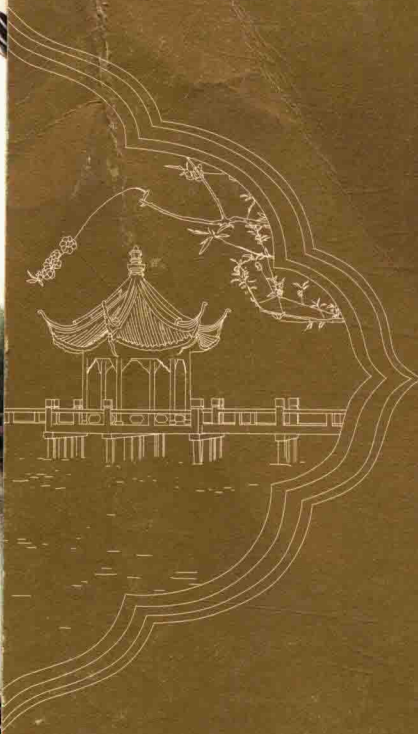
Chief Editors BAI WEI DAI HEBING

Written by DU DAOMING

Translated by LI YI

BEIJING PUBLISHING GROUP

BEIJING EDUCATION PUBLISHING HOUSE



Chinese Civilization Series

Embody the long history
Explore the Chinese civilization



Modelling After Nature

Chief Editors BAI WEI · DAI HEBING

Written by DU DAOMING

Translated by LI YI

BEIJING PUBLISHING GROUP

BEIJING EDUCATION PUBLISHING HOUSE

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

天地一园：中国园林：英文 / 杜道明著. — 北京：
北京教育出版社，2013.7

(中华文明探微 / 白巍，戴和冰主编)

ISBN 978-7-5522-1685-1

I. ①天… II. ①杜… III. ①古典园林—介绍—中国—英文 IV. ①K928.73

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2012) 第318663号

中华文明探微

天地一园——中国园林 (英文)

主 编 白 巍 戴和冰

作 者 杜道明

译 者 李 毅

出版创意 钟制宪

丛书策划 李国强 石岱峰 孙左满

执行策划 张晓莉

责任编辑 邹 雪

责任印制 赵天宇

封面印章 赵守庆

书籍设计 张亚静 李建章

美术编辑 曹昌硕 刘 伟

黄姜媛 寇大山

出 版 北京出版集团公司
北京教育出版社

地 址 北京北三环中路6号

邮 编 100120

网 址 www.bph.com.cn

总发行 北京出版集团公司

经 销 新华书店

印 刷 北京燕泰美术制版印刷有限责任公司

版 次 2013年7月第1版第1次印刷

开 本 710毫米×1020毫米 1/16

印 张 14.5

字 数 230千字

书 号 ISBN 978-7-5522-1685-1

定 价 198.00元

质量监督电话 010-58572393

Editorial Board

Honorary Editor TANG YIJIE

Chief Editors BAI WEI DAI HEBING

Editorial Board Members BAI WEI CUI XIZHANG DAI HEBING
DING MENG DONG GUANGBI
DU DAOMING FANG MING
LI YINDONG LIU XIAOLONG
LIU XUECHUN TIAN LI XIAO MO
XIE JUN XU QIAN YE ZHUOWEI
ZANG YINGCHUN ZHANG GUANGWEN
ZHU TIANSHU ZHU WENYU
ZHU YAPING ZHU YIFANG

General Preface to the Book Series of *Exploring Chinese Civilization*

Many books introducing traditional culture can be found nowadays. It's a good thing for scholars to popularize culture so the common people can benefit from the traditional cultural essence. The book series of *Exploring Chinese Civilization* has been written by such a group of scholars with achievements in different cultural fields. In writing the series, they try to make the ideas clear and the book easy to understand. That's quite different from the traditional academic approach to history. The series includes books on Chinese characters, operas, music, painting, gardening, architecture, folk vocal art, medicine, traditional crafts, martial arts, costumes, solar terms, myths and legends, jade wares, bronze wares, calligraphy and literature. Stunning pictures combine with the well-written texts to make the series quite accessible, even for readers unfamiliar with the subjects. Ancient history seems to be tangible. That makes reading traditional culture a delight for both the old and the young. Reading is an enjoyment, which makes people reflective and smart, so why don't we do some reading?

As the spiritual home of a nation, culture is the driving force for a nation to innovate and develop. Among all the human civilizations, Chinese civilization is the only one with more than five thousand years' continuous development. During this long historical process, Chinese people have demonstrated their qualities of diligence, perseverance, optimism and kindness. They respect nature and live in harmony with it. Chinese people are also extremely tolerant towards other cultures. They

absorb, study and transform other cultures and have fused them into Chinese culture. The wisdom and creativity of the Chinese nation once played an indispensable role in developing the world's civilizations. Today, Chinese culture, unprecedentedly fresh and vigorous, has been showing its generosity, love, responsibility and pursuit of peace and happiness in its further development, all of which represents the splendid tradition of the Chinese nation.

What is tradition? Tradition is the culture that can be inherited and developed. Chinese traditional culture, after thousands of years' development, continues to be carried forward by new generations. With such a glorious civilization, Chinese people should work to build on their rich heritage and try to create a new history, virtuously and unceasingly.

湯一介

Preface

Gardens: The Past and the Present

You'll be impressed by the massive-scale magnificent buildings and enchanting beauty of the Forbidden City, Beihai Park, the Summer Palace, the Old Summer Palace and other splendid imperial gardens if you visit them in Beijing, the capital of China and a renowned historical and cultural city. You'll also be fascinated by the unrivaled elegance of some private gardens in Suzhou—the city known as the “Oriental Venice” in Jiangnan, the regions in the south of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River. What's more you will surely feel refreshed and free from worldly cares when strolling in an antique and sacred temple deep in a picturesque mountain. Such are the gardens or “the wonderlands on earth”, which, with their widely different styles, intrigue visitors.

There is an old Chinese saying, “Up above there is Paradise, down here there are Suzhou and Hangzhou.” The popularity of these two cities is to some extent attributed to the gardens with divine workmanship in Suzhou and the West Lake with graceful scenery in Hangzhou. While heaven is an imaginary garden, a garden is a paradise on earth. As described in the canons of the three major religions in the world: the Garden of Eden in the Old Testament, the Paradise in the Koran, and the Pure Land in the Buddhist scriptures—present almost the same scenery—flowers and trees, fruits, rivers and ponds, magnificent towers

and terraces and bright roads, which constitute the basic elements of a garden. Whether in China or in the West, gardens are an artistic space enjoyed by people. They combine natural and artificial components to demonstrate the true, the good and the beautiful. That's why the garden is arguably an ideal place for people to live, an artificial paradise where people can enjoy the happiness of this life and spiritual elevation, even if they cannot live forever or enter nirvana.

China is a country with a 5,000-year-long history of civilization. Its brilliant ancient culture has given birth to rich and varied national arts. In this treasure house of the arts, gardening is a bright pearl enjoying international renown.

The origin of Chinese gardens is closely linked with mythologies and legends. The earliest world of deities that appeared in ancient Chinese legends is the Mount Kunlun where there were palaces, gardens and farms, exotic flowers and grass, and rare birds and animals. According to *Shan Hai Jing (The Classic of Mountains and Rivers)* and *Shui Jing Zhu (Commentary on the Waterways Classic)*, people would never grow old if they could reach the top of the Mount Kunlun leading to the heaven. That's why the ancients had a deep longing for the Mount Kunlun, which was particularly worshiped by the kings or emperors of later generations. The kings or emperors had the earth piled up and the platforms (*tai*) built by way of approaching deities, seeking protection or obtaining favors. Platforms were also built one after another in other places where people were influenced by the mythologies and legends. According to historical records, King Qi of the Xia Dynasty had the Juntai (Jun Platform) built in Yuxian County, while King Zhou of the Shang Dynasty had the Lutai (Lu Platform) built in Qixian County. Being an early form of buildings in palatial gardens, platforms became the center of these spaces with plants grown around them. That's when the earliest gardens came into being. Lingyou, the earliest Chinese hunting garden, was built by King Wen in the Zhou Dynasty, and its construction also started the tradition of designing hills

and water scenery in Chinese gardens. The gardening art in the Spring and Autumn Period reached a fairly high level with the use of artificial ponds, buildings and plants, etc. King Wei of the Qi State and King Zhao of the Yan State during the Warring States Period both sent people to the Bohai Sea to seek the legendary immortal mountains—Penglai, Fangzhang and Yingzhou. Although such a layout of “the fairyland on an island” does not exist in reality at all, it is an ideal layout for gardens, and has always been loved and used by the gardeners of later generations.

After unifying China, the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty had the Long Pond built. He also had the pond filled with the water introduced from the Weishui River, and had Shanglin Park built at Xianyang, the then capital of the Qin Dynasty. Later Emperor Wu of the Western Han Dynasty had Shanglin Park expanded, where the palaces were built, animals were raised, and as many as over 3,000 types of fruit trees and exotic trees from all parts of the country were planted. Shanglin Park became a Chinese garden in the real sense. In the Eastern Han Dynasty, private gardens appeared in addition to large-sized imperial gardens. Liang Ji, the General-in-Chief, “had gardens extensively built and the earth piled up to form a hill”. The hill is a vivid imitation of the real Mount Yao.

The Six Dynasties Period (220 or 222–589) was an important transitional period in the history of ancient Chinese gardens. The gardens were no longer located far from the capital city, but on the outskirts of or inside the city. The size of gardens was no longer hundreds of square *li*, but was obviously reduced. The artificial landscapes were no longer directly modeled after the famous mountains and great rivers, but were reproductions of typical natural landscapes. At that time the rich and the powerful people had private gardens built one after another. For example, the Garden of Golden Valley built by Shi Chong, a wealthy person of the Western Jin Dynasty, condensed the natural landscape in an impressionistic rather than realistic manner.

The West Garden built during the reign of Emperor Yang in the Sui

Dynasty was a splendid imperial garden following Shanglin Park. The development of gardens was in full swing in the early Tang Dynasty, when the number of private gardens built by high ranking officials and aristocrats in Luoyang only amounted to over 1,000. The men of letters as well as artists, who claimed themselves to have refined tastes and noble and pure character, were mostly involved in the building of their private gardens that had picturesque scenery: a garden can be compared to a three-dimensional poem or a flowing painting. The representative people in this regard included Wang Wei, Bai Juyi and other eminent poets.

In the Song Dynasty, rural villas gradually gave way to urban gardens, in which a large amount of artificial waterworks and piled rocks became the main features of gardens. The Longevity Mountain Genyue was a garden with mountains and rivers in impressionistic style built in the Northern Song Dynasty. It was a pioneering work in the history of Chinese gardens. It boasted not only the largest artificial hill fully piled with taihu rocks, but also many scenes characterizing the Chinese landscape.

In the Yuan Dynasty, the innovations made in Chinese landscape paintings exerted influence on the art of gardening, which was called three-dimensional landscape painting. Towards the end of the Yuan Dynasty, a large number of painters were involved in garden construction, promoting the organic integration of poems and paintings with gardens, which marked the shift from realistic to impressionistic style in garden construction.

The Ming and Qing dynasties saw the peak of the creation of Chinese gardens. The main achievements in the Ming Dynasty were represented by the construction of private gardens in Jiangnan, such as Canglang Pavilion, the Lingering Garden, the Humble Administrator's Garden and the Garden for Lodging One's Expansive Feelings. The reigns of Emperor Kangxi and Emperor Qianlong was a period when the construction of imperial gardens, including that of the Old Summer Palace, the Chengde Summer Resort and the Spring Garden, was very active. An important

characteristic of the gardens in the Qing Dynasty was that well-known scenic spots all over the country as well as the natural landscape were reproduced in large-sized imperial gardens, forming a style of "larger gardens enclosing smaller ones". For example, at the Chengde Summer Resort, the Golden Mountain Pavilion was modeled after the pavilion at the Golden Mountain Temple in Zhenjiang, the House of Smoke and Rain was modeled after the House of Smoke and Rain in Jiaxing, and the Lion Forest Garden at Wenyuan Garden was modeled after the Lion Forest Garden in Suzhou. In addition, the Garden of Harmonious Interests inside the Summer Palace was constructed to reproduce the scenic Garden for Lodging One's Expansive Feelings in Wuxi.

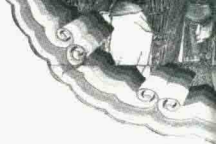
Due to its vast size, China has varied climates and geographical conditions among its different regions. This results in distinct local characteristics of gardens. Generally speaking, the gardens in the north look grand and magnificent, those in Jiangnan are graceful and pretty, those in the regions of Lingnan (referring to the regions south of the Five Ridges, covering Guangdong and Guangxi provinces), are splendid and exquisite, and those in Sichuan, are simple and elegant.

According to the types, Chinese gardens can be roughly divided into imperial gardens, private gardens and temple gardens. In addition, there are natural landscape gardens, tomb gardens, government office gardens, ancestral hall gardens, academy gardens, public gardens and others. Of them, imperial gardens have the longest history. Concentrated mainly in north China, the imperial gardens extant today include the cute imperial garden inside the Forbidden City as well as the large-sized ones such as the Summer Palace and the Chengde Summer Resort. The private gardens mainly include gardens commissioned by literati, which are mainly distributed in Jiangnan. Visitors are liable to be amazed by and linger in these private gardens which, though lacking in the grandeur and the soul-capturing beauty of imperial gardens, have their distinctive flavors. Temple gardens can be found in almost all the famous mountains.

Most of them are tucked away in the mountains. There are some small gardens inside some temples for pilgrims, such as Lingyin Temple in Hangzhou. There are some other temple-affiliated gardens, such as Longhua Temple in Shanghai.

Overall, Chinese gardens represent an artistic gathering of various Chinese cultural elements, embodying the traditional philosophical ideas and aesthetic tastes of the Chinese and presenting unique gardening techniques. All these characteristics may probably become all the more clear when Chinese gardens are compared with Western gardens, Japanese gardens and Islamic gardens.

Now, let's take a look at Chinese garden art.



CONTENTS

Chapter 1

Miniaturizing the Immense Body of Nature in a Limited Space —On Chinese Gardens

The Principle of Being Modeled After Heaven and Earth...1

A World in a Teapot...10

A Wealth of Cultural Attractions...17

Chapter 2

Contending with Each Other to Demonstrate Their Charms—Types of Chinese Gardens

Magnificent Imperial Gardens...27

Exquisite Private Gardens...39

Archaic Temple Gardens...51

Chapter 3

Divine Workmanship—Four Garden Construction Elements in Chinese Gardens

Hill Construction...67

Water Arrangement...76

Buildings...90

Plants...104





Chapter 4

The Unity of Human and Nature—Philosophical Thinking Expressed in Chinese Gardens

Confucianism and Chinese Gardens...113

Taoism and Chinese Gardens...124

Buddhism and Chinese Gardens...133

Chapter 5

Exerting Fascination—Appreciating the Beauty of Chinese Gardens

The Aesthetic Connotations of Gardens' Names and Antithetical
Couplets...143

The Artistic Conception of Chinese Gardens...150

Dynamic Beauty...164

Chapter 6

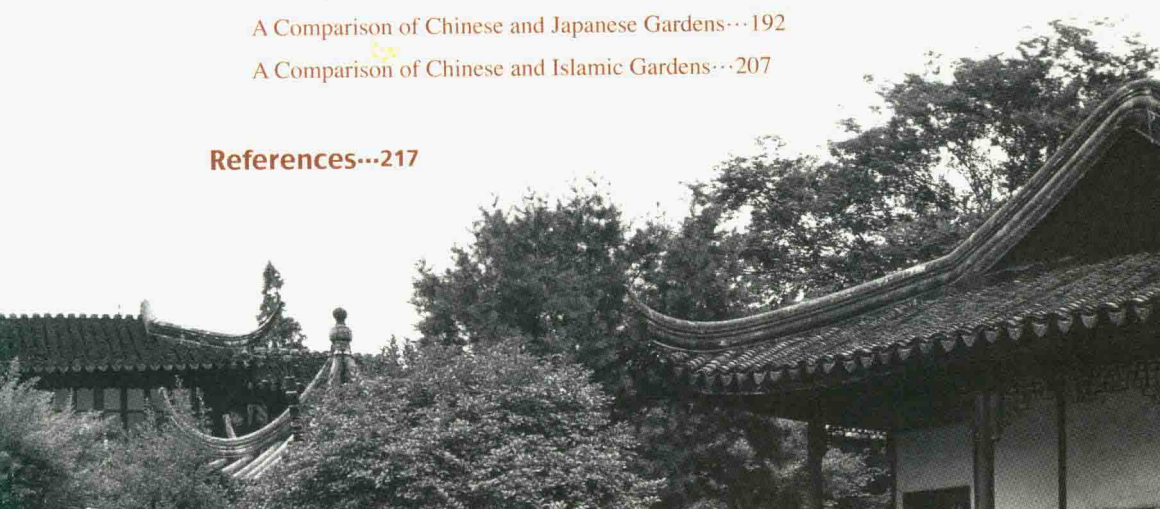
Each Having Its Own Merits—A Comparison of Chinese and International Gardens

A Comparison of Chinese and Western Gardens...177

A Comparison of Chinese and Japanese Gardens...192

A Comparison of Chinese and Islamic Gardens...207

References...217



I The Principle of Being Modeled After Heaven and Earth

The essence of Chinese gardens is to miniaturize the immense body of nature in a limited space. Chinese gardens represent an art embodying the essence of the Chinese culture. They not only imitate the natural landscape by being “modeled after heaven and earth”, but condense time and space in a confined space.

Proceeding from their primitive outlooks on nature, the ancestors of the Chinese worshipped the sun, the moon, stars, winds, rain, thunder, lightening, famous mountains, great rivers and other natural phenomena, thinking they represent supernatural powers. Following the end of the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties, people even worshipped the supreme “god of heaven”, thinking the mysterious god of heaven was in control of the world of deities. The heavenly abode of the god of heaven became an object imitated by Chinese gardens. The heavenly palace where the god of heaven lived became the blueprint for the construction of imperial palaces of the successive generations. For example, in the Summer Palace, the inscriptions on the archway in front of the Gate of Dispelling the Cloud below the Palace of Dispelling the Cloud read “Xinggong Yaoshu” (Fig. 1-1), which means “the North Star is surrounded and protected by stars”. Kunming Lake in the Summer Palace also symbolizes the fairyland having “one pond and three islands”. On the west bank of Kunming Lake there used to be a group of buildings signifying agriculture and mulberries and representing the Weaving Girl engaged in agriculture and mulberry plantation; on the east bank there is a bronze ox (Fig. 1-2) which represents the Herd Boy. As the Weaving Girl and the Herd Boy are separated by the Milky Way in a well-known Chinese fairy tale, it is obvious that Kunming Lake implies the Milky Way. The predecessor of the Hall of Infinite Space of the South Lake Island was the three-storied “Moon Watching Hall” which symbolizes the wonderland of the moon palace. The Dragon King Temple

Fig. 1-1 The inscriptions on a horizontal board on the archway in front of the Gate of Dispelling the Cloud below the Palace of Dispelling the Cloud, which means the North Star is surrounded and protected by stars (shot by Zhang Qingmin)

These not only symbolizes that, with the allegiance of his subjects, the emperor exercises the imperial rule over the whole country or even the whole universe, but represents that the garden on the earth corresponds to the heavenly phenomena, representing the Chinese concept of "unity of human and nature".



on the South Lake Island and the Phoenix Mound (Fig. 1-3) in the south water symbolize respectively dragon and phoenix.

As the Chinese garden usually reflects its owner's general philosophy of life, it should symbolize and present the universe and everything in it, thus it becomes a certain "microscopic cosmos". It is well-known that in the eyes of the Chinese people, the circular-shaped upper part represents the heaven while the square-shaped lower part indicates the earth. For instance, a copper coin with a round shape and a square hole in it means that it represents the whole universe. In addition, in each of the nine temple gates inside the Temple of Heaven Park in Beijing, there are three holes with semi-circular upper part and square-shaped lower part (Fig. 1-4),

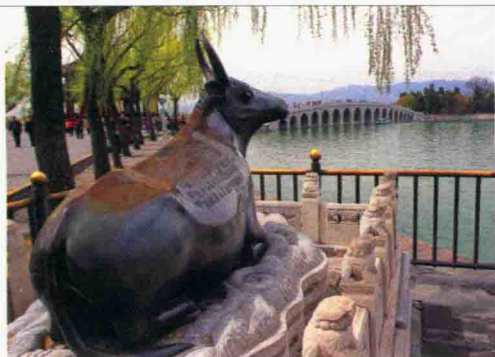


Fig. 1-2 Bronze ox symbolizing the Herd Boy on the east bank of Kunming Lake at the Summer Palace (shot by Liu Shuo)

As Emperor Qianlong compared himself to the Jade Emperor in Heaven, and compared Kunming Lake to the Milky Way, the Herd Boy and the Weaving Girl were respectively arranged on the east and west banks of Kunming Lake which symbolizes the Milky Way. The "Drawing of Tilling and Weaving" on the west bank of Kunming Lake signifies the Weaving Girl.

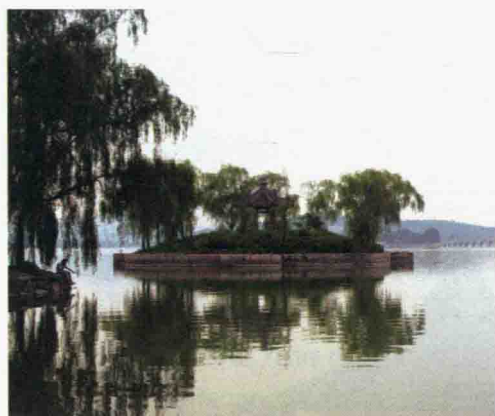


Fig. 1-3 Phoenix Mound corresponding to the Dragon King Temple on the South Lake Island (shot by Nie Ming)

In the feudal era of the dynasties, the dragon stood for the imperial power, therefore the emperor was called the "real dragon and the son of heaven". The phoenix symbolized empress, and the coronet worn by the empress was called phoenix coronet. The dragon and the phoenix correspond to the union of a dragon and a phoenix. From this it can be seen the careful consideration of the designers when they designed the Dragon King Temple and the Phoenix Mound.

which means no matter how huge the heaven and the earth are, they are embraced in each of these gates.

In Chinese gardens, which are renowned for their impressionistic natural landscapes, visitors feel like they are enjoying an objective natural landscapes, which are imitated, artistically distilled, and miniaturized in a confined space. At the same time, poetic beauty finds its expression in Chinese gardens, which, from their beginning, have been nurtured in the fertile land of Chinese culture, subject to the influences of painting, poetry and other forms of art, and designed and built directly by men of letters and artisans. The core of Chinese art lies in observing the principle of being "modeled after heaven and earth", for example, the creation and use