

Original Research Article

# An Investigation of Iranian Garden Conception in Miniature\*

## With Emphasis on the Miniatures of Shahname-ye-Baysonghori

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**Abstract** | Iranian gardening can be considered an artistic expression. Gardening is an art that has played a significant role in Iranian culture and history. This art was created before the arrival of Islam in Iran. Since the arrival of Islam, it has not only continued to grow and outshine all other arts since then, but it has also attained maturity. Also, painting is an art that has been popular in Iran for a long time and has always served as a narrator of Iranian culture. Natural elements have a special significance in Iranian culture, thus their depiction in miniatures appears quite natural. Plants appear in every Iranian painting, even if they do not take center stage. Iranian gardening has been used in various forms of art in this country. This study was an attempt to investigate the prevalence of Iranian gardening in Iranian miniatures and examine the artist's interpretation of the Persian garden. For this purpose, the miniatures of Baysonghori's Shahnameh were chosen as samples of the study. The reason behind this selection was influenced by the close relationship between the miniatures and Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, the depiction in a specific period, the uniformity in their drawing method, and the availability of this collection. Analyzing and scrutinizing the miniatures in this collection showed interesting results of Iranian miniatures, which are the manifestation of an Iranian painter or an Iranian gardener's impression of the garden. The artist's attention to detail and the general atmosphere of the garden are among the most important part of this manifestation. In fact, the Persian garden may be thought of as a collection of natural components, whereas a miniature is a collection of garden elements.

**Keywords** | Iranian garden, Miniature, Shahname-ye-Baysonghori, Selected nature.

**Introduction** | It seems that the association between arts and territories throughout the history of its formation is inherent. This is because the arts are subject to an upstream thing called "culture". Art is a reflection of the culture of each land and its people throughout history. The presence of religion in the land of Iran and the familiarity of Iranians with it has caused its manifestation in the culture and, consequently, in the art of the people of this land. Natural elements have had a special and great position in different religions that have

existed in Iran throughout history. This issue has caused these elements to have a strong presence in Iranian art. Miniature is an art form that has been popular in Iran for a long time and has always been the narrator of Iranian culture and traditions. Due to the place of natural elements such as plants in Iranian culture, their appearance in miniature seems completely inherent. Since there are fewer miniatures in which there are no plants, even if they are not in the first role (Javadi, Personal interview, 2016). The art of gardening is also one of the oldest arts in Iran. This art achieved glory by building the Pasargadae

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Garden and is still alive and developing over the centuries. These two arts have found a deep and elegant connection with each other throughout history. Because of that, Iranian painters depicted their perception of their culture and environment. Miniatures contain a lot of information about the time they were depicted. Therefore, the miniatures contain pristine and significant information about the Iranian garden. Since most of the available information about the Iranian garden is obtained from sources assigned to the Orientalists, a study of the original Iranian sources will help to discover new information about the Iranian garden. Miniatures can help to have a better understanding of the Iranian garden. In this research, an attempt has been made to study the manifestation of Iranian miniatures of Iranian gardens by examining the miniatures and the elements of the Iranian garden in miniature.

### Statement of the problem

According to various sources, the Iranian garden was one of the first types of gardens in the world which is an Iranian invention. Many sources consider the Egyptians or Elamites to be the creators of the garden, but no trace of their gardens is available yet. Considering that the Persian garden is referred to as "Paradi" or "Paradiso" in Western documents, it can be claimed that the Iranian garden is the first model of the garden that has found its way to the West. This claim is confirmed by the fact that this phenomenon went to the West with its name, which is an Iranian name (Mansouri, Personal interview, 2021). Furthermore, Pasargad, as an Iranian garden, is the world's oldest garden with archaeological works available. In Iranian culture and civilization, the garden is one of the rich cultural products that (first) originated before Islam and (second) continued and was completed after the arrival of Islam in Iran. Evidence of this is the world's registration of the Iranian garden as a heritage of human civilization (ibid.). Despite the above two advantages, the Iranian garden is known today as one of the great achievements of Iranian civilization, but there is not enough knowledge about it. Most of the contemporary knowledge of the Persian garden is from the sources of the western Orientalists, which is often from the Safavid period and after. These resources also have their atmosphere and space. They have seen the Iranian garden from another intellectual space. Their interpretations of the Iranian garden are different, and in some cases, incomplete and wrong. One of the most controversial and old quotations related to Orientalists is Chaharbagh's theory about the Iranian garden. Motedayen is one of the supporters of this theory (Motedayen, 2020). However, Mansouri and Heidarantaj are opponents of this theory (Mansouri & Heidarantaj, 2009). This conflict shows that the garden should be identified based on domestic and Iranian sources. In the meantime, there are a few sources who have explained the garden directly. In Iranian culture, there is the concept of a garden, but for example, there are very few books about Iranian gardens in the

Safavid period. Such books have been written about the plan of planting plants, but these books generally have agricultural content and have not dealt with the garden and the art of gardening (Mansouri, Personal interview, 2021). Therefore, it is possible to use the sources that have implicitly introduced the garden or the garden is implicitly reflected in them, and by referring to them, better and more accurate information about the Iranian garden can be obtained.

### Research question

How is the relationship between the philosophy of the Persian garden and the artist's perception of such a garden manifested in the miniatures of Baysanghari Shahnameh?

### Hypothesis

As in the Iranian miniature, the artist portrayed his perception of the environment and surroundings. He also had his own manifestation of the garden and made a selection of elements of nature.

### Research method

The research method in the present study is a combination of a historical research method and a case study, which is a qualitative research method. In this article, the concepts of "Iranian garden" and "miniature" in Iran form a theoretical framework. The sample selected in this study includes the miniatures of Shahname-ye-Baysonghori. The reason for this choice is as follows: The close connection of these miniatures with Ferdowsi's Shahnameh has been one of the most important reasons for choosing this collection, and Shahnameh is also one of the most influential sources in Iranian culture and art. The influence of this collection of Iranian miniatures from the Shahnameh and their depiction in a specific and limited period has caused these miniatures to have a unity of procedure in drawing and to express a single thought. This Shahnameh is also one of the few illustrated Shahnamehs in Iran that is fully available and accessible. This collection includes twenty-two drawings that are interpreted and read in the context of theoretical literature.

### Literature review

Mirzaei believes that "longing for heaven" is the connecting element of Iranian Islamic art. He believes that this issue is rooted in the hot and dry climatic conditions of Iran as well as religious beliefs and verses of the Qur'an, which have always had an impact on the writings and artifacts of the people of this land (Mirzaei, 2012).

Mansouri and Hydrantaj also mentioned in an article that "trying to reconstruct life after death in heaven on earth is believed by many cultures, including Iran, to be one of the reasons for creating spaces such as gardens" (Mansouri & Heidarantaj, 2009).

Ansari and his colleagues believe that all the features and

qualities resulting from the elements of the Iranian garden lie in the geometry of the Iranian garden. A geometry that has a rational and sacred origin and, due to its order and symmetry, by determining the space of the Iranian garden and its continuity in history, has made the Iranian garden the bearer of the spirit of the place. It is also believed that the Iranian garden has significant values that, by using the capabilities of natural elements such as trees and water and a structure such as geometry, has achieved a spatial spirit that, despite the repetition, has not faded for centuries and is still spatial. It has a quality that can continue for many generations (Ansari & Habibollah, 2016). In an article, Heydrantaj stated that among all the main elements of the Iranian garden, such as water, vegetation, humans, etc., the viewpoint buildings, such as pavilions, porches, balconies, and floors, have the most presence in the miniatures related to the garden. And he believes that the viewpoint is the most important element of the Iranian garden that is mentioned in the miniatures. He believes that the arrangement of the rows in front of the main garden building, determining the shape and position of the pond and water pool, was measured with them. At the same time, these elements are among the most prominent elements of the Iranian garden, which show themselves in the studied miniatures... Although many features, such as the geometric order of the Iranian garden, are not seen in the studied miniatures, the main element of the garden, the pavilion, all of which have the best view of the garden, can be a strong reason for the miniaturist's intention to depict the Iranian garden (Heidarantaj & Teimouri Gorde, 2014). Javadi believes that miniature, based on religion and naturalistic beliefs and in a realistic way, has formed a combination of reality and fantasy (Javadi, 2004). She also believes that what makes the imaginative space of the Iranian miniature unique is the way in which real and natural elements are placed together in a way that does not fit into a real and natural time and place. For example, the meeting of Homa and Homayoun happened in an imaginary garden that connected the earthly landscape with the ultimate beauty through a celestial and transcendental atmosphere. In this scene, day and night are connected, time and place are broken, and a special scene is drawn. This scene, like other miniature events in Iran, uses landscape elements and rooted elements in Iranian naturalistic thought and beliefs to provide a special landscape for dealing with mystical and sacred meanings in its special scenery (Javadi, 2011). She also believes that the miniature is an important document of Iranian-Islamic gardening art (Javadi, 2021).

### Theoretical foundation

Iranian miniature space is its unique feature and is fundamentally different from European painting in the Renaissance. Another feature, especially after the advent of Islam, is the connection of miniatures to society and literature (Zamani, Amirkhani & Okhovat & Ansari, 2009).

Kafshchian Moghadam & Yahaghi (2011) considers the principles of miniature aesthetics to be the result of two different types of thinking: "technical" and "religious". Regarding the technical and aesthetic foundations of Iranian miniatures, he believes that the tradition of avoiding realism and creating a scene without time and place, with a special center away from empty space, are the characteristics of Iranian painting. Also, the induction of space and the depth of space by showing elements with a combination of front, top, and sides at the same time, and distinguishing between the painted world and the real world by writing or passing some of the elements of the composition from the framework of the work and occupying the space related to the audience can be seen in Iranian painting (Ayatollahi, 2000 cited in Kafshchian Moghadam & Yahaghi, 2011).

Iranian gardens have been used in a special way in the art of miniature. The Persian garden is often depicted in miniature in the form of a background of a narrative or mythological scene, and the artist uses the details of the garden to depict it (Wilber, 2008). The main subject is a story happening in the garden and building. The important point in the studied miniatures is the presence of the viewpoint element. Many features of the Iranian garden, such as geometric order, water, vegetation, etc., are not clearly depicted. However, the placement of an element as a viewpoint, including pavilions, porches, tents, etc., shows its importance in the Iranian garden (Heidarantaj & Teimouri Gorde, 2014). Even though the location of the viewpoint in these paintings is not the same, depending on the subject, they are drawn in different places. In general, it should be said that relying only on miniatures is not a good way to find the structure of the Iranian garden.

#### • Miniature

As soon as Westerners became acquainted with the miniature of Eastern Muslims, they fell in love with it. Many wondered how medieval masters could handle difficult and intricate coloring. Some of them changed their artistic styles under the influence of Iranian miniatures. Nazarli quotes in his book that Vasily Kandinsky wrote in an article sent from Munich, with enthusiasm: I cannot believe that these were made by man! It seems to stand in front of something that has come into being or has come down from heaven like a revelation... Its simplicity goes almost to the border of primitiveness, and its complexity is dizzying... by what miracle has he (the painter) been able to combine a rudimentary, clear, and simple expression (which is completely masterful and cannot be destroyed by anything, and we Europeans, mistakenly try to introduce it as decorative) with all these boiling components (Nazarli, 2011). Regarding Iranian miniatures, Western artists have stated that "the golden sky and the silver water, the dark green cedars next to the trees with white blossoms, the autumn leaves of the vast plain, the horses in the brown-fawn desert, a group of people in red, raspberry, patterned tiles, delicate patterns, and flower gardens behind the not-so-tall minium-red fences, all make



the most joyful symphonies possible” (ibid., 10). Islamic art has abandoned realistic genres. In this painting, objects and characters are depicted as if they are looking for a new life and it goes from the outward to the conscience. Iranian miniatures have always followed certain rules. Avoiding shadows, not showing the third dimension, and placing nature in the background are among these cases. In Iranian miniatures, the characters have been sacrificed for decoration. The artist’s attention to storytelling is also one of the characteristics of Iranian miniatures (Zargham & Dastyari, 2021). Examples of Iranian miniatures are shown in Figs. 1-4.

#### • Shahname-ye-Baysonghori

One of the most important literary works of Iranian art is Shahnamehs, which have been prepared in different periods and usually deal with matters related to the Shah of that time. The Shahname-ye-Baysonghori is about Baysonghor Mirza, one of the sons of Shahrokh, Shah Teymouri. This work of art was written in his time and is currently kept in the Golestan Museum Palace. This book includes twenty-two valuable miniatures (Sharifzadeh, 2014). Since this book is about important people of his time, the first and most important role of these miniatures belongs to the characters, and other elements are given second priority. Of course, being second is not a sign of inferiority.

In this book, there are twenty-two miniatures, some of which clearly present the elements of the garden. However, most of the images are depicted in spaces other than the garden. In general, in Figs. 5b, 8-a, 8-c, 9-b, 9-c & 10-b, the elements of gardening and architecture can be clearly seen. Also in Figs. 4, 5-c, 9-a & 10-a, some elements are shown in the garden.

At this stage, all twenty-two miniatures of Baysanghari Shahnameh are classified based on visual cues and the location of each narration, and then the common visual elements related to the garden are extracted. These elements will be the criteria for the final analysis of the miniatures. At this stage, all twenty-two miniatures of Shahnameh-ye-Baysonghori are classified based on visual cues and the location of the narration for each, and then the common and almost similar visual elements related to the garden are extracted. These elements will be the criteria for the final analysis of the miniatures.

#### The communal elements of each group

At this step, the miniatures of Baysanghari Shahnameh are classified based on spatial diversity and are listed in Table 1. The general content of the miniatures is presented in three spatial formats. Miniatures narrated in an “indoor space” and miniatures narrated in an “outdoor space”. The second category is divided into two categories. These two categories include the space of “garden” and “nature”.

In terms of classification, the communal elements in each category of miniatures are identified in Tables 2- 4. Elements have been extracted from these miniatures that share greater semantic similarities with the theme of the Persian garden.

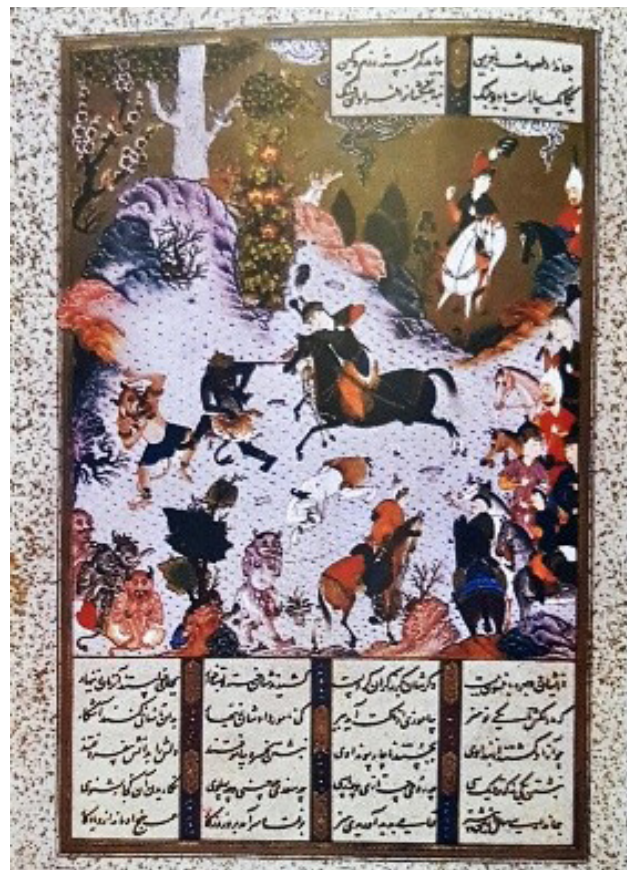


Fig. 1. Tahmurth's war with demons, a page from Ferdowsi's Shahnameh. Source: Nazarli, 2011.

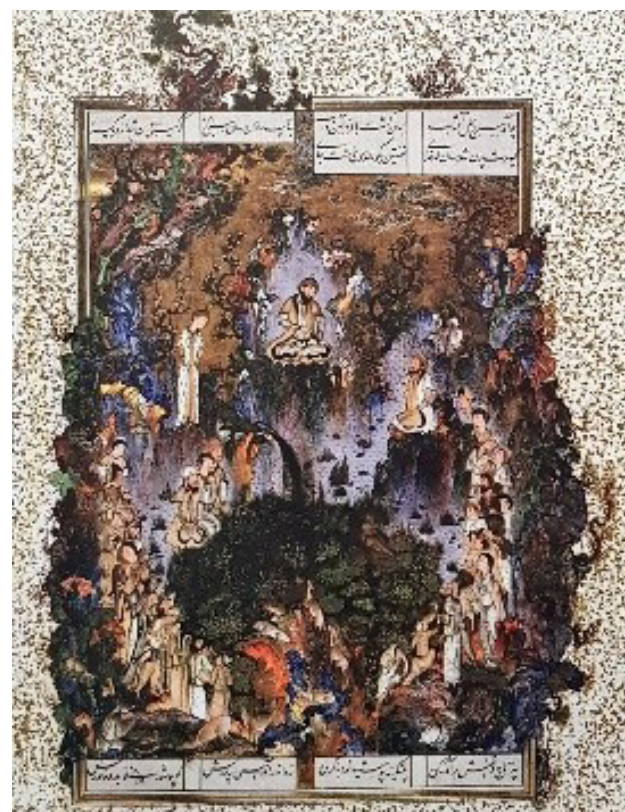


Fig. 2. Majlis Kiomars Shahnameh Shah Tahmasebi, Tabriz School. Source: Sharifzadeh, 2014.





Fig. 3. Khosrow and Shirin feast, Safavid 947 AH, Tabriz school, Khamseh Shah Tahmasb. Source: Welch, 2005.

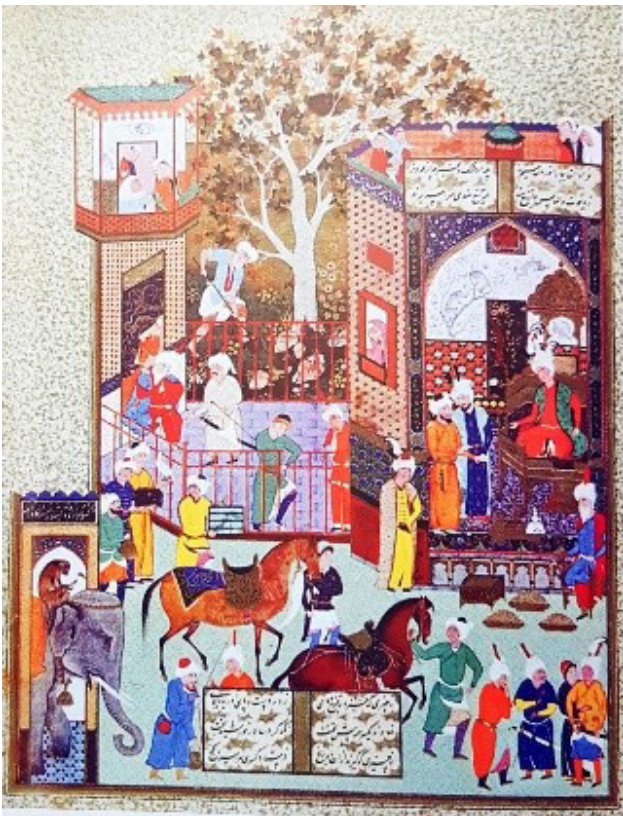


Fig. 4. Offering gifts from India to Khosrow, Mir Seyyed Ali, Tabriz, 951 AH. A page from the manuscript of Ferdowsi Shahnameh, performed for Shah Tahmasb I. Source: Nazarli, 2011.

### • The first group, interior spaces

In both miniatures in this category, we see a vertical axis balance. Also, in both figures, there is a stage in the center of the figures. The main characters are in their center, and the most important people are in this center and on the stage. The other people in the scene are portrayed as lower than the main characters. Flowering plants are seen in the windows of both figures. Fig. 5-b evokes a porch that is a viewpoint element and has a full view of the outside of the building. On the other hand, in Fig. 10-b, the outward view is only through the windows. A summary of the mentioned contents is given in Table 2.

Heidarantaj and Teimouri Gorde (2014) believes that... for Iranians, the pavilion and other elements of the viewpoint have always been meaningful with the presence of nature and the garden, and the existence of one is proof of the presence of the other. As can be seen in many paintings related to the garden and the outdoor space, the close connection between the belvedere and nature is apparent. He also considers the temporary viewpoint a means for people in the garden to enjoy themselves.

Since the Iranian garden is built to create a pleasant atmosphere for Iranians to have fun, it is inherent that a place should be considered to surround the whole garden. Also, since the official Iranian gardens belonged to the royal family and wealthy people of society, to pay homage to them, whenever for any reason it was not possible to build a pavilion, the throne was used as a building to surround the surroundings. It has created a temporary point of view. About the presence of flowering plants in the Persian garden, Mansouri says, quoting Von Rokuez: "... waterways are built in them in a way that is surrounded by places full of trees and flowers. At the intersection of waterways and creeks, there are ponds or garden houses (Mansouri & Heidarantaj, 2009).

Since the illustrated story takes place in an interior space, there is not much expectation of the presence of flowers and plants in this group of miniatures. However, flowers can be seen from the windows installed in the building. This point can be confirmed by the fact that flowers were planted around the pavilions and garden buildings.

### • The second group, gardens

The viewpoint element is very important in this category. In three miniatures, in Figs. 6-a, 7-a & 11-b, the viewpoint element is temporarily in the form of a bed. Also in miniatures in Figs. 9-b, 10-c & 11-a, the viewpoint has appeared in the form of a mansion and a building. In total, in 6 miniatures in this collection, the viewpoint element is present. The Cypress tree is also one of the symbolic and important elements that can be seen in the miniatures of this collection. Cypress trees are present in miniatures in Figs. 5-a, 5-b, 9-b, 10-a, 10-c & 11-a. Water can also be seen in four miniatures. Water appears in Miniatures in Figs. 9-b, 10-a, 10-c & 11-a although they are not very strong.



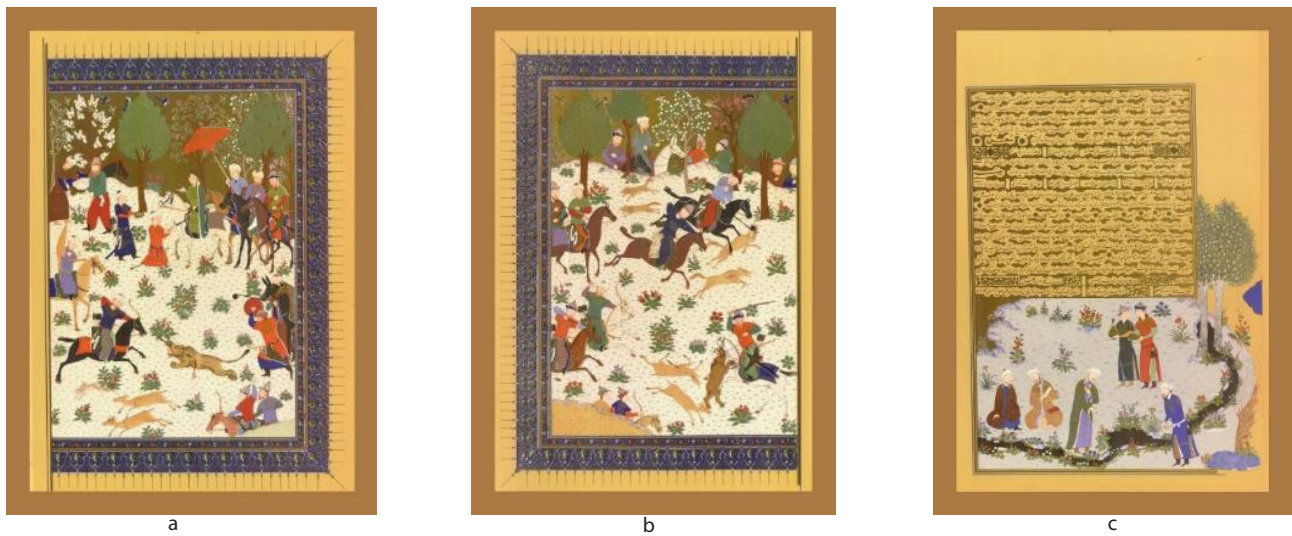


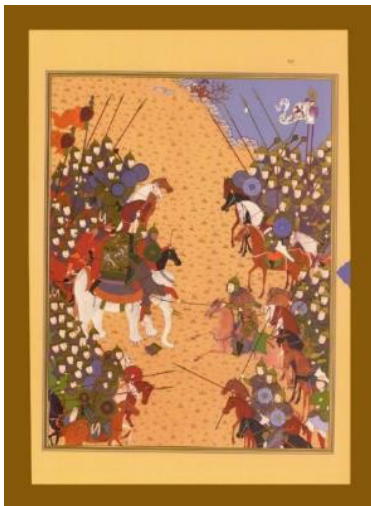
Fig. 5. a: Hunting ground, b: Hunting ground, c: Ferdowsi's meeting with poets. Source: Ferdowsi, 1971.



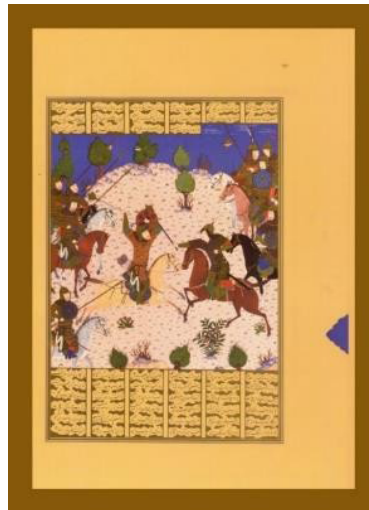
Fig. 6. a: Jamshid Kingdom, b: Zahak being tied by Fereydoun, c: Meeting of Zal and Rudابه. Source: Ferdowsi, 1971.



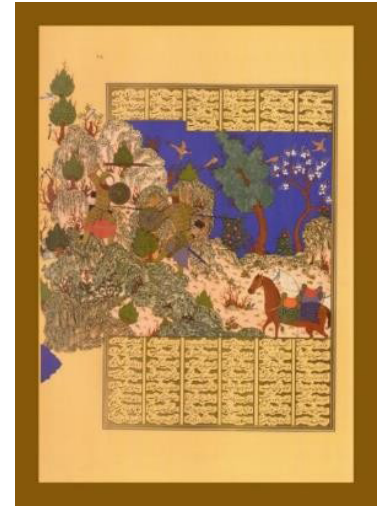
Fig. 7. a: Kikavous Assembly, b: Battle of Rostam and the White Demon, c: Killing of Siavash. Source: Ferdowsi, 1971.



a



b

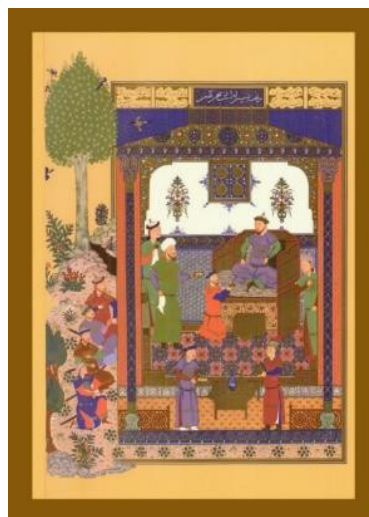


c

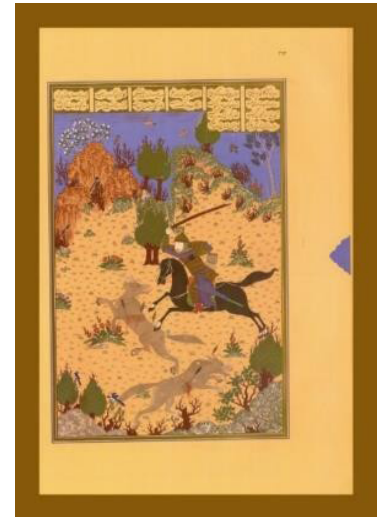
Fig. 8. a: The Battle of Rostam and Khaqan-e-China, b: Battle of Rostam and Borzoo, c: Goodarz Battle with the Elders. Source: Ferdowsi, 1971.



a

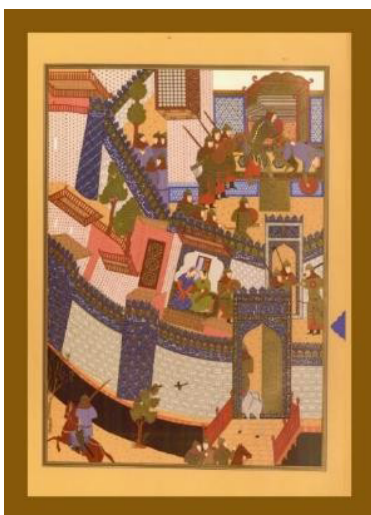


b

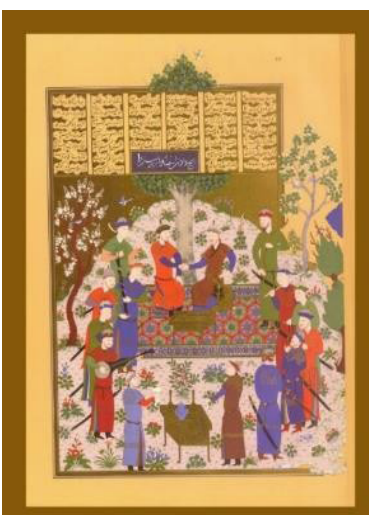


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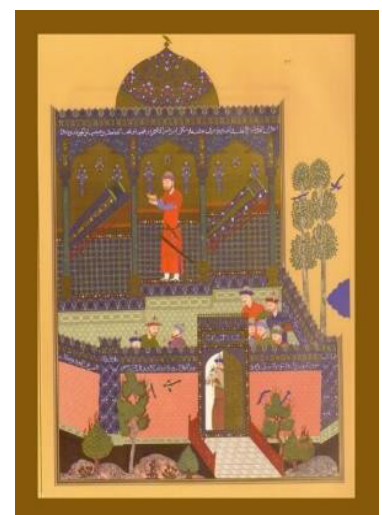
Fig. 9. a: Battle of Kaykhosrow and Afrasiab, b: Lohrasb sitting on the bed, c: Khan-aval, killing wolves by Esfandiar. Source: Ferdowsi, 1971.



a



b



c

Fig.10. a: Arjaseb was killed by Esfandiar, b: Meeting of Rostam and Esfandiar, c: Faramarz crying on Rostam coffin. Source: Ferdowsi, 1971.



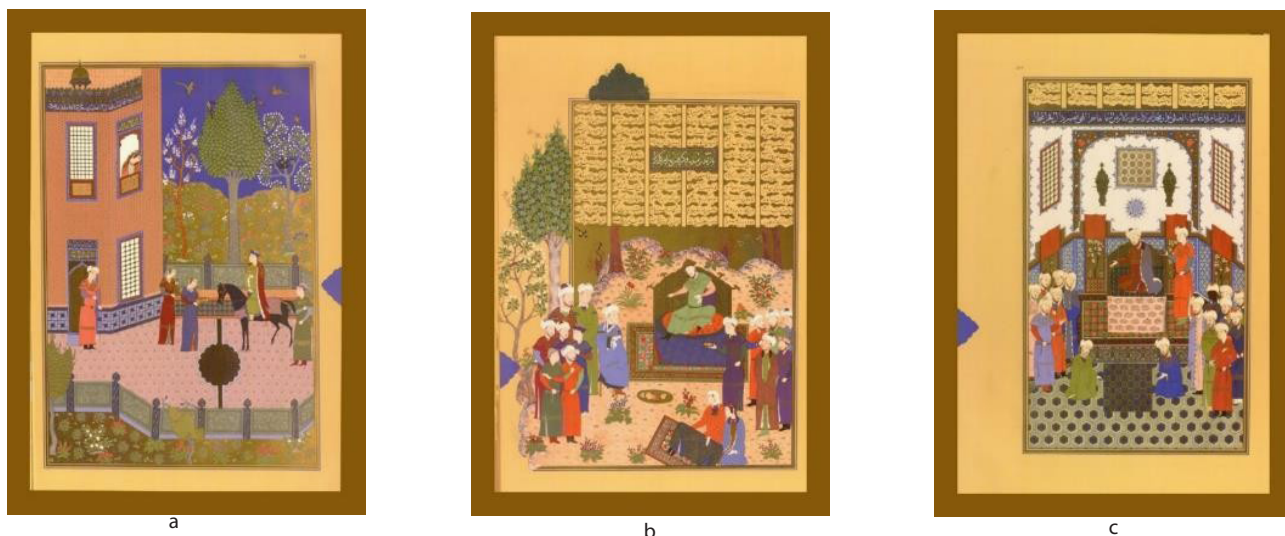


Fig.11. a: Meeting of Ardeshir and Golnar, b: Meeting of Yazdgerd and Monzer, c: Bouzarjomehr Chess and the Ambassador of India. Source: Ferdowsi, 1971.



Fig.12. Battle of Bahram and Saveh. Source: Ferdowsi, 1971.

Flowering plants can be seen in several ways in the figures. Trees, shrubs, and cover plants are important types of flowering plants depicted in these miniatures. In miniatures in Figs. 5-a, 5-b, 6-a, 7-a, 11-a & 11-b, a variety of flowering plants can be seen. The garden fence is one of the elements that has been emphasized lot. In this group of miniatures, this element can be seen in miniatures in Figs. 9-b, 10-a, 10-c & 11-a. As

before, a summary of the above is provided in Table 3. Much has been said about the permanent viewpoints in the garden. Usually, in miniatures that include pavilions and permanent viewpoints, the viewpoint occupies the major part of the miniature. In addition to a brief view of the garden, the views outside the garden are also depicted. Since the description of the viewpoint of the garden mansion has been considered, this building is more detailed and elongated than usual (Heidaranttaj & Teimouri Gorde, 2014). Of course, contrary to popular belief, in miniatures, there is no sign of geometric order around the pavilions. Apparently, the artist has placed more emphasis on the pavilion's being the viewpoint and its height. This is especially true of temporary viewpoints. The viewpoint, whether permanently or temporarily, is to surround the environment and accommodate people who have a higher social status than other people present on the scene.

As mentioned in the previous group about flowering plants, these plants are of special importance in the Persian garden. In this group of miniatures, some flowering trees can be seen that seem to be fruitful species. In another part, flowers have been used to cover the ground. This is inconsistent with the famous statements about the Iranian garden. Because, as mentioned, flowers were planted around streams and pavilions, not to cover the ground. In fact, in Baysonghori miniatures, in this case, the artist did not adhere to reality and portrayed his perception.

There have been a lot of speeches about the importance of the cypress tree in Iranian culture and art. An evergreen tree, with an upright form stretched out in the context of a symbolic culture, quickly acquires a symbolic place for itself and becomes immortal. The role of cypress in Persepolis motifs and the likeness of the beloved to cypress are examples of the use of cypress in Iranian popular culture (Mirzaei, 2012).



Table 1. Classification of the miniatures of Baysanghari Shahnameh. Source: Authors.

Type of space	Internal space	External space	
Fig. No.	6-c, 11-c	Garden	Nature
		5-a, 5-b, 6-a, 7-a, 9-b, 10-a, 10-c, 11-a, 11-b	5-c, 6-b, 7-b, 7-c, 8-a, 8-c, 9-a, 9-c, 10b, 12

Table 2. Garden elements in interior miniatures. Source: Authors.

Internal space			
Number of miniatures in the group		2	
The desired element	Number of miniatures with the desired element	Percentage of the whole group	
Axial balance	2	100	
Temporary viewpoint	2	100	
Flowering plants	2	100	
view to outside space	1	50	

Table 3. Garden elements in garden space miniatures. Source: Authors.

Garden			
Number of miniatures in the group		7	
The desired element	Number of miniatures with the desired element	Percentage of the whole group	
viewpoint	6	85	
Cypress	6	85	
Water	4	57	
Flowering plants	7	100	
Fence	4	57	

Table 4. Garden elements in nature space miniatures. Source: Authors.

Nature			
Number of miniatures in the group		11	
The desired element	Number of miniatures with the desired element	Percentage of the whole group	
Cypress	9	81	
Flowering plants	8	72	

Despite the importance of the cypress in Iranian culture and proving its existence in the Iranian garden, with the regular planting plan, in the miniatures of this group that have depicted the garden space, only the existence of the cypress tree has been emphasized. Not only is there no example of the exemplary order of planting cypresses in the garden, but it is also portrayed as much less important than other trees. Although in most of the miniatures in this collection, there is a cypress tree, this way of presenting the cypress tree is in contradiction with what actually exists.

Among the important elements in the Iranian garden, water is perhaps the most important one because it has both symbolic and practical properties. In an attempt to refute Chaharbagh's

theory, Mansouri referred to Iranians' beliefs about water, and he believes that... Anahita, the goddess of water, has always been present in the beliefs of Iranians. The life-giving water, which at its starting point is divided into four parts, creates a paradise in the heart of the desert (Mansouri & Heidaranntaj, 2009).

However, in the miniatures of Shahname-ye-Baysonghori, the water element has the least possible presence. This lack of water occurs both in quantity and quality. It is as if the artist has taken the least effect from water and water has no role in his manifestation of the garden. The meaning of the word "Pardis," which is a remnant of the Avestan word "Paeri Deza," is "enclosed by a wall and fence" or "what is behind the wall." In

the Moein dictionary, the term hoard, the Persian word "Ferdows" means "enclosed and rounded area; garden; Paradise and paradise" (Mirzaei, 2012). These definitions, and their adaptation to the existing realities, show that the fence and the wall of the garden have been of great importance to the Iranian gardener. However, in the miniatures of this group, the garden fence is mentioned as a not very important element. The painter has seen the garden wall as less important and has depicted it. In his opinion, the fence around the garden is not very important, and both inside and outside the garden, it becomes more important.

#### • The third group, nature spaces

In this group of miniatures, elements related to the Persian garden are less visible, because the story of these miniatures takes place in natural environments. The element of the cypress tree is one of the elements that can be seen in these miniatures. This element can be seen in miniatures in Figs. 6-b, 7-b, 7-c, 8-b, 8-c, 9-a, 9-c, 10-b & 12. In total, this element can be seen in 9 miniatures of this group. Flowering plants can also be seen in the miniatures of this group. In miniatures in Figs. 5-c, 6-b, 7-b, 7-c, 8-b, 8-c, 9-c & 10-b, flowering plants can be seen as trees, shrubs, and cover plants. In total, flowering plants can be seen in 8 miniatures in this group. As before, a summary of the above is provided in Table 4.

It has been said before that flowering plants are very important in the Iranian garden. Since the image space is not in the garden, we still see the presence of flowering plants. Of course, the number of flowering trees is probably higher and the cover flowers are fewer, especially on battlefields. Various explanations have been given for the importance of the cypress tree in the previous sections. The cypress tree is one of the most important plants in Iranian culture and art. In pre-Islamic Iran, and even shortly after the advent of Islam, nature was portrayed almost as real. For example, motifs such as pomegranate, grape, and cypress were represented in a real way, and later, in their evolution towards the accepted abstraction of Islamic teachings, these motifs found a way in many works of arts of this land in the form of Shah Abbasi flowers, arabesque ivies, and paisley (Mirzaei, 2012).

As mentioned before, the presentation of cypress trees in the miniatures of *Shahname-ye-Baysonghori* does not correspond to the reality of its planting plan in the garden. But in the miniatures of this group, which depict the space of nature, this mode of presentation is closer to reality. Although the cypress tree is still present in most of the miniatures in this collection, it is still less important than other trees. At the same time, the individuality of the planting of trees, and how it is scattered in the image, is close to the natural space.

Discussion

#### • Internal space

As mentioned earlier, the miniatures that depict the interior have two communal categories of garden elements. These miniatures have elements of viewpoint and flowering plants

from the garden. The viewpoints depicted in these miniatures are temporary ones. Although in miniature number 6 in Fig. 10, the story takes place on a porch, which is itself a constant viewpoint, the overall image is more pronounced than the bed in the middle of the image. In these temporary viewpoints, there is more emphasis on the surroundings and the place of the story, and most importantly, there is more emphasis on the person or persons sitting on the bed. Since the spaces depicted in these miniatures have windows to the outside view, the presence of flowering plants in the window frame indicates that such plants have been planted around the pavilions and mansions of the garden, and due to their nature, they have a decorative aspect. Their importance is evident from the fact that, among other elements of the Persian garden, flowers have been selected for display behind the window. In general, the important elements and their functions in interior space miniatures can be summarised as Table 5.

#### • Garden

As mentioned before, four important elements of the Persian garden can be seen in the miniatures that depict the garden space. The viewpoint is the most important of these elements. But there are a few points about this element and how the artist manifested it. First, there is usually a minimum order around the pavilions and important mansions of the Persian Garden, while this is not the case in the miniatures of this collection. The next point is the excessive height of the pavilions in the figures. The artist has given the pavilions a higher height than reality. For example, he has seen their height as higher than the cypress trees present in the scene. While this is not consistent with reality, the miniaturist has also depicted people in his viewpoint who have a special social status. Flowering plants are also included in this category of miniatures. In these miniatures, flowering trees that look fruitful can be seen. The main difference between the way they are drawn and the reality is that the usual planting design that exists in the Iranian garden is not seen in these miniatures. In addition, some types of flowers have been used as cover plants, which is not true. As for the cypress tree, which is very important in the Iranian garden, as mentioned before, there is no usual planting plan. The cypress tree is usually depicted as single and large, or multiple and small. This contradicts the reality of the Iranian garden, where the cypress tree is grown according to a regular planting plan. This tree is also less important than the other plants in the Figure. While we know that cypress trees are one of the most important plants in the Iranian garden.

Water is also one of the important elements of the Iranian garden that has both practical and symbolic importance. In this collection of miniatures, we can clearly see that water does not matter much in the artist's manifestation. At first glance, it is clear that water has a very low quantity of presence. Also, this faint presence of water is not very symbolic and has only been used as a functional element.



Table 5. Miniature's manifestation of garden's elements in interior miniatures. Source: Authors.

Internal space		
Important elements	Miniature manifestation	Adaptation to reality
Temporary viewpoint	Overlooks the environment	own
	Emphasis on place	own
	Emphasis on the character	own
Flowering plants	To decorate the garden	own

This is also true for the fence. Despite its importance, the fence element has a very small presence in these miniatures. The summary of the above is given in Table 6.

#### • Nature

In the miniatures that depict the space of nature, it is implied that there are not many references to the garden. As mentioned before, two elements of the Persian garden can be seen in this group of miniatures. Flowering plants are still present in this category. The presence of these plants is less on the battlefield. It is not clear whether this is true or not. But it is inherent that flowering plants do not attract much attention during an epic story or a battle. But their presence in this category of miniatures is greater than in the previous categories.

As mentioned before, the cypress tree is an important symbolic element in Iranian culture and is also present where the garden is not the subject. Its planting plan is still scattered and small. Given that this is not the story of the garden and we are dealing with natural space, this way of drawing is close to reality. These are summarized in Table 7.

### Conclusion

The manifestation of the Persian garden in the Shahname-ye-Baysonghori, while having many similarities with the

conventional manifestation of the Iranian garden, also has obvious differences. In this reading, the “mood” of the garden matters. The presence of flowers and plants and also “viewpoint” are very important in the manifestation of Shahname-ye-Baysonghori from the Iranian garden. The “cypress” tree is still one of the important elements of this manifestation of the Iranian garden. The above-mentioned items are in line with the common manifestation of the Iranian garden. The important point in the manifestation of Shahname-ye-Baysonghori from the Iranian garden is the lack of conventional order in the shape and form of the garden and its planting plan. In this manifestation, the garden is depicted as an irregular space. Also, the garden fence, which is one of the important elements of the Iranian garden, is not very important in it and is present in the least possible way. The artist's manifestation of the Iranian garden evokes an unlimited and infinite space. As mentioned before, the traditional form of the Iranian garden is not important to the artist, and he has not paid much attention to it. His attention is focused on the mood of the garden. Details have no place in this manifest, and the generality of the garden has been considered by the artist. It can be said that the Persian garden is the election of nature, and the miniature is the election of the Iranian garden.

Table 6. Miniature's manifestation of garden's elements in garden space miniatures. Source: Authors.

Garden		
Important elements	Miniature manifestation	Adaptation to reality
viewpoint	There is no news about the order around the pavilion	No
	Emphasis on being viewpoint and higher than usual	No
	Placing special people in the viewpoint (temporary or permanent)	No
Flowering plants	Fruitful flowering plants but without the usual planting plan	No
	Flowering plants cover	No
Cypress	There is no news about the usual planting plan	No
	Less important than other plants	No
Water	With the lowest possible presence	No
Fence	Lack of usual importance	No

Table 7. Miniature's manifestation of garden's elements in nature space miniatures. Source: Authors.

Nature		
Important elements	Miniature manifestation	Adaptation to reality
Flowering plants	Less on the battlefield	Not clear
	More fruitful species than before	Not clear
Cypress	Usual planting plan	Own

## Endnote

\* This article is taken from Hossein Parvin's Ph.D. thesis entitled "Representation of the Persian Garden in Other Iranian Arts and Literature" which is being conducted under supervision of Dr. "Heshmatollah Motedayen" at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran.

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