

# The Treatment of Japanese Garden based on Zen Philosophy in Mental Health

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**ABSTRACT:** By designing conditions and relaxing spaces with the help of values and concepts of Japanese architecture, based on Zen's philosophy that based on simplicity, purity, avoidance of complexity and relaxation, it has tried to bring an experience of relaxation to the audience. This article seeks to investigate a principled relationship between the principles of Japanese gardens in accordance with the teachings of Zen philosophy, and the effects of its tranquility and cheerfulness. In fact, a set of principles for the design of Japanese gardens influenced by Zen's philosophy can play an effective role in the mental relaxation of the audience from a psychological point of view. The architecture of the Zen Gardens from the point of view: the style of the rocks, the elements of the garden, the types of lines and shapes used in them, and... Have a positive psychological effect on the audience. Relaxation in these gardens can be used in landscape design of public and private buildings in cities that are facing increasing numbers of mental illnesses, so that perhaps the correct architecture could be effective in improving mental illness and promoting community health.

**Keywords:** *Tranquility, Cheerfulness, Zen philosophy, Japanese garden*

## INTRODUCTION

Zen-influenced design is often admired for its unique simplicity and minimalist approach. People find the essence of "less is more" in quiet yet powerful Zen aesthetics. Although Zen arts are just one variation of the entire Japanese traditional culture, which stretches thousands years in history, it seems as if Zen ended up representing what the world perceives as "Japanese aesthetics." (Interaction green, 2017).

Also Japanese gardens are well known for their sophisticated, minimal design and for the calm yet profound atmosphere which they engender. (Van Tonder & Lyons, 2005). These gardens are designed with the principles of Zen philosophy, and at there all the elements create with the former thought and intention of calm, that is the ultimate goal of Zen philosophy.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

At the first of this study, Zen's philosophy books and articles were studied and based on this, theoretical principles were compared with the principles and rules of the Japanese architecture that based on Zen philosophy has been done in Japan. With the knowing of the effect of Zen's teachings on calming and reducing stress, it is possible to extract the

principles of the sense of relaxation in the architecture of Japanese buildings and gardens

## Theoretical Fundamentals of Research

### What is Zen?

Briefly, Zen is one of the products of the Chinese after its contact with Indian thought, which was introduced into China in the first century A.D. through the medium of Buddhist teachings. There were some aspects of Buddhism in the form in which it came to China that the people of the Middle Kingdom did not quite kindly cherish: for instance, its advocacy of a homeless life, its transcendentalism or world-fleeing and life-denying tendency, and so on. At the same time, its profound philosophy, its subtle dialectics and penetrating analyses and speculations, stirred Chinese thinkers, especially the Taoists (Suzuki & Jaffe, 1959,3).

This school orders reliance on the spiritual and internal forces to strive to strengthen the spiritual power and achieve absolute calm.

Zen does not have a special philosophy and is in fact a training method that focuses its teachings on the basis of an intuitive experience, and the rational content of this experience is not provided with a thought System that is necessarily Buddhist. Accordingly, at the beginning of the Zen formation in Japan,

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many Zen leaders were the subject of Confucius philosophy (IRNA, 2013).

The basic point of Zen's philosophy is that the universe and its components are not a few, but all are real; a fact that is part of a whole broader. Human logic ignores this unity by analyzing the diversity of the world, but the irrational part of the mind, or intuition, can understand this unity (Aftab, 2006).

Zen is discipline in enlightenment. Enlightenment means emancipation. And emancipation is no less than freedom. In fact, it is Zen that makes most of enlightenment, or satori (Suzuki & Jaffe, 1959, 6).

To realize satori, Zen opens for us two ways in general: verbal and actional.

First, as we all know, we human beings cannot live without language, for we are so made that we can sustain our existence only in group life. As Zen is one of the most significant human experiences, one must resort to language to express it to others as well as to oneself. But Zen verbalism has its own features, which violate all the rules of the science of linguistics. In Zen, experience and expression are one. Zen verbalism expresses the most concrete experience (same).

The ultimate goal in Zen is to calm down, and it's the last point of interest and pleasure and mental relaxation.

### Impact on the Arts

Zen was commonly studied in semi-monotheistic communities where public people were admitted for limited periods. However, the Zen Temple is a very difficult educational school that intertwines reasoning with a significant amount of joy. Followers in such schools pay particular attention to a variety of arts and crafts, especially paintings, calligraphy, gardening, architecture, and ceremonial drinking. In Japan, swordsmanship, archery, and Jojutsu are also prosecuted in this regard.

Zen has had a very powerful impact on the arts and industries of the Far East for the sake of such perspectives as preempting the action of observing and direct observation of nature, and not just the acquisition of it. According to Zen, the mind is used properly as a glass window, and not as a mirror, this means that the mind must provide an immediate image of the world, and not merely a revelation about It will deal with it. Thus, the Zen shows its continuity with the main idea of the philosopher and founder of Buddhism, Gautama Buddha, by which the suffering is the result of lust, because according to the Buddhist mind and emotions, when deliberately fascinated the world of experience, how they work correctly will be diverted. Therefore, the main theme of Zen's religious painting is the natural forms, such as birds, plants, rocks, and mountains, which are presented merely as images in the form of a stash that maximizes the technique with a minimum of Design and hinges blend. Such an art avoids any kind of pictorial (the description or representation of visual devices, such as images) and expresses the mode of experiencing, rather than the experience-based ideas, because Zen did not believe in any system of teaching. (Farhangian university, 2016)

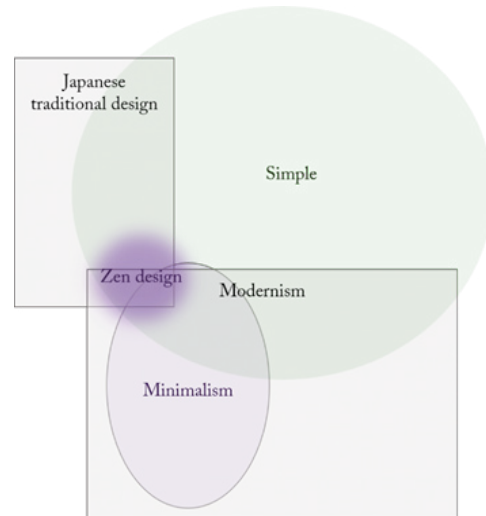


Fig.1: Zen design position in art styles  
(Source: Interaction green, 2017)

In figure1, it can be seen that the Zen roots in art combine the principles of commonality between minimalism, modernism, and the traditional architecture of Japan.

### Zen and Minimalism

In Japanese rush painting, a single line can suggest the whole. Just a few brush strokes form the shape of a face. In technical documentation, completeness has often become a fixation. The user may not need to read the complete details of each possible action, but instead may need to solve one peculiar problem. To try to read about every possible action is like trying to learn about life by reading an encyclopedia. (Stieren, 1998).

Minimalism not only in art and painting, but also exists in Japanese architecture and gardening under the influence of Zen's philosophy.

Minimalism means summarize in form with an emphasis on content that is inspired by the sense of tranquility for the sake of simplicity. Minimalists believe that by eliminating the enticing composition of the composition, the pure quality of color, form, space and material can be achieved. (Jamarani, 2011, 60).

Many designers call this architecture a silent architecture. The silhouette architecture is in fact a skillful expression of architecture that allows the coexistence of the inhabitants and the land in which they are located. This simplicity has led, in many cases, to critics who focus only on objective aspects, call these "cool" architectures, while minimalism seeks to create a special atmosphere for people who love beauty and silence. This architecture was influenced by Japanese architects and artists, and is one of the most prominent architects of the world, including Mies Vondrohe and Tadao Ando. (Davtalah Nezamvazife, 2013).

Japanese gardens are the main source of minimalistic attitude. The boulders are best placed in clean sand that is accumulated

in rotating patterns, and this is nothing but pure minimalism. Japanese gardens were created in the spirit of spiritual balance, but in the West this was a design style of the area.

### Japanese Traditional Architecture

Space in Japanese architecture (Kukan) literal, as an empty place. The first character in this word originally stood for a "hole in the ground", and later took on its present meaning of a "hole in the universe", or "sky". In Japanese the word of Kukan, composed of Ku and the character for kan (interval, space). The character can also be real ma, which is also a key word providing important clues to the nature of Japanese culture. Ma is the temporal interval between two different phenomena or between two contradictory elements or between dimensions of varying nature (Kurokawa, 1988, 55). This ma, recognition of which is now being restored in contemporary architecture, could not be created on the basis of functionalism and rationalism alone. The awareness of ma opens new frontiers in symbolism and pluralism for architecture. Ku and ma are all key words which express the intervening territory between spaces, temporal, physical, or spiritual, and in this they all share the quality of Japanese Culture. In Japan this ma are spaces of spiritual or philosophical significance that respond to the need of mental repose and detachment (Kurokawa, 1988, 56).

The Japanese Garden is the name of a particular style of gardening, in which the elements in nature are used extensively. Commonly used in the combination of Japanese gardens is a combination of colorful and diverse plants with elements such as stone steps, shallow ponds, stone fences, fences made of bamboo, wooden bridges or rock over ponds and artificial islands filled with flowers and plants.

Most traditional Japanese gardens, is simple and elegant in form. It contains several clusters of three to four stones, each surrounded by a raked sand bed. Given the size of the garden, however, it is not possible to view each of the dusters simultaneously. To take in all of the rocks one must move. One must take a number of vantage points. As you step through the garden, different perspectives become available. Moving, however, requires us to relinquish one perspective in order to gain another. So it is with our understanding of human development and adaptation. This volume represents an effort to explore human depression and its treatment. As the contributors to this volume ably demonstrate, a range of perspectives on depression and its treatment are available. (Reinecke & Davison, 2007, 453)

Zen Garden (Japanese rock garden) is a kind of Japanese garden, that the following is discussed about their details.

### Zen Gardens (Sandy Gardens)

One of the most beautiful types of philosophical gardens is the Zen Garden. In this kind of garden, the minimalist school, (meaning "minimizing as much as possible" and transferring the most elements with the least elements), reaches its peak, to the extent that the slightest change in these gardens is considered an important event. This mini-tax comes from Zen.

(Wikipedia, 2008)

In ancient Japanese culture, sandy gardens are spaces for meditation and reflection and secrecy.

Sandy terraces are covered with shallow sand that is covered with sand, pebbles, rocks, and sometimes grass or natural elements, which helps to strengthen meditation and rest, and in those who can enter this abstract world with their eyes. Sense of balance.

The most important parts of the garden are sand and gravel, which are reminiscent of the seaside, but not by using water, but by using sand where the groove is formed and indicating the waves of the sea. (Fig.2)

The most important gardens in Kyoto are Japan. Monks every day carry ribs with their harnesses, and by creating regular grooves, they create a kind of gentle sea that does not screw them down, even the wind. Inside these ribs, there are gems that cannot be seen at the same time. And this is a self-explanation for the visionary and the wise, which can never be seen by the universe, and we must find everything within ourselves that is unimaginable.

Stones originating from the rhymes, which are symbolically and well understood, but not obvious, are included in special rites that only monks engage in. Each stone should be based on its type.

The psychological and natural effects of these gardens are exacerbated by massive plants around and outside the walls of the garden.

There are traditional policies for the proper placement of rock groups and sandstone sandstones. Plants are chosen for their symbolism and seasonal changes. There is only one distant landscape, but there are very different landscapes in the form of a landscape throughout the movement of the person in the garden.

Water movement is being investigated and many different types, such as direct current, are proposed orientally. Japanese planting design tries to combine plants that are found in nature together. It avoids the combination of plants on the shores of the sea and the mountains and creates plant compounds from very different climates. Simplicity, limitation and stability in planting designs are demonstrated through the use of ever-vegetable plants that result in a gradual and delicate arrangement of colors and forms. Asymmetries and groups with elements in the number of individuals are highly regarded. The plants do not interfere with each other but give them enough space to grow.

Japanese Japanese Pine, Japanese Red Pine, Azaleas, and Camilla are among these plants. Bamboo species add tissue contrasts to the garden. Ferns and mosses are connected with water and used properly. Since the color is applied with elegance, the plants are selected because of their characteristics in different seasons, resulting in "flowering cherries", "wild apple" or "plum", "Japanese", "Japanese apple" and "lily" Very scattered plants are planted and the issue of establishing plant communication in the calm and comfort is very much examined.



Fig. 2: Sand and gravel, which are reminiscent of the seaside (Source: Coudert , 2013)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Zen garden design is a kind of art. These gardens are built for meditation and relaxation. Artists in the design and construction of these gardens have achieved an extraordinary combination of nature and human genius to fly the transcendental spirit of human.

There's a lot of effort to explain what sand dunes are at Zen gardens. Some of them are as follows:

The sand representing the ocean and rocks represents the island of Japan.

The rocks represent the material of the tiger and its children who swim towards the dragon.

The rocks display a form of heart and mind in the Kanji language.

In terms of mathematical analysis, the empty parts of the garden are constructed according to the architecture of the temple. The stretching of the axis of symmetry of the garden reaches the main hall of the temple, which is traditionally the best place to see the garden, and seeing the rocks from this angle in the human sense of vision makes it possible to see a natural shape like a tree. This effect cannot be obtained when you look directly at the garden, but it is said that the unconscious mind of humans is able to communicate delicate between the rocks. Each gardens can be a sign of something. For example, there is a garden that is the Yin and Yang double symbol (Chinese signs). Another garden is a symbol of the Causes and Effects Act, and the other has the value of a clean heart. It depends on the viewer what they get from these arrangements. Whether it only sees rocks and rocks around it, or it is able to relax in order and rest.

Also, Japanese garden designers, today, would be familiar with the following list of the key techniques used in garden design: Rocks form the backbone of the garden composition.

Triangular rocks and rock clusters are preferred. As compositional units, or so-called triads, they express earth, man and the divine through horizontal, diagonal and vertical lines, respectively.

Odd-numbered groupings of rocks are preferred; the total number of clusters should also be an odd number.

The largest rock in each cluster is set first. Smaller rocks must then be placed such that they are in 'good agreement' with the main rock of each cluster.

The composition can be rounded off through various techniques of adding rocks. For example, 'base stones' are typically placed at the foot of the dominant rock in a cluster, to extend its base and make it look more triangular; Sute Ishi, literally meaning thrown away stones, are low, inconspicuous stones that appear as if scattered in a random manner. These techniques are used to make a composition look more natural.

Arranging rocks like the scales on a fish (also called the folding screen technique), creates the impression of a vast, deep landscape with mountains.

Suggested landscape features, like streams, should never be straight, but curved in a manner suggestive of an endlessly winding structure.

Asymmetry of all aspects of the design should be considered. (Van Tonder & Lyons, 2005).

In general, the following can be found in Japanese and Zen Garden:

-The style of Japanese gardens is rooted in the religious conception of nature, and all the elements that form the symbolic role in the overall framework. It should be noted that this style should not be synonymous with the natural landscape of landscape. In natural style, an artificial and artificial landscape looks like a natural ecosystem, while in the Japanese style it merely reflects on the spiritual and symbolic perception

of nature in terms of landscaping. That's why most Japanese gardens are categorized in the rows of official gardens.

- Harmony and balance in the landscape are characteristic of the Japanese style, and no element should have a more prominent appearance than other elements. All elements have the same status and quality in design.

-The goal is to shape the imagination of a particular space and extend it even in a small environment. For example, the symbolic look of a sidewalk from the outer gate to the entrance of the house is based on the imaginary conception of the path from the city to the mountain.

-The law is "less than most" ruling. A small piece of stone was used as a symbol of the mountain and a stream of water as a symbol of the river.

-Empty land is regarded as peripheral spaces in the landscape.  
- Environments such as passages and palaces are designed in an official style and used in private spaces in cities using both formal and informal methods. In rural environments and farmers' and farmers' homes, using informal methods. (Keane, 2012)

### Japanese Symbolic Elements

**Rock :** The existence of rocks and rocks in Japanese landscapes is a continuum of survival. All styles of Japanese gardening are used in stone. How to pick them up is in accordance with its own rules. The type of stones used includes long, vertical, short, arched, and arched vertical rocks in horizontal rocks. When picking up, they will install them in groups of three, five and even seven. More than one type of rock should not be used in the design. Useless use of rock type and the use of unbreakable and unhealthy stones are not welcome.

**Water:** An important element in Japanese gardens. The water represents the sea and the existence of it represents the inevitable passage of time. Water in Japanese designs can be displayed real in pools and lakes or symbolically by using sandy materials or by installing riverbed slabs as representing streams and rivers. Use water as a cleansing element in the Japanese tea garden.

**Fence or Separation Borders:** Given the premise of creating Japanese gardens for the concentration and restoration of intellectual and artistic forces, all gardens were separating borders or the same fence.

**Gate:** As a passage from one stage to another. In various life modes, the installation of gates is another feature of Chinese and Japanese gardens.

**Bridges and arches:** The presence of the bridge in this style of landscape in terms of content is relatively similar to the gate and the passage from one stage of life to another.

**Footpaths and access paths:** The road means the path to life. By molding middle cracks or broad slabs, sidewalks form a landscape.

**Plants in Japanese gardens:** Native plants, some of which are traditionally symbolic and used in the design of Japanese gardens, include tree species such as: *Prunus serrulata*, *Ginkgo biloba*, *Acer palmatum*

**Shrubs include:** *Abelia X gradiflora* and *Pinus Muga*.

**Coverage plants include:** *Ophiopogon Japanese*, *Liriope Muscari*, *Hedra helix*, *Festuca ovina var. glauca* and various arsenic and flowering plants, including *Jasminum polyanthum*.

**Japanese garden furniture:** In addition to the desk and bench, Japanese garden furniture is also used in stone lanterns, wooden umbrellas and domes, and so on. (Kawana, 1977)

### CONCLUSION

The traditional Japanese garden is arranged in a neat arrangement of objects designed to create an architectural perspective. A rocky garden is a kind of space that is closely related to the observer's location. The place where the visitor arrives properly from the harmony of objects. A rock garden is a kind of Japanese garden with its roots in Zen philosophy. In most cases, these gardens are built near the temples, and the interior of the temple - a place where the opportunity provides a kind of deep and relaxing thinking - extends outward. The rocks are arranged in the rocky gardens below a set of geometric rules according to which the Japanese stone gardens can be defined within a seven-seater network of lines. An observer receives the harmony and beauty of the seventh-one that stones are informed about cosmic harmony, as a result of the magic, in which the objects are clearly shaped, and the observer is placed at a very precise point. The point that the opportunity Meditation and Thought.

If we look at the garden from a designated point, we find that the arrangement of rocks has a kind of hypnotic effect on people. The effect that helps the viewer is more focused and thoughtful.

Zen monks seem to try to reveal the beauty of life in an incomprehensible way in the garden, but one should not forget that the harmony between natural elements is, in any case, a law that exists throughout the world, so it can be identified in this garden too. A law that should be followed in the garden geometry. Understanding the secret of the garden requires that we take a look at the garden: a network of lines that invisibly geometrically cover the entire garden, separates the gray rectangle from the margins of the garden. . The Japanese atmosphere is a unique way, which unfortunately has only one name in Iran, and each view is placed by placing a rock In the name of the Japanese style, while this thinking is wrong, in external space projects, the type and shape of the altars, corridors, water spots and lighting is important, and the elements of a Japanese garden. Then the space design and finally the type of plants will determine the coherence and the ideal rhythm. The longitudinal and longitudinal extension of plants in any weather conditions is the key to the implementation of the information.

Inspired by Zen gardening elements and their proper use in designing urban landscapes and gardening, and in some ways using the hidden techniques used in these spaces, the psychological effects of the audience can be positively impacted and many mental illnesses, such as depression Improved.

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