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Prologue

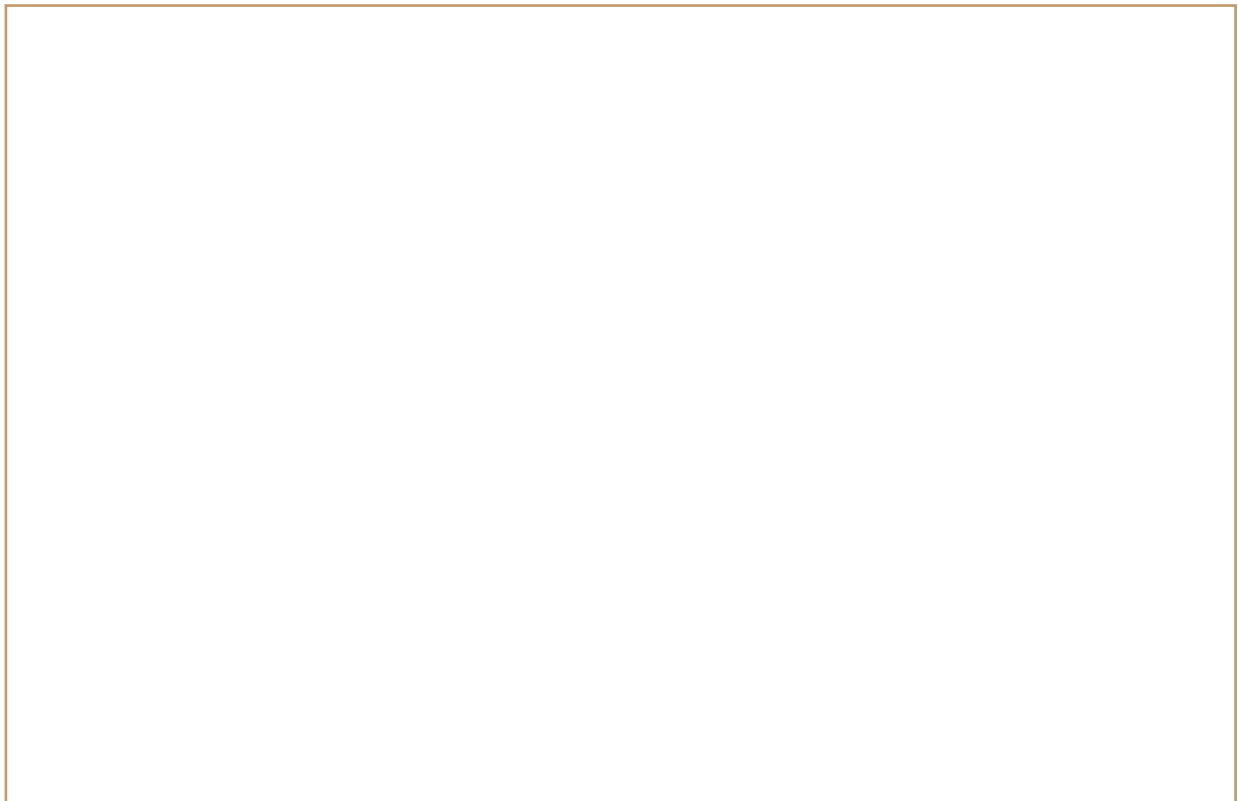
This time, the third issue of the Memar Melli magazine is published in a very diverse ambiance. Throughout preparation process of the 3rd issue, on a chilly autumn day, the news of the loss of three veteran architects and artists made our autumn so unpleasant, namely, Farshad Farahi, Ebrahim Sina and Jahanguir Darvich, two as a student and the other as a professor. All three artists and stylish, two turned art into architecture and the other mingled architecture with structures. The staff and participants of the magazine wish that the souls of these three dearests erudite may rest in eternal peace and their memory may always be remembered with compassion. The Research and Interview Group also extends its condolences to the Muslim communities and the society of architecture, art, and music on the passing of the 49th founder and chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network and hopes that this non-profit foundation will be, as it has always been, a pioneer and honored in providing services to Islamic communities.

What is more is the content covered in this issue which comprises a collection of projects by contemporary and young architects, books, articles, and research reports by architects and senior university professors in the national and international arenas, an oral history of the faculty, a biography of one of the faculty's prominent professors, an introduction to leading architecture in the field of cinema and television. Introducing one of the six winners of the 15th Aga Khan Architecture Award competition is another striking part of the magazine.

In the era of speed and artificial intelligence technology, paying attention to thought and intellect has become doubly important. True understanding and analysis of the surrounding events and occurrences will increase a worldview built upon logic. We hope that paying attention to the activities and research carried out in the field of architecture, culture and art of Iran, along with examining international activities, will not only increase the quantitative load, but also promote thought, intellect, and shared interactions.



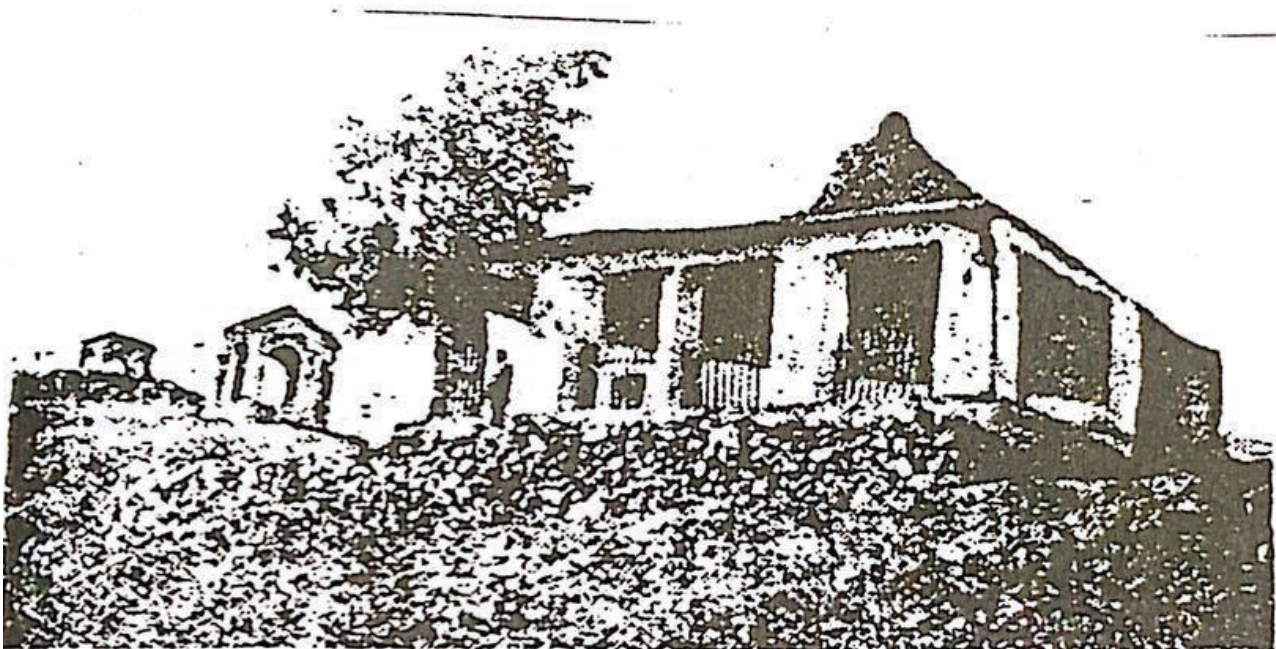
Issa Zokaie – March 2025



Oral History of the University and Imamzadeh Anari

Seyed Mahdi A'rabi
Former Director of Public Relations of
Shahid Beheshti University

In 1962, the first phase of transferring a portion of the crown lands of the ancient village of Evin began. A six-hectare (60,000 square meters) area, located northwest of the current Shahid Shahriari Square, was allocated. This land included a public cemetery and grazing fields used by Evin farmers designated as the new site for the buildings of the National University of Iran, which had been operational for two years. Construction began with a blend of red brick facades and white stone bands. Two years later, in November 1964, the buildings of the Faculty of Medicine (now the Faculty of Public Health) and the Faculty of Architecture (currently the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning) were inaugurated.



From that year onward, as faculties were gradually relocated and the student population grew, the need for further construction on the allocated land became evident. Plans for new faculties, an auditorium, a central library, dining halls, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, and their expansion northward and westward were increasingly felt. As a result, the university administration at the time prioritized the rapid construction of these facilities. Furthermore, this involved the site of the old mausoleum of Imamzadeh Aziz ibn Mohsen ibn Musa al-Kazim (PBUH) and the surrounding cemetery, which had long served as a pilgrimage site and burial ground for the residents of Evin and neighboring villages.

It is worth noting that, according to existing documents, this process led to restrictions on burials as well as bans on the entry of pilgrims and visitors to the graves near the mausoleum. This caused disputes between local residents and university officials, culminating in complaints and gatherings by the villagers (a copy of the complaint is attached).

Following this initial allocation, additional laws were passed: 30 hectares on March 28, 1968, 72 hectares on March 7, 1971, and 150 hectares on December 11, 1977. With the inclusion of grazing areas and adjacent lands, the total area allocated for the development of the university campus grew to approximately 300 hectares (3 million square meters). However, during the first few years following the revolution, up to 1983, the unique national circumstances prevented university administrators from maintaining or expanding facilities, including the construction of teaching hospitals, housing for professors, staff, and students, in the northern part of the allocated land. Ultimately, the university retained only the current one million square meters, while the remaining lands were taken over by organizations, governmental housing cooperatives, and other uses. These areas are now referred to as New Velenjak, distinct from the original village-neighborhood of Velenjak at the end of Shahid E'jazi Street to the east of the Velenjak stream.

The restriction, combined with the absence of villagers and the lack of continuous oversight by the mausoleum's caretakers, as well as the heavy winter rains typical of Evin and its mountainous surroundings, led to the old mausoleum building's near-total destruction. Originally reconstructed during the Zand dynasty, the mausoleum had additional rooms built on its eastern and western sides and a large southern veranda overlooking the green village and old orchards of Evin during the Qajar period.

With the construction of new buildings, fencing, and the erection of southern walls around the university, the movement of locals and pilgrims became practically impossible. Moreover, deep excavations around the mausoleum and disruptions to the cemetery created further unfavorable conditions. As previously mentioned, the mausoleum was on the verge of complete collapse. Consequently, in June 1970, the university president at the time reported this situation to the Endowments Organization and requested the reconstruction of the mausoleum, proposing a budget of 1,200,000 Rials for reconstruction and 1,000,000 Rials for road construction and landscaping, totaling 2,200,000 Rials. Given the university's ongoing construction projects since 1964, university officials decided to expedite the building of the new mausoleum and its access road in parallel with the construction of the university mosque, requesting the necessary actions from the Endowments Organization.





It is worth noting that one reason for selecting the mosque's location next to the mausoleum was to create a unified sacred complex with closely related purposes. After extensive correspondence between the university and the Endowments Organization, agreement was reached on the design and style of the mausoleum building. However, disagreements arose regarding the materials for the building's façade. The representative of the Endowments Organization insisted on turquoise tiles, typical of religious buildings, while the university's representative advocated for a design harmonious with the appearance of other university buildings. The current structure reflects the university's preference. These negotiations and agreements extended until late November 1970. During this time, the lack of the mausoleum's historical registration by the Cultural Heritage Association was also confirmed. The exact date of the old mausoleum's demolition is unknown, but it likely occurred in 1971 when the old adobe structure, on the verge of collapse, was removed. Preliminary construction efforts, including placing tarps around the wooden shrine,

began in the summer of that year. However, due to unfavorable weather in the fall and winter, construction was halted. Subsequently, on May 20, 1972, the university president formally requested the Endowments Organization to expedite the mausoleum's completion. Like the date of demolition, the exact dates of the new mausoleum's completion and opening are not officially recorded, and no inauguration ceremony was held. Nevertheless, based on local accounts and discussions with Evin residents and visitors, it was confirmed that the construction was finished in the fall of 1973. As previously explained, burials in the cemetery surrounding the mausoleum effectively ceased after 1967. However, locals maintained a tradition of visiting the site during the mourning days of Tasu'a and Ashura. With coordination from university officials, they would gather in mourning processions to visit the mausoleum and recite prayers for the deceased.

In recent years, university officials have taken steps to organize the area around the mausoleum and the nearby memorial for anonymous martyrs. According to a prepared plan, an independent road will be built from Darakeh Street to provide easier access for visitors to the mausoleum. The current shrine structure was constructed and installed approximately 15 years ago.

The designer and principal architect of the mausoleum, as the university's other buildings, was the late Dr. Masoud Jahan Ara, the first president and professor at the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning. Despite the prolonged construction process of the mausoleum, he placed special emphasis on maintaining the symbolism and materials of the structure of Imamzadeh in harmony with the architectural style of the university buildings. To better understand the location and structural condition of the mausoleum before its demolition in 1970, we draw the readers' attention to a description provided by the late Dr. Manouchehr Sotoudeh, a professor at the Faculty of Literature, University of Tehran, in his esteemed book *Geographical and Historical Description of Shemiran*, Volume 1, Page 141:

“In the northeastern mountain slopes of Evin, where the gardens and houses at the northern end of the village meet the gardens and houses at the southern edge of the village of Darakeh, atop a hill overlooking the orchards of both villages, lies a scenic and beautiful shrine named Imamzadeh Aziz.

The original structure is a small, proportionate mausoleum with an oval dome. The interior measures approximately 4 meters in length and slightly over 3 meters in width. The building seems to date back to before the Qajar period. Later, two simple rooms with interiors plastered in straw and mud were added to the east and west sides of the mausoleum. Besides, a wide veranda with stone pillars and a simple wooden railing was constructed at the front (south side) of the mausoleum, overlooking the village of Evin. These additions are likely more than a hundred years old.

Inside the small sanctuary, a simple wooden latticework enclosure, measuring 1.91 meters in length, 1.31 meters in width, and 1.34 meters in height, with large square partitions, surrounds the tomb. The shrine's inscription identifies the deceased as Imamzadeh Aziz ibn Mohsen ibn Musa al-Kazim al-Imam al-Natiq, a descendant of Amir al-Mu'minin. Thus, this Imamzadeh is the uncle of Imamzadeh Motayyib, making the two shrines in Evin village – one belonging to the uncle and the other to the nephew – closely related. Due to the shape and color of the Imamzadeh's domed roof, the locals affectionately refer to it as 'Imamzadeh Anari' (the Pomegranate Dome).

Above this shrine, on the same hill, are two well-constructed hexagonal tombs, each with six slender brick pillars, open arches, and a sloped roof. The first is the burial site of the late Hossein Qoli Mirza Salor (Emad al-Saltaneh), who passed away in 1932. The second belongs to the late Qahreman Mirza Salor (Ain al-Saltaneh), who passed away in 1945. Both were sons of Abdolmohammad Mirza Salor (Ezzoddoleh), a son of Mohammad Shah Qajar.”

It is also worth mentioning that the university mosque, built between these two tombs in 1969, was constructed with the same general façade as the university buildings and features a square minaret. The details of the mosque will be discussed on another occasion. Both tombs are registered as national heritage sites, and their gravestones remain in their original form.

The Philadelphia House: Organic Architecture And Placemaking In Chestnut Hill

A Concise Overview of the New book on American Architecture

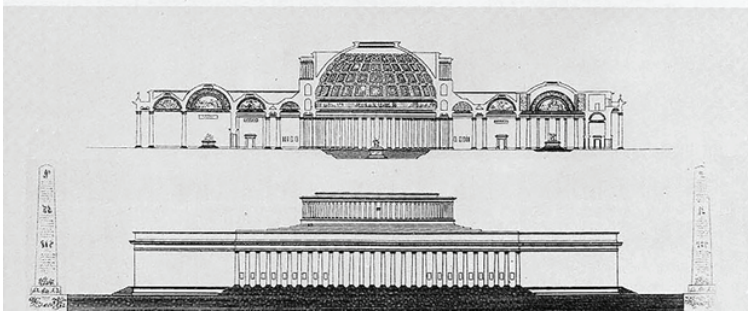
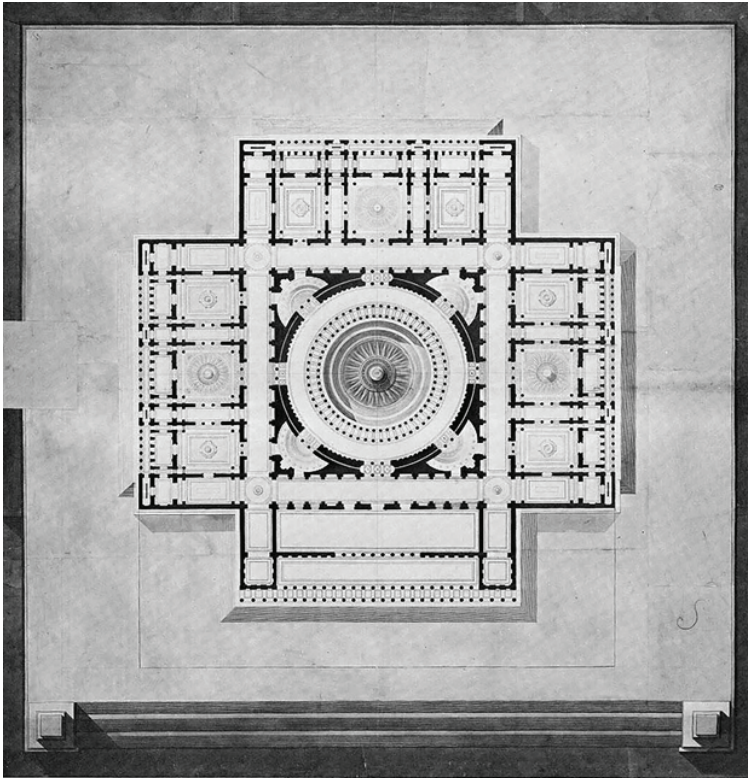
Published by Rowan & Littlefield United States and United Kingdom, 2023

Book Authored and Summeryzed by: Khosrow Bozorgi, PhD



The social customs and traditions, the architectural principles and the circumstantial environmental factors which guided architects in America during 1920s were shared by a wide segment of society. Yet these Philadelphia estates differ markedly from contemporary houses in Newport, on Long island and even Main Line Philadelphia. These differences have grown out of the varying emphasis or interpretations given to the many factors that contributed to the decisions made by owners and architects in the process of design. A unique combination of factors has produced an unusual “type” of houses in the Philadelphia examples.

Though countless ideas and cultural traditions have made decisive contributions to the end result of a recognizable Philadelphia country house, perhaps most powerful is the architectural principle of unity which conceives the house and garden as one rather than as a marriage, happy or unhappy, of two discrete elements. Unquestionably there are many historical examples from Rome and Paris where site limitations have forced a unity of concept similar to those in Philadelphia. Yet even in these cases additional factors or cultural biases have produced designs which bear no resemblance to the Philadelphia examples. In Avignon, Francois Franque, the architect of the Hotel for the Marquis de Villefranche had to content with an unbelievably irregular site and yet, because of his classical beliefs, steadfastly maintained, despite all obstacles, a classical symmetry in all its rooms, courts and gardens. In contrast the Philadelphia “type” reflects the subtle three-dimensional balance that had become an accepted architectural principle as interpreted by Guadet in Paris and Cret in Philadelphia.



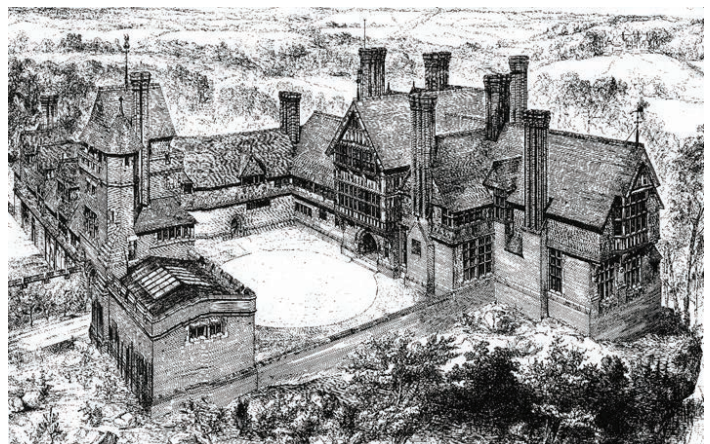
Charles Percier. A Building for "Assembling the Academies", 1796

These houses reflect the strong sense of balance that is part of the unity of indoor architectural space and outdoor landscape gardening. They are freed from the indisputable Vitruvian symmetry that was restated in the Renaissance and reestablished by Francois Blondel. The plans of Philadelphia examples perpetuated the principles of unity expressed in the intimate architectural transition between house and garden. However they did not necessarily follow the restrained bilateral symmetry celebrated in the well known winning drawings of the Grand Prix de Rome of Labrousse, Duc, Boullée and Percier, and retained in the designs of contemporary American architects like Mckim, Mead and White, and Trumbauer.

Since they were trained under Beaux-Arts principles, the Philadelphia architects' distinguished design achievement was their use of the academic tradition (as rationalized by Cret, More and Duquesne) couple with their attachment to the intuitive Romantic genius of some of the admired structures of Normandy, such as the Abbey Church at Mont-Saint-Michel and the Manoir d'Archelles, near Dieppe. In their Romantic creations, an image of French vernacular architecture was combined with the rustic charm of the Pennsylvania farm-house through the use of local materials, organically blended with the surrounding environment.

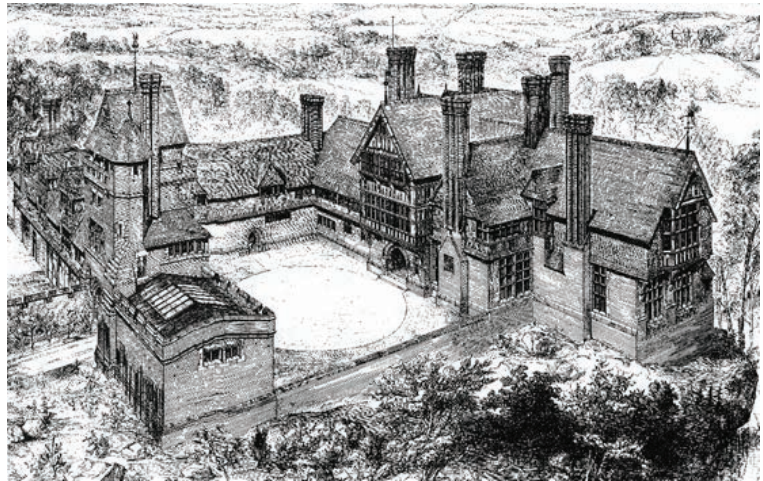


Mont-Saint-Michel, the medieval fortress in Normandy, France



Richard Norman Shaw. Leyswood, Sussex, 1868.

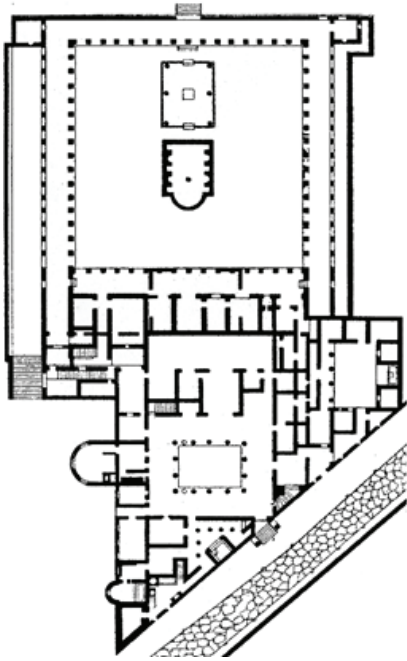
The essence of each architect's planning was a feeling for the static laws of balance, along with a sensitivity to the physical and social backdrop of Philadelphia. On one hand, the asymmetrical balance governing the plan organization fabricated a hierarchical complex of primary, secondary and tertiary axes in order to bring together the circulation dictated by the program and the natural topography. Cognizant of both these factors, the Philadelphia architects modeled the structural axes of their project in part on Duquesne's Voltive Church at a Noted Pilgrimage place, whose asymmetrical composition presented an excellent solution to the problem of an inclined site. On the other hand as a result of their Anglo-American cultural ties, their designs were also influenced by the dynamic composition and intricacy of the irregular plan of Leyswood by Norman Shaw. Moreover the concept of unity in these houses, combining the elements of house and garden as a single whole, was reinforced by the treatment of the roofscape. In this the architects were influenced by the picturesque silhouette of English Arts and Crafts architecture, as typified by the Melsetter house of Lethaby or the best of Lutyens in residential design like Munstead Wood.



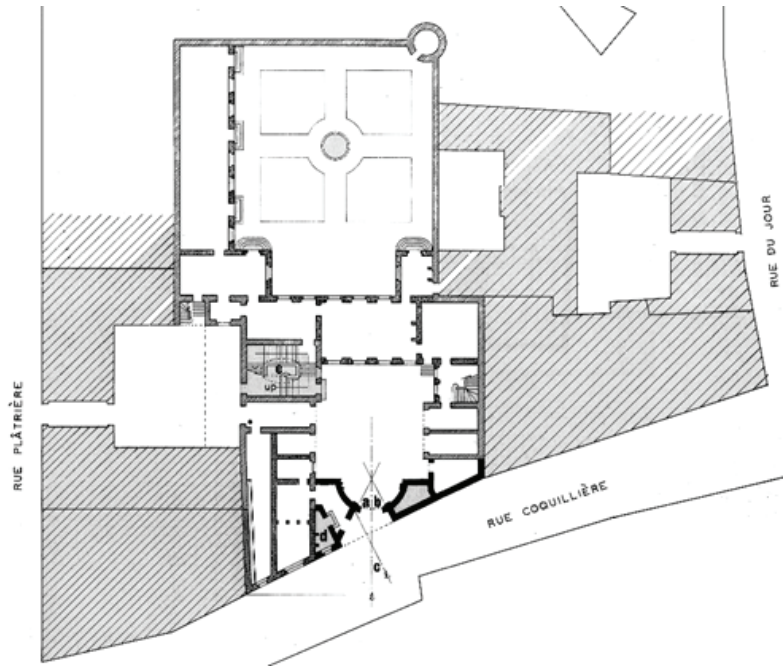
Richard Norman Shaw. Leyswood, Sussex, 1868.



The unique architectural expression found in the work of Mellor, Meigs and Howe, MacGoodwin and Willing and Sims produced a special kind of unity that integrates the exterior courts, garden and interior rooms within an inward looking self-contained plan. Wall, the distinct and inseparable element of composition, defines the architectural space of this confinement. Characteristically, the unity circumscribed by such a defined boundary reflects the social attitude of the Philadelphia gentleman molded by his Quakerish traditions. The concept of wall as rendered in the Chestnut Hill home includes this cultural modesty while maintaining a union of the other elements of composition. A relevant historical reference can be attributed to Viollet-le-Duc. He discussed the genuine and forcible expression of inside-outside conformity by referring to the Doges' Palace in Venice. In this example, columns used as the structural device simultaneously define the concept of an interlocked space. The historical precedent for this functionalist approach can be traced back to architectonic elements of the Hellenistic temple. In more recent times, Wright's Prairie houses emphasized this interlocked space conception based on the destruction of predetermined boundary of a confined box. In Taliesin, the dynamic visual integration of the building with its surrounding landscape has created an organic unity. Under different circumstances, at Philadelphia the compositional unity has been achieved with the authentic understanding of the restricted site and the concept of a court-garden. In this case, the wall produces a limited vista for the viewer when experiencing the inside-outside relationship. What harmoniously integrates the two is a humanized scale that relates the elements of the plan composition to one another and to the whole.

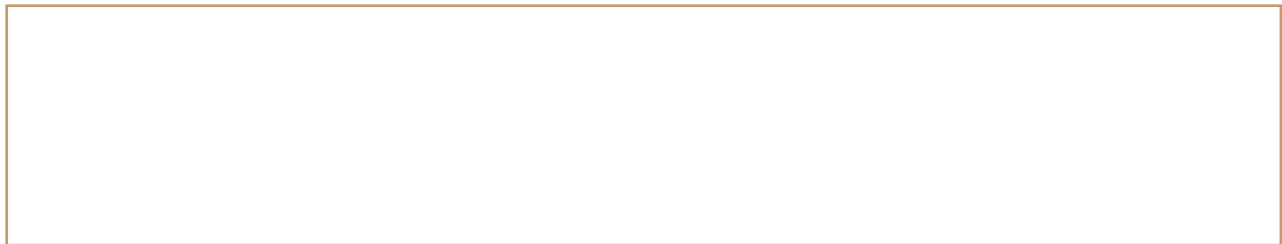


The Villa of Diomedes, Pompeii.



Francois Mansard. Hotel de l'Aubespine, Paris, 17th Century.

Undoubtedly the impact of particular social conditions and physical circumstances were determining features of the historical infrastructure, from which the Villa of Dimendes or the Hotel de l'Aubespine were involved. In Pompeii as in Renaissance Paris, the wall as a typical and inevitable solution had to define the physical juxtaposition of all these confined urban structures. Perhaps the concept of character as interpreted by Durand underlies the utilitarian function of the wall. Nonetheless the vitruvian notion of “decorum”, based on the Aristotlian thesis (the unity of external body and inner activity of the soul), was also influential in the drawing up of a unique kind of plan organization in the Philadelphia country house. This was because the client’s attitude in maintaining his image of a unpretentious public life style was the reflection of his Quaker beliefs.



Departing from Durand’s geometric rigidity in planning, Guadet emphasized a balanced irregularity. His emphasis on the beautiful plan as understood by Philadelphia architects created compositional unity in which a balanced discipline in juxtaposing the elements of the plan remained the key. Fenestration follows the same criterion with windows unsymmetrically placed where needed. All these elements are subordinated to the dramatic and picturesque roofscape, thereby cementing the strong overall unity of the general mass which in turn is the outgrowth of an harmonious intercommunication between plan, elevation and section.

The picturesqueness characterized by such compositional unity appears to relate to what Uvedale Price (1747-1829) called “sublime” rather than the beauty of classical formalism. The distinctive character of the roof, which unifies contracting elements in a sublime fashion, can be interpreted through what Soane (1753-1837) theorized to be the principal feature in representing an artistic composition. John Soane stated that: “In every Poem we seek for a distinguishing and chief object; in every picture, a principal figure or group, a principal color, a principal light, to which every other parts diverge.”

The unique picturesque image expressed by the Philadelphia country house is the legacy of a Romantic sensibility, expounded by centuries of nostalgic search for the past. The wholesomeness of a “green countrie towne” that William Penn dreamed of for Philadelphia landscape, the romantic classicism as interpreted by Jefferson in his design of Monticello Adams’ fascination with Normandy, and Poe’s passionate criticism of the machine-age are essential components of this legacy. Motivated by an increasing antipathy for the discomforts of urban living and inspired by an idyllic vision of agrarian life, many upper-class Philadelphian families migrated from the city to the suburbs. The intellectual background to this rural sentiment was provided by earlier moralists like Rousseau and the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury who celebrated the joys of

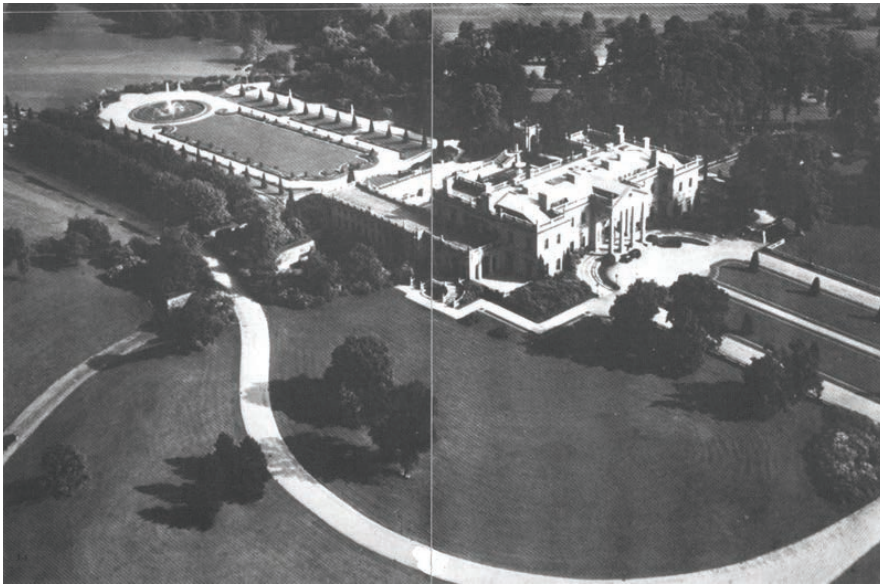


William Penn. Plan of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1682

rural solitude. The picturesque silhouette of the Philadelphia “type” produced by Mellor, Meigs and How reflects the unity of plan composition which in turn has grown organically from the site and the architectural manifestation of this pastoral landscape. The Romantic concept of the gentleman-farmer took concrete shape, based upon the balanced-irregularity that is an architectural response to the concept of organic substance, part of the united whole.



The move of wealthy families from town to country, accelerated by the separation of home and work, took vastly different forms. The houses of Newport, Long Island and to some degree the main Line reflected the classical mood that followed the Columbian Exposition of 1893. Imitating the grandeur of Versailles and following the neoclassical vocabulary of the English Georgian estate, John Rusell Pope, Delano and Aldrich did not hesitate to claim the total isolation of their buildings from the immediate physical and environmental context. Such formalism was based upon the mathematical and geometric principles codified by theorists such as Serlio and Vignola. The Philadelphia houses deliberately eschewed the monumentality and individual assertiveness of this Renaissance tradition. Their image of pastoral simplicity owed more to Ruskin and Downing. The status symbol of overblown classical column and portico would have been anathema to the Philadelphia Quaker, as may be noted in his disdain for the showmanship of a Stotesbury mansion in his formal extravaganza in Philadelphia.



Horace Trumbauer. Whitemarsh Hall (Stotesbury estate), Philadelphia, 1921

The poetic sensibility characterizing the architectural composition in the works under consideration in this research introduces aesthetic ideals quite divergent from the Vitrovin notion of beauty. In the Philadelphia house, the classical concept of bodily-proportioned composition has been replaced by the image of a picturesque interweaving of house and garden, similar to that which Edmund Burke (1729-97) romanticized in his interpretation of natural beauty based upon “obscurity” and “surprise”. Burke’s discussion of “sublime and beautiful” was continued by the Romantic generation in Europe and their American contemporaries. As illustrated in the design of the Philadelphia architects, the advocacy of true organic beauty is a unique theoretical synthesis, reflecting the ideas of Lodoli, Greenough and Emerson. The Philadelphia country house of the 1920s celebrates the sublime expression of unity. A whole of which all the architectural, cultural and physical forces inseparably and intimately unites. To a great extent such unity is colored by the cultural and religious background of the Philadelphia gentleman, stemming from the Quaker beliefs in truth and honesty. The quality of craftsmanship present in these homes reflects the persistence of such ideals, seen in the preference for simplicity and integrity in the hand production of high quality artifacts. Based on the idea of “Inner Light”, the spiritual power and social modesty that underlies this artistic creativity was best manifested by Emerson in his interpretation of Quakerism as “the sentiment of virtue”. In Philadelphia home, the Romantic expression of such ethical notions of craftsmanship has been conceived in the light of the spiritual understanding of unity as a whole.



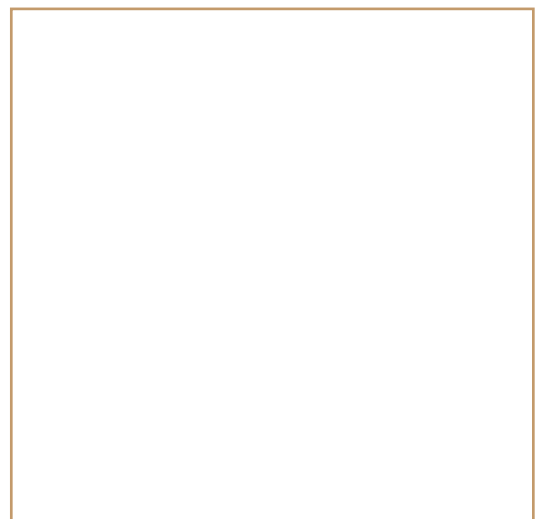


Mellor, Meigs & Howe. McCracken House, Philadelphia, 1919

In this examples, the image of a rustic farm-house, the respect for the natural form of the ground, and the ingenious handling of local materials all combine to create an organic quality, at once simple and integrated. Monumental mansion was seen as pretentious and immoral. To imitate the slickness of marble by the use of inferior stucco was to show no respect for the nature of materials, as instead upon by men like Lodoli, Downing and Wright. By contrast, the aesthetic values of craftsmanship which characterize the unity of house and garden in the Philadelphia country house is a conscious expression of the cultural background of its owners and of its physical environment. In its broadest sense this consciousness is an interpretation of the ancient doctrine of decorum, assimilated with the spirituality of the Quaker's emphasis upon the Inner Light. The harmonious relationship between external and internal appearance of these houses illustrates the integration of both in accordance with the social and religious background of their owners. The distinguishing characteristics of such integration are the use of native gray stone and the skilled incorporation of wood and ironwork that unites the house naturally with the landscape architecture of the garden in texture and color. In the work of Yellin and other local artisans, Viollet-le-Duc's rationalism, based on structural unity, is successfully joined with Pugin's moralizing exaltation of the honesty of craftsmanship.



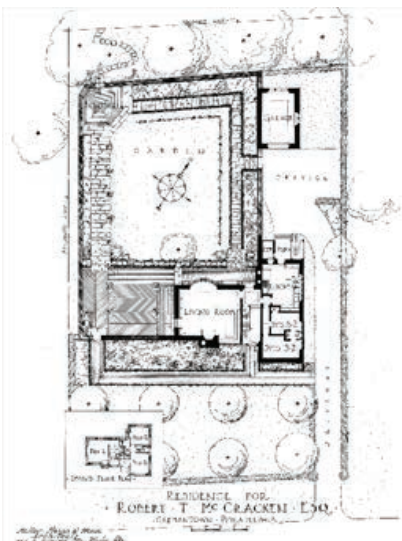
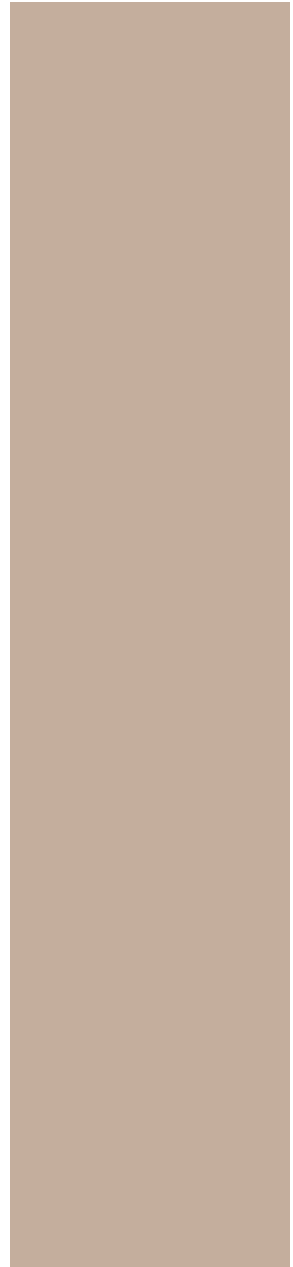
Mellor, Meigs & Howe. Walter Mellor Residence, Philadelphia, 1928



The tradition of the English Arts and Crafts garden, as seen particularly in the work of Webb and Norman Shaw (what Muthesius has called the modest English individuality), combined with Guadet's idea of employing materials that the modest English individuality), combined with Guadet's idea of employing materials that respond to the utilitarian concept of the program and the reflection of truth in structure are contributing factors in creating the intimate relationship between inside house and outside landscape. The Romantic sense of pre-industrial values, characterized by living craft traditions working in harmony with nature, is uniquely expressed by the architectural composition of these walled garden country-houses. The tranquility resulting from this harmony can be attributed to those who believed in the divine creation of landscape, uniting all elements of nature and man-made structures. In their quest for the spirit of place, the architects successfully combined rules and principles that would bring their design into close association with the physical environment of Philadelphia. Consequently the end result is an organic cohesiveness perfectly in tune with the site. From a detailed study of Philadelphia country houses there emerged a recognizable "type" exhibiting a unique combination of architectural characteristics:

The Walled "House-garden"

The wall harmoniously integrates house and garden as a united composition. Such an architectural feature discreetly defines an enclosed courtyard house, which was spatially conceptualized through the architect's interpretation of the garden as a room. In the work of the Philadelphia architects, the concept of wall exceeds its rational purpose as a means of division and structural support. The architectural extension of the wall from inside out coherently harmonizes the distinct character of the construction while also expressing its aesthetic plasticity. The inward-looking garden by means of its unpretentious wall is publicly blended with the texture and color of the surrounding landscape. The Philadelphia "type" contains its own cultural heritage, representing a particular social image carried by the Philadelphia gentlemen. The oneness of house and garden while handsomely satisfying the clients needs, at the same time overcome the limitations imposed by zoning restriction and small lots.

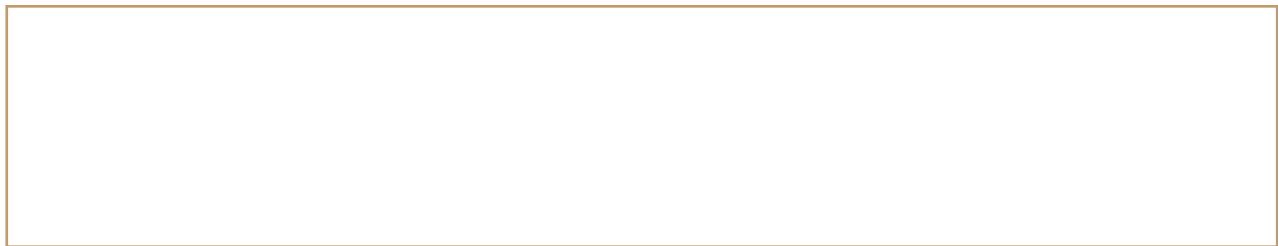


Mellor, Meigs & Howe. McCracken House, Philadelphia, 191

The Room (indoor-outdoor) as the Compositional Unit

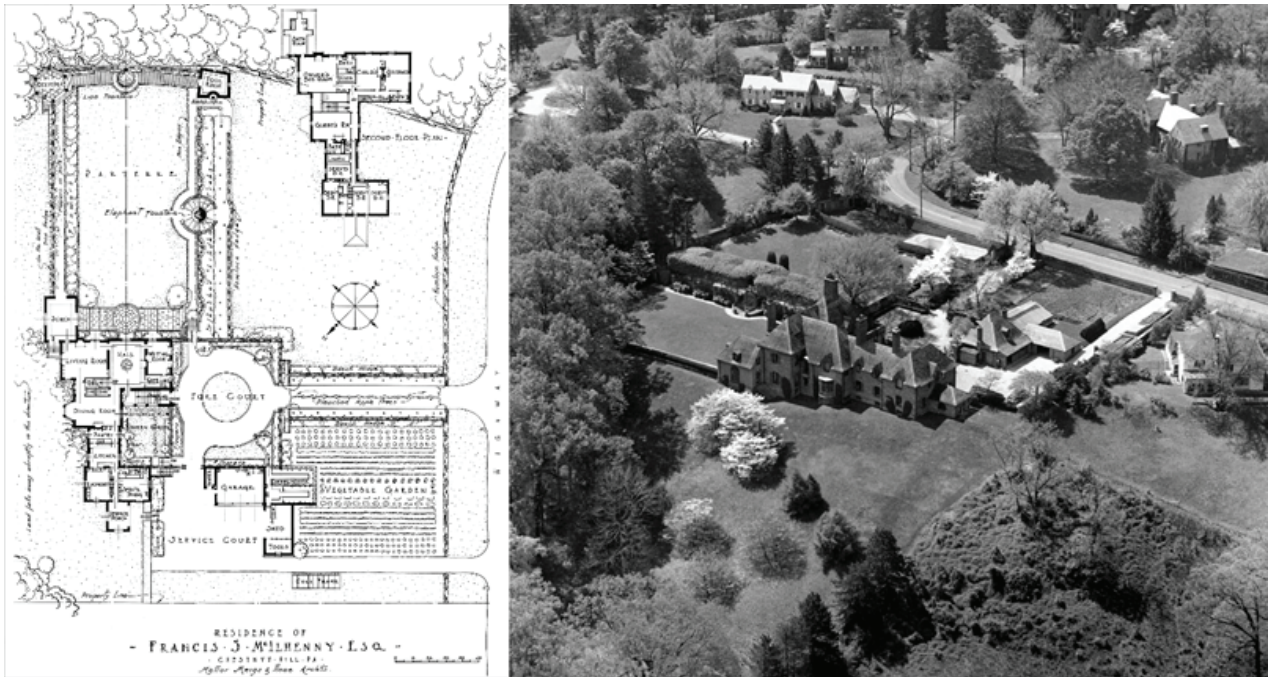
When analyzing the plan organization, the Philadelphia “type” is identified in part by the notion of “room” governing the relationship between indoor and outdoor. As classically defined by Alberti, the ‘Wall’, the ‘roof’ and the ‘opening’ represent the basic spatial modules of academic composition. In this respect the rationalism in planning evident in the Philadelphia country house is linked with the concept of the ‘autonomous room’. The “type” under study shares a similar sequential procession from room to room theorized by Guadet, adopted in the work of H.H. Richardson and romanticized by Shaw, Lutyens and Baillie Scott. When analyzing the relationship between house and garden in the work of the Philadelphia architects, the interpretation of unity is consonant with Porphyrrios’ comment: “it is only logical to expect that the autonomous room would be a necessary conceptual prerequisite to an architectural sensibility that capitalized upon the sensuous individuality of its independent spatial coherence.

In this houses the unity in plan is expressed through a dynamic movement demonstrating the asymmetrical juxtaposition of harmoniously balanced rooms. The indoor-outdoor conformity is based upon a similar spatial concept observable simultaneously in rooms, garden, service court and forecourt in which the enclosed circulation romantically interpreted an upper class life style with its background of Quaker simplicity. Such an architectural expression combines spiritual unity with a sentimental search for the past recalling Hegel’s understanding of space: “The distinctive form here is the fully enclosed house. In fact, just as the Christian spirit concentrates itself with itself, so the building becomes the place, closed in on all sides...”



Balanced Asymmetry in Plan and Elevation

The unique character of these houses is produced by the principle of architectural unity which masterfully expresses the social and cultural background of the client, placed within the boundary of a limited site and particular surrounding circumstances. A preference for architectural unity, Romanticism, and balance asymmetry was acquired by the Philadelphia architects through training, foreign travel, and their social and cultural background. Characteristically, the sentimental interpretation of the pastoral architecture of the past, couple with the asymmetrical picturesque house of nineteenth-century England, found a strong echo in the architectural composition of these examples. Because of their architectural educational background under the Beaux-Arts system, the architects were influenced by Guadet’s theory of composition based upon the rejection of bilateral symmetry in favor of balanced irregularity where a sense of “equilibrium” is produced by a harmonious correlation between primary, secondary and tertiary axes. A beautiful plan, which for Guadet is the originator of a beautiful elevation, becomes the compositional goal sought by Mellor, Meigs and Howe, McGoodwin, and Willing and Sims. The ability to visualize the inseparable relation of plan and elevation as taught at the Ecole is explained by Van Pelt when he writes that: “The power of seeing a completed figure in the mind’s eye is acquired by thorough training in descriptive geometry...through practice anyone can finally attain facility, provided he never draws a silhouette in plan without knowing what it means.” The preference of client and architect for the irregular picturesque, for the requirements of the program and for a response to the site and topography are important reasons why these architects chose the design principle of balanced equilibrium while rejecting neoclassical forms of symmetry.



Mellor, Meigs & Howe. The Residence of Francis S. McIlhenny, Philadelphia, 1920.

Marriage of the House and Site

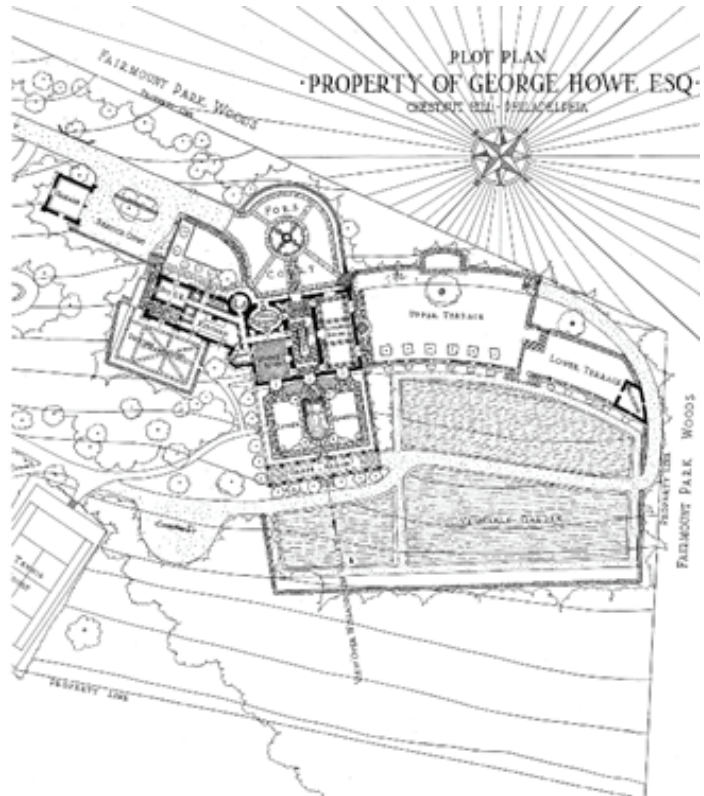
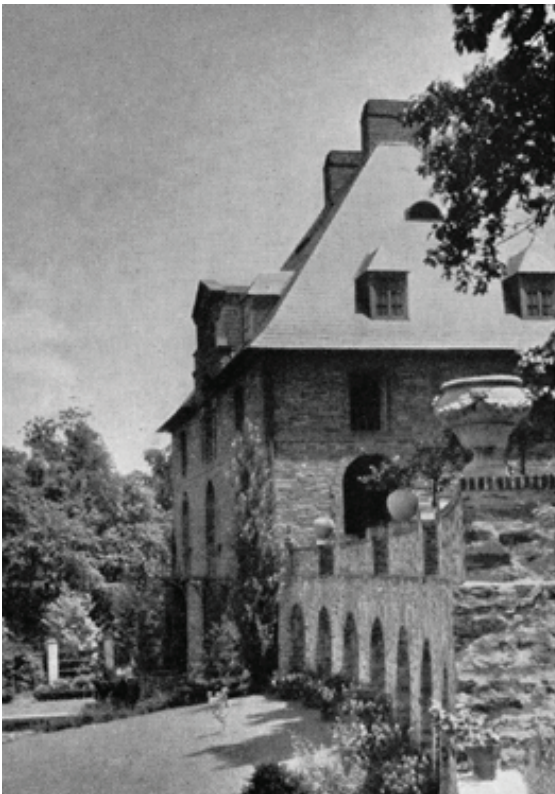
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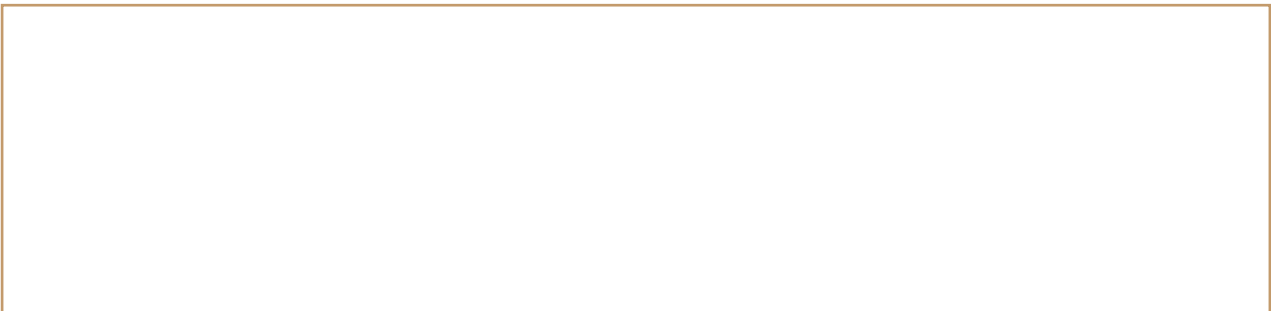


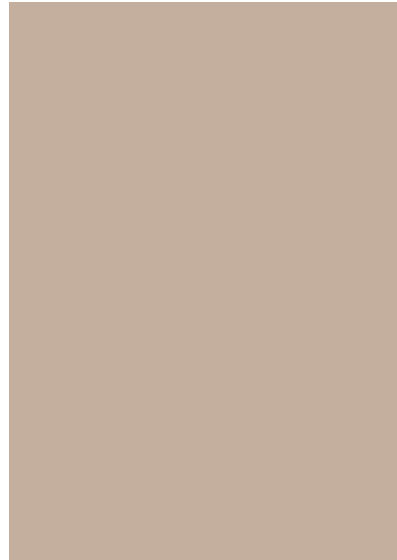
The Picturesque View/Eclecticism

The aesthetic attitude behind the design of these houses in Philadelphia is expressed by a love of diversity. In this romantically inspired eclecticism, the characteristic method of using and combining architectural elements as dictated by a cultural nostalgia for a dynamic and pictorial skyline. The picturesque eclecticism of nineteenth-century America was guided though the eloquent writings of Downing, masterfully demonstrated by Richardson at Boston's Trinity Church, extravagantly celebrated in the architectural image of the Centennial in Philadelphia and nostalgically interpreted by R.A. Cram in his church designs. Building upon the innate visual quality of the "picturesque" intellectualized by Price and Lutyens, the Philadelphia architects formulated an intricate asymmetrical composition dynamically emerging from the landscape. In these houses the elements of surprise and contrast are subtly interwoven, integrating the variables of height, shape, void, solid, dark, light, shade and shadow accented by the texture of materials. The image produced by such an eclectic juxtaposition of architectural elements was inspired by a nostalgic interpretation of the English cottage and Normandy farm. The composition so full of dynamic movement, as the masses rise and fall, advance and recede is a sublime expression of architectural unity and much of its charm comes from the intricacy of the relationships between the elements of the composition.



George Howe. The Property of Gerorge Howe, Philadelphia, 1914





Robert R. McGoodwin. The House for Persifor Frazer, Philadelphia, 1921

Appropriate Choice of materials and Respect for their Nature

In each of the houses the same limited range of natural materials is to be found with each material serving a special function consistent with its nature. A common distinguishing element is the choice of native gray stone as the dominant structural material which blends naturally with the surrounding landscape in texture and color, and the skilled incorporation of brick, wood, ironwork and tiles. The tradition of the English Arts and Crafts Movement in its American adaptation, combined with Guadet's idea of employing materials that respond to the utilitarian requirements of the program had a profound effect on the design of these houses. A sense of historical continuity is perceived in the choice of ledgerstone which maintains the long-established local masonry tradition of the humble Pennsylvania farmhouse as well as in the work of earlier Philadelphia architects. The randomly coursed stone walls without parallel joint have a overall uniform texture. Another feature of the masonry is the frequent juxtaposition of stone and brick in chimney, gates, walls, and terrace paving. A respect for the nature of materials, inspired by the philosophy of the Arts and Crafts, is present not only in the treatment of masonry but also in the use of colorful Mercer tile and in the handcrafted Yellin grills, stair rails, lanterns and locks.



Mellor, Meigs & Howe. The Residence of Francis S. McIlhenny, Philadelphia, 1920



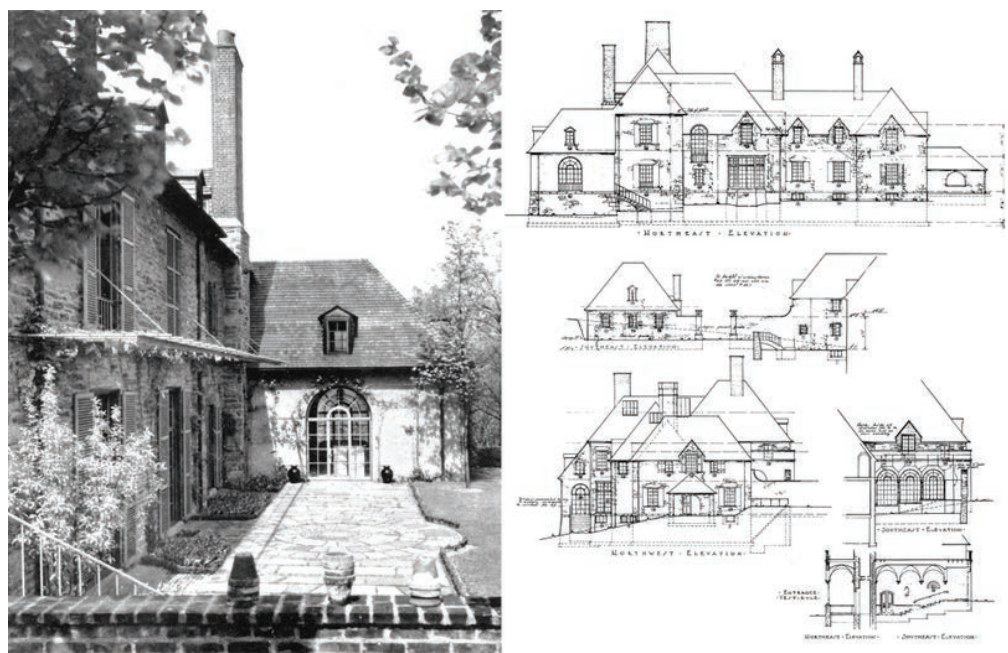
Mellor, Meigs & Howe. Walter Mellor Residence, Philadelphia, 1928

Quality of Craftsmanship

The highest quality of craftsmanship is to be found in all the examples. From masonry work to wrought iron and wood work, all materials are worked with refinement, precision, and sensitivity to their nature. The Chestnut Hill stone in

Philadelphia through its dominant uniform texture and color permitted the incorporation and the harmonious juxtaposition of other materials such as brick, tile, and hand-hew beams. Perhaps the finest expression of Craftsmanship in the tradition of the Arts and Crafts movement of William Morris is in Sam Yellin's iron work. The apparent simplicity of his handwork concealed a most highly sophisticated sense of design perfectly in harmony with the spurious simplicity of the architecture. In his grilles, gates, screen, lighting fixtures, railings, and door and window hardware, one can sense a sensitive understanding of the limitations of the material, combined with a strong feeling for medieval craftsmanship. Integrated within the unity of house and garden, the rugged beauty and infinite variety of Yellin's ironwork was perfectly suited to the entire "Romantic" concept of the house.

From the study of Philadelphia Country Houses a well defined "type" emerged. A unique combination of seven architectural characteristics were recognized involving the element of wall, the essence of room, balanced symmetry, natural setting, picturesqueness, materials, and craftsmanship. Not all of the examples exhibit equally all these characteristics which in combination identify the Philadelphia "type". All are, nevertheless, fine architectural creations. Many of the qualities shared by these examples derive from a common Philadelphia architectural tradition, found earlier in the work of other Philadelphia architects like Price, Eyre, Gilchrist, Duhring and Okie. Their impressive designs, initiated an architectural style that dealt organically with the natural environment of the site, through the employment of local materials and the best of the skilled craftsmanship available in the area. Yet the architectural concept of the walled "house-garden" that is the basic characteristic of the Philadelphia "type" in which the indoor and outdoor are conceived as an indivisible unity is found in the earlier work. In response to the functional requirements of the program the architects have uniformly employed a balanced asymmetry in plan and elevation while at the same time made for a better relationship to the topography of the site. The small lots, characteristic of Philadelphia, encouraged the use of the inward looking walled "house-garden" parti in which common walls simultaneously serve indoor and outdoor rooms.



Mellor, Meigs & Howe. The Residence of Francis S. McIlhenny, Philadelphia, 1920

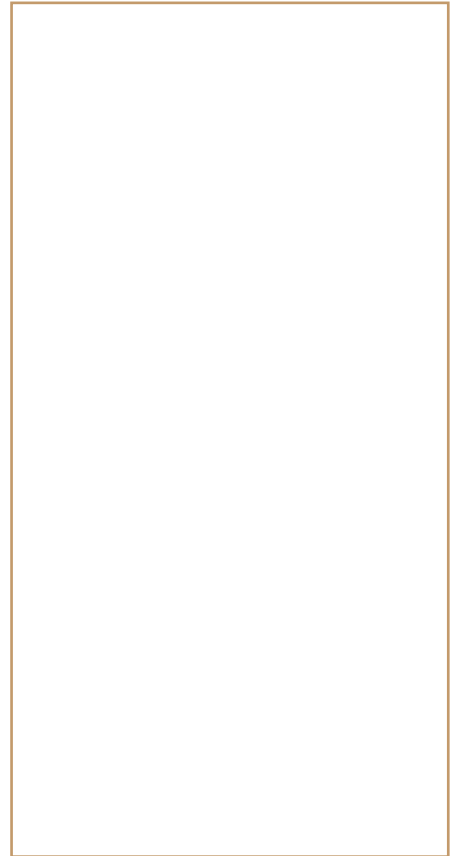
It should be noted that the vast majority of the fine houses in Philadelphia exhibit one or more of the characteristics examined in this study. Nearly all of those built in this era were of native stone, most were on comparatively small lots, many were superbly crafted and a sizeable minority possessed a picturesque quality that grew out of their balanced asymmetry, yet relatively few exhibited that unique combination of the seven characteristics that define the Chestnut Hill “type”. For example, most of the houses were symmetrical free standing structures that repeated colonial or Georgian architectural mannerisms. Stylistically these differed little from similar suburban communities along the east coast. On the other hand one cannot help but observe that the very special architectural quality of the community was primarily by those unique houses which created the ambience for the highly cultivated yet retiring life-style of Baltzell’s Philadelphia Gentleman.

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Khosrow Bozorgi

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Gonbad-e Kavus Tower, Gonbad-e Kavus City

Golestan Province Babak Zirak, M.A

Introduction

Among many historic heritage buildings in Iranian architecture, tomb structures hold a particularly prominent status and are represented in significant numbers. Significant factors, such as the belief in an afterlife and the desire for immortality through fame and prestige in great dynasties, have led to the design and construction of tomb buildings, which have played a vital role in the architectural practices of the ancient world for millennia.

The history of notable tomb structures on the Iranian plateau dates back to the second millennium BC, beginning with the tomb of the Elamite king at Haft Tappeh in Khuzestan. Following this, the impressive tombs of the Achaemenid kings at Naqsh-e Rostam, carved into towering stone cliffs, stand alongside Persepolis, showcasing the grandeur of Achaemenid architecture through their monumental sculptures. During Parthian period, the changing worldview of the new rulers led to a rise in the construction of family and underground tombs. However, during the Sassanid period, strong prevailing biases in the Sassanid court resulted in a pause of several hundred years in the construction of luxurious tombs.

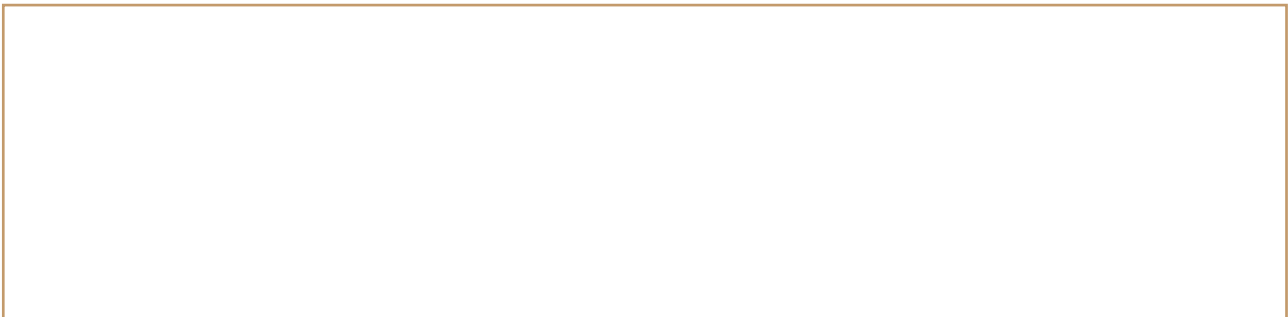


Photo by: Nasser Mizbani

The design and building of tombs resumed slowly in the first centuries following the Arab invasion of Iran. This process gradually expanded with the construction of both small and large structures over the graves of prominent cultural, literary, and political figures, as well as the establishment of holy shrines above the graves of religious figures from the new faith. As a result, the number of these tombs in Iran has now grown to several thousand.

Given the importance of understanding the rich history of enduring Iranian architecture spanning over four millennia, there is a pressing need for historical research and in-depth cultural studies on tombs. This exploration can help reinterpret the secrets and mysteries embedded within many of these structures.

Among the significant tomb buildings from the Islamic era, the monumental Sultaniyeh Dome stands out. Its inclusion on the World Heritage List offers a promising opportunity for enhanced recognition beyond current awareness. Additionally, the registration of the remarkable "Gonbad Qaboos" tower, noted for being the tallest brick tower in the world, was achieved by compiling a comprehensive identity card that documents and introduces it according to modern standards. This magnificent and unique tomb deserves further acknowledgment, and efforts have been made to appreciate it from a fresh perspective.



One of the most unique and enduring monuments of Iranian architecture from the Islamic era is Qaboos bin Voshmgir Tower, located north of the city of Gonbad Qavoos, just 3 kilometers from the remnants of the ancient city of "Jorjan," the center of the Al-Ziyar dynasty. Architecturally and technologically, this dome serves as a significant testament to the period of prosperity and settlement in the land of Jurjan and the Al-Ziyar dynasty.

Constructed in 397 AH during the reign of "Shams-ul-Maali Qaboos bin Voshmgir," the city of Gonbad-e-Qavoos derives its name from this illustrious ruler. According to an old legend, the lifeless body of this great king was placed in a crystal coffin, suspended within the tower, so that each morning the sun would shine through the dome's aperture onto it. This haunting narrative has profoundly shaped the essence and mystery inherent in the architecture of the Qaboos Dome, lingering in the collective memory like a captivating tale.

Shams al-Ma'ali was a virtuous individual known for his artistry, calligraphy, and thoughtful writing, producing works in both Persian and Arabic. His court became a hub for scholars and scientists of his era, where the renowned Iranian scientist Abu Rayhan al-Biruni wrote his famous work "Asar al-Baqiyah" in his honor in 390 AH. Despite these admirable qualities, some historical texts portray him as hot-tempered, ruthless, and an extremist politician.



Photo by: Kiarash Milani nia

This mausoleum is situated on a hill that rises 15 meters, reaching a total height of 55 meters. Consequently, the top of the dome stands 70 meters above the surrounding plain. Since ancient times, this tower has symbolized the city of Jorjan, serving as a prominent landmark that guided caravans of travelers across the vast Turkmen Sahra plain.

The architecture features a tall, circular structure with a star-shaped plan and a conical dome that is 18 meters high, adorned with 10 large triangular cracks. Each crack measures 1.60 meters at the top, with a base spaced 1.4 meters apart from the adjacent crack. This results in a total main perimeter of the dome measuring 30 meters and 144 millimeters. The design reflects a profound understanding of statics; the architect cleverly avoided thickening the tower's body and instead incorporated the triangular cracks with a circular base. This innovative approach increases the torque of the structure without adding to its mass, thereby providing significant resistance for the towering building.

In fact, apart from the important issue of using highly resistant materials in the foundation and structure of the building, creating the integral skeleton of the tower in the aforementioned method is a masterpiece that has allowed the aforementioned building to survive (despite its very high height and small base) for more than 10 centuries and to survive the terrible earthquakes that have leveled many of the valuable and short buildings of Iran to the ground during the aforementioned long period.

The inner dome of the building, now a striking sky blue, features solid brickwork that has remained largely intact despite the passage of time. Some of these bricks have been specially molded to align precisely with the slope of the walls. In the eastern section of the dome, there is an opening measuring 1.90 meters in height, through which, according to ancient traditions, the lifeless body of Qaboos was suspended in a crystal coffin for a final farewell.

On the southern side of the tomb, there is a tall and unadorned doorway, the sole opening in the thick, solid structure that connects the exterior to the interior of the tomb. The tower and dome are constructed from specialized bricks known as root bricks, held together with mortar.

Inside the crescent arch of the entrance to the tower, two rows of elegant muqarnas can be seen. Although simple, these muqarnas hold significant historical value, as they are among the earliest examples to have survived in Iranian architecture following the advent of Islam.

On the brick surface of the tower, 3 meters above the base of the cone, two rows of brick inscriptions in simple Arabic Kufic script are set within identical brick frames. The text in these raised inscriptions is consistent across both rows and crafted from plain red bricks. Despite their simplicity, these inscriptions exhibit a distinct readability and aesthetic charm.

The translation of the Arabic text of inscription is as follows:

This is the exquisite palace of Shams Al-Ma'ali - Amir Shams Al-Ma'ali, son of Amir Qaboos Ibn Voshmgir, ordered its construction through his lifetime. In 397 AH - 375 solar year. To protect and manage the mentioned site, Jorjan Historical City Base, affiliated with the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization, has implemented comprehensive measures to integrate conservation management with urban planning in the region. This includes efforts to remove nuisances within both the physical and visual boundaries of the site. In addition, protective restoration and risk mitigation for the overall structure have been conducted. This involves assessing the geotechnical conditions, analyzing the natural environment of the building's foundation, identifying various structural threats, and repairing both the internal and external surfaces of the tower as part of the restoration efforts.

Given its remarkable characteristics and historical significance, this monument, which has stood strong and resilient for over a thousand years on the arid landscape of northeastern Iran, warrants more effective action from cultural heritage custodians and non-governmental organizations. Efforts should focus on clearing the surrounding area and removing visually disruptive elements within its expansive territory. Furthermore, it is essential to design appropriate elements that enhance the site, creating various areas and landscapes that complement this magnificent monument, with the assistance of landscape and green space architects. In concluding this article and the description of the aforementioned tower, it is important to highlight the enthusiasm expressed by a renowned Iranologist following their visit to this magnificent Iranian tomb. Their admiration underscores the cultural and architectural significance of the site, reflecting its enduring impact on those who encounter it.





Photo by: Kiarash Milani nia

Professor Arthur Ebbam Pope wrote the following about Qaboos Dome in his famous book called *The Art of Iran*:

Among nearly 50 memorial towers in Iran, Qaboos Dome is the oldest and most impressive tower that still remains.

Pope is deeply impressed upon seeing the towering structure of Qaboos Dome. He describes the architecture of the tower, reflecting on the personality traits and identity of its founder. He proceeds to offer a beautiful analysis that encapsulates the magnificent and powerful life of Al-Ziyar king, a life marked by both grandeur and an eerie sense of unity and solitude.

He is captivated by the crystallization, grandeur, and solitude embodied in the towering structure and the setting of this unique building, remarking as follows: At the foot of the eastern Alborz Mountains, overlooking the vast plains of Asia, a remarkable architectural masterpiece rises. The Dome of Qaboos, or the Tomb of Qaboos and the Tower of Shamgir, rises to about 51 meters from its broad base to the peak of its pointed roof, with an additional 10 meters for the basement. Constructed from very strong red bricks, the structure is now adorned in hues of tin and gold. Kufic inscriptions are positioned between each ridge at the top and bottom of the tower, marking the year of construction by Qaboos. Aside from these inscriptions and ridges, the building remains devoid of elaborate decoration. Qaboos was an extraordinary man who ruled Gorgan intermittently (from 976 to 1012 AD).

He was a scholar and a patron of scholars, a poet and a supporter of poets, a calligrapher, an astronomer, a linguist, and a chess player, brave yet often suspicious as a warrior, ultimately meeting his end at the hands of angry elders. His life was marked by a paradoxical blend of safety and conflict, inviting fate to engage in battle.

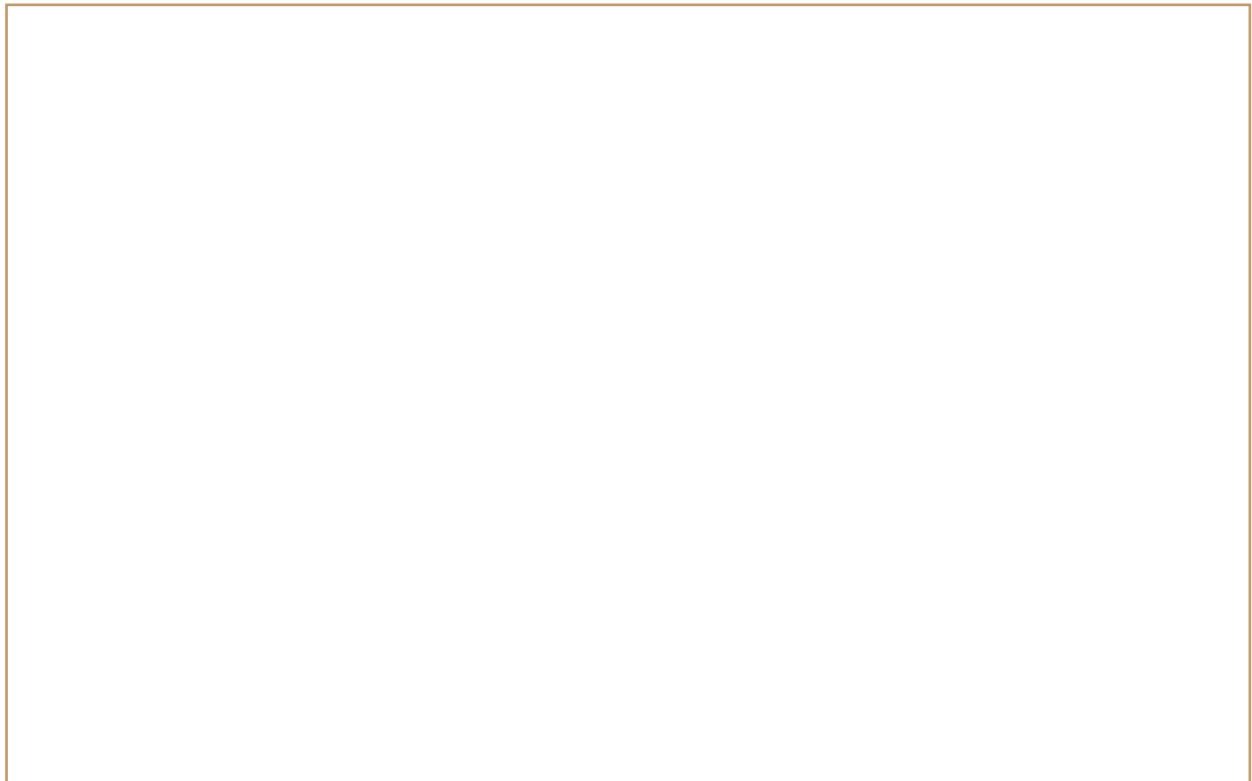
All these characteristics are vividly reflected in the design of the aforementioned monument. Its power emanates from its towering height and solitude, embodying a pure combination of simple volume and a formidable form that leaves no room for doubt or error. The monument stands completely bare, reminiscent of a warrior facing fate, much like the poet-king who wrestled with the concept of eternity. This monument, with its dignity and awesomeness, is a spectacle of death and the defeat of death. Is there any tomb so eloquent and so captivating?

A brief explanation of the city of "Jorjan" is essential in this article. Jorjan reached the peak of its prosperity during the fifth and sixth centuries AH. It was a unique city for its time, characterized by a well-designed urban plan and advanced infrastructure, including a sewage network. Additionally, Jorjan boasts some of the finest examples of pavement construction among historical cities in Iran. The city also housed the most equipped glass, pottery, blacksmithing, and metalworking workshops of that era, highlighting its significance as an important center of industry and culture.

In describing the reputation of Jorjan, it is important to note that the city was home to educational and higher education centers of its time, making it a significant cultural, social, and industrial hub in the region during those centuries.

According to surviving anecdotes in ancient texts, after the devastating Mongol conquests, which obliterated the city's infrastructure and much of Jorjan itself, the only structure left standing was Qaboos Tower. This enduring monument served as a witness to the extent of the devastation, symbolizing the loss of civilization and culture in the wake of the Mongols' destructive passage through the land.

Fortunately, the unique historical significance of Qaboos Dome Tower has garnered special attention from UNESCO. In addition to the efforts made for its registration on the World Heritage List, a ceremony was held in 1997 by Iranian institutions, including the Cultural Heritage Organization and the UNESCO Representative Office in Iran, to commemorate the thousandth anniversary of its construction next to the tower.



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He born on 23 April 1954, Studied Architecture at National university of Iran. Master of Architecture and Planning in 1979. Managing Director at Aran architecture consulting engineers since 1983. During her 40 years of activity, he has participated in many projects and competitions. Among his activities are as following: Designing Iran's Pavilion at Expo 2000 (Hanover, Germany) and Publishing 14 volumes of the book on typology of housing (typology)

Sociocultural Influences On An Important Example Of Iranian Urban Space

Fereshteh Habib. PhD

Abstract

In casting a new look at city; this study interprets the urban form in respect of the role played by human perception of space. The main aim of this research at a macro level is to attain a strong theoretical basis through a multi-dimensional approach to the city. The method of analyzing and carrying out a critique of it at an applied level will clarify the impact, which cultural factors have in the formation of urban form. This preliminary recognition and idealism is based on a hermeneutic and deductive method that is particular to the intellectual sciences. In the process of devising theories, studying the urban planning texts related to the subject of study and the conclusion from the field study which is carried out in the Isfahan Naghshe Jahan square in the Safavid period played a key role in the research in addition to the goals and questions.

Keywords: Culture, Indigenous, Religious, Global, Urban Form, Naghsh-I-Jahan Square.



Fig 1. Iran in Safavid era (Pop, 1939)

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Introduction

With the growth in urbanization and the acceleration of the new constructions which have taken place as a result of technological advancement and the improvement in living standards, we can establish two alternate points. On the one hand, the unplanned growth of cities and the accelerated construction work have met to some extent, the quantitative and material demands of human life; on the other hand, qualitative aspects and in some cases the artistic, cultural and psychological demands have been neglected. This study intends to take a special look at reviewing the basic concepts and visual manifestations of the city paying particular attention to the role and function of human socio-cultural influences in the formation of space. The article proceeds from theoretical research on cultural concepts their conformity to time and place. Under this scope, Naghshe Jahan square¹ in the Isfahan, one of the capital cities of Iran (Fig.1) which enjoy the opportunity to house many remarkable remains of historic and cultural heritage is chosen as case study. And the concepts underlying the design of it in the Safavid period (1535-1778) are interpreted in connection with the concept of culture and its dynamic multi-dimensional aspects. The language of urban planning in an ancient part of Isfahan (Fig.2), i.e. the Naqshe Jahan complex, like the language of any other work of art, transfers the cultural messages of its own period, that is to say, it creates symbolic cultural categories. The search for these concepts, more or less, resembles an archeological excavation, for these conventions are believed to be hidden in the unconscious mind and human perception, so to speak, of what is called the Iranian cultural heritage. It is clear that this study does not intend to idealize a period in the past; rather the goal is to learn from the past for the future.

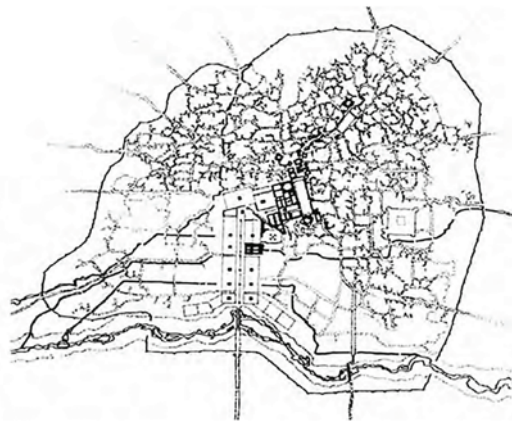


Fig 1. Plan of Isfahan in Safavid era (Herdeck, 1995)

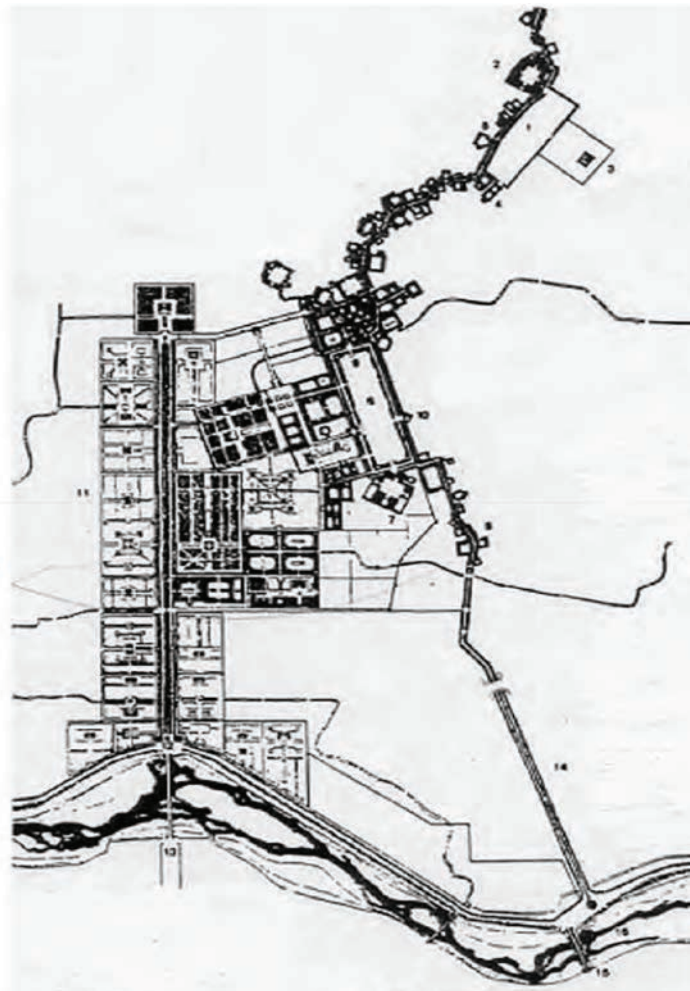


Fig 1. Naghshe Jahan Complex, royal town beside the river Zayandeh Rood and near old city (Herdeck, 1995)

¹ The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seek to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. This is embodied in an international treaty called the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972. The World Heritage List includes 830 properties forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which the World Heritage Committee considers as having outstanding universal value. These include 644 cultural, 162 natural and 24 mixed properties in 184 States Parties. Meidan Imam (Naghsh-e Jahan square) in 1979 was chosen as nominated site for inclusion on the world heritage list.

Safavid period in which the Naghsh-I-Jahan Complex was constructed is concurrent with the age of passing through darkness towards enlightenment in the Western Civilization, known as the process of Renaissance, and the age of Ottoman classicism (1535-1778). This period can also be described as the age of the renewal of political, social, economic and cultural reorganization in Iran. The design and implementation of the new center of the city (Naghsh Jahan complex, which took 25 years to complete, is a clear and beautiful expression of symbolism and innovation in city planning that clearly demonstrated and fully adopted in a practical application the theoretical perspective and concepts introduced in this study. Complex composed of Old Piazza, Masjed-I-Jame, Palace, Masjed-I-Ali, Bazaar, Naghshe-I-Jahan Square (Shah), Masjed-I-Imam (Shah), Ali-Quapu, Masjed-I -Sheik Lotfollah, Chahar-Bagh Gardens, Chahar-Bagh Street, Pol-e-Allahwardi Khan, Pol-e- Khwaju, Zayandeh Rive (Fig.3)

Among the theories about concepts underlying the design of the Naghshe Jahan square, we can propound; Pope (1939) and his followers who introduced the idea; that all Iranian arts have one basic concept; to reproduce and exhibit the Garden of Eden. Shariati (1991), Bahar (1997), and Habibi (1996) have led a mythical approach to the issue; they survey the basics of design in the myths of the Iranian tribe and believe that the basics of design must be sought in the ancient patterns of the Iranian tribe Burkhart (1990), Nasr (1995) and his followers Ardalan and Bakhtiyar (1975) have analyzed the influence of the religious (Islamic) impacts relying on unity.



Oliver, in his article "Binarism in an Islamic City", presents duality as the base of design, as well as the aesthetic considerations and opinions on form of it. Ashihara (1983) believed that the formation of space in this type of architecture and urban planning is merely due to geographical, aesthetical and ecological conditions. From this point of view; this study is an attempt to define and clarify the impacts, which social culture has on perceiving city form. Thus, cultural symbolism is considered as the base of perceiving Naghsh-I-Jahan square and it has been carried out in three domains: **Indigenous impacts, religious pattern and contemporary qualities.**

Since the methodology of the study is a deductive one, the resultant theories are only hypothetical and have never been categorically proven. Therefore, the eclectic method, a combination of the empirical method and the deductive-perceptive method, could prove to be appropriate. In this method, recognition does not come from experiencing details, but rather speculations and theories and the resulting issues can be the early stages of recognition and awareness. These theories, the empirical methods and the examples can then complement and support the approval and reformation of the theories. In the process of devising theories, the study of the appropriate urban planning texts and of the conclusion of the field study played a key role in this issue in addition to the goals identified and questions posed.

General Concept and Definitions

In order to understand the concepts related to our discussion, it is vitally important to deal with some key concepts which are mainly; Culture, indigenous, religious, global, urban form and Naghsh-I-Jahan square for a comprehensive understanding of the case of Naghsh-I-Jahan square.

Culture: In a broad sense, can be studied as a phenomenon closely related to such issues as economy, politics, society and environmental factors. It can be defined as a creative dynamic conceptual process, which is in direct relation with values and identity. It is inseparable mixtures of native and global or internal and external impacts. It's man's view and attitude towards the world, his way of individual and social life, and a complex collection of the beliefs, and immortal modes of behavior, manifestation of art, music and literature, relying on indigenous, religious and contemporary patterns circumstances and conditions.

Indigenous impacts: is a collection of all values, ancient and mythical patterns.

Religious pattern: is the fruit of religious beliefs and traditions.

Global qualities: are meaningful in connection with other cultures and in the form of self critical approach and a commitment to deep thinking about ourselves (Table.1).

Indigenous Impacts	Culture is a complex collection of the, values and immortal modes of behavior, manifestation of art, music and literature
Religious Patterns	Culture is a creative dynamic conceptual process, which is in direct relation with, beliefs and traditions.
Global Qualities	Global impacts are meaningful in connection with other cultures and in the form of self critical approach and a commitment to deep thinking about ourselves

Table 1.

Urban form: According to Lynch, the urban form is the material entity of a city that is a formal and spatial manifestation of the activities of societies in time and place in a combination of objectivity and subjectivity (Lynch, 1997). Rapoport says: "Sociocultural schemata are the primary determinants of form even on those scales and in turn affect the images and schemata that mediate between environments and people. Urban form (and whole landscape) can thus be interpreted. In many traditional cultures sacred schemata and meanings are the most important ones, and cities in those cultures can be understood only in such terms" (Rapoport, 1982). The minimal parts of this combination, within the framework of man-made elements have been placed in an intertwined whole on which the natural environment, has a strong influence on the way the elements combine to produce the city form. Additionally, the city form is in close and bilateral interaction with the functions of the city (Bacon, 1967). It possesses both static and dynamic properties and this is an essential indicator of the transformation of the city form. It can be purposeful.

The process of formation of urban form is impossible without reliance on and attention to the role of human perception and indeed, based man's previously perceived experiences. As Hall mentioned, culture penetrates into the depth of human nervous system and determines his perception of the world of being. Symbolization of the world of perception is not only a cultural performance but also is actable, sensational and sentimentally relevant (Yung, 1960). People from various cultures use their sentiments in different ways. The formation of space - not creation - is another type of collecting things together in relationship. It could be described as a type of emergence of relations and the subsequent relationships that are realized. The wholeness of the urban form is worthy of study as a complex compound, a complex of symbols that is definable, as with any other system, through its elements, parts, external and internal relationships. The system that clarifies the mutual relations of human beings and lays the foundations of culture has been rooted on a system of values that is not fixed in the course of time. Whatever we refer to it as style is indeed a palpable manifestation of this system of values, which is as a result, a manifestation of general governing system. Culture affects urban form, which is a sign of dominating system of values, and forms it. In other words, culture creates set of rules that form is a reflection of it (Table 2)

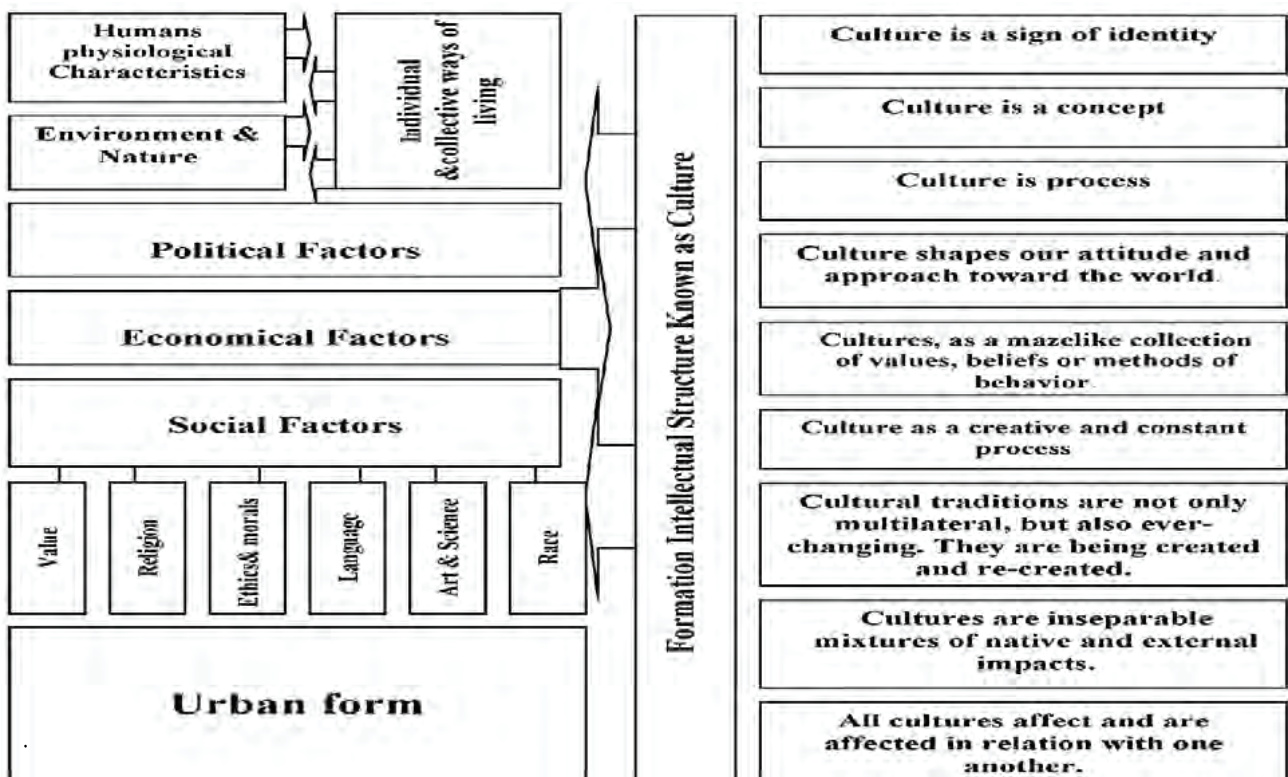
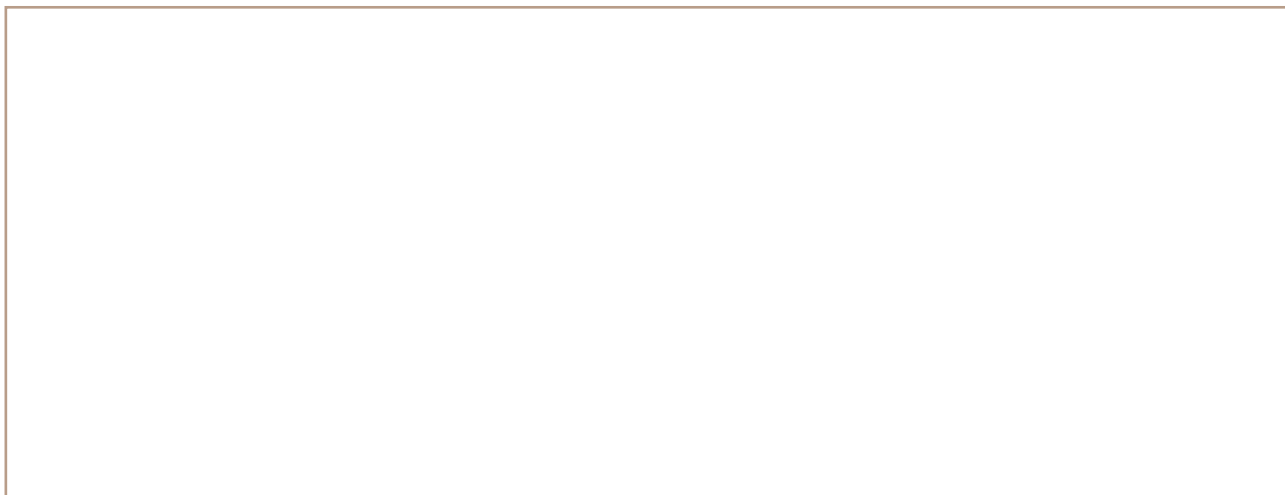


Table 2.



Isfahan and Naghsh-I-Jahan square:

The pre-Islam history of Isfahan dates back to ancient times and the three kingdoms of Achaminids (549-329B.C.), Arsacides (248B.C.-226A.C.) and Sasanids (224-810A.C.). It was turned into a military quarter at the time of the Sasanid kings and in 7th century it was conquered by the Muslims who divided the city into the to Muslim and Jewish populated quarters. In 1587 the Safavid dynasty transferred their capital from Qazvin to Isfahan. The decision for moving to the new place was made after king (Shah Abbas) left Qazvin for Isfahan in the month of March to celebrate Now Rouz (New Year) in one of the royal palaces in the city known as 'Naghsh-I-Jahan' that was situated in a vast garden.

While staying in Isfahan he decided to erect a royal town beside the river Zayandeh Rood and near old city.

The independent Iranian political and cultural identity that had been turned to an Islamic identity as a result of the influence the caliphs of Baghdad was revived. These kingdoms ruled an endless territory extending from India, Pakistan and Mesopotamia to Asia Minor, assuring unity and integrity throughout the empire. The past of the Iranians is intermixed with myths and epics and this has been eloquently manifested in *Shahnameh*² of Ferdowsi. A large part of the Zoroastrian³ eschatology has found its way well into the metaphysics of the Iranian Shia (Corbin, 1979) (Bakhtiyar, 1979). Of course, there has always been more or less hidden conflict between the Persian monarchy, as presented in the *Shahnameh* and the Iranian Shiite verses as glorified by the blood of martyrs.



These considerations, however, are considerably moderated in respect of such issues as eschatology and the belief in the coming of the Saviour. The concept of the Saviour in the Shia branch of Islam is manifested by the presence of the Imam of the Time Hazrat Mahdi after the conclusion of the prophetic lineage. The belief is very distinct and strong in the religious conscience of the Iranians. The disappeared Imam, like Soshiant (Coming Zoroaster⁴) and Kay-Khosro, this hero of resurrection in *Shahnameh*, is obscured in this world, but is present elsewhere. The deep concept of this message, i.e. the final metamorphosis that Iranian objectivity has felt and experienced deeply, remains intact. The relation of the mysticism of the Ibn Arabi⁵ with the school of Divine illumination of Sohrevardi⁶ and the mystical contemplation of Shi'ism, paved the way for the existence philosophy that was perfected by Molla Sadra⁷ in the School of Isfahan (11th and 12th H. centuries) (Shayegan, 2001). This school of thought was scattered across Iraq, Syria, and India, who maintained close relations with Iran and was named the School of Isfahan. The capital city, Isfahan, was one of the centers of this school and other major centers were in Shiraz, Qazvin and Tabriz. Scientists of the School of Isfahan like Molla Sadra, Mir Damad, Mir Fenderesky, and Sheikh Bahaii, and their level of knowledge let to design a city based on the cosmology of the time

2 *Shahnameh* is one of the greatest epic of all times, a mixture of, institution, rites, habits, attitudes, conducts, manners, beliefs, principles, myths and history, a resultant of all cultural values of Iran. This has been written by Ferdowsi the Iranian famous poet (329-411H.)

3 Iranian ancient religious before Islam

4 Zoroastrian prophet

5 Ibn-I-Arabi (560-638H) was Andalusian (Spanish) Islamic sage and Sufi.

6 Sohrevardi(549-587H.) was Iranian sage who intermixed Islam with Iranian myth in Shi'ism and school of Divine illumination belongs to him

7 Molla Sadra (980-1017H), Iranian sage and existence philosophy belongs to him also he was one of the schools of Isfahan philosophers

The internal policies of the Safavid king (Shah Abbas) government were based on fighting with feudalism and the separatist policies of the big landlords, empowering the central government. Just as in the Sasanids era, Agricultural, commercial, industrial affairs and public facilities and security is under supervision of kingdom and government. The direct presence and interference of the Safavid government in all affairs advanced to such a degree that it achieved an equal and opposite position with the religious and ideological concepts of the country. The religious courts in the judiciary system, who were usually under the authority of the ulema and clerics, often neglected government requests in many cases. In contradiction with this, the Safavid government restructured the judiciary system and established public courts with a view to minimizing the authority of the religious courts. In these courts, the ulema had to issue verdicts based on culture, traditions, rites and rituals.

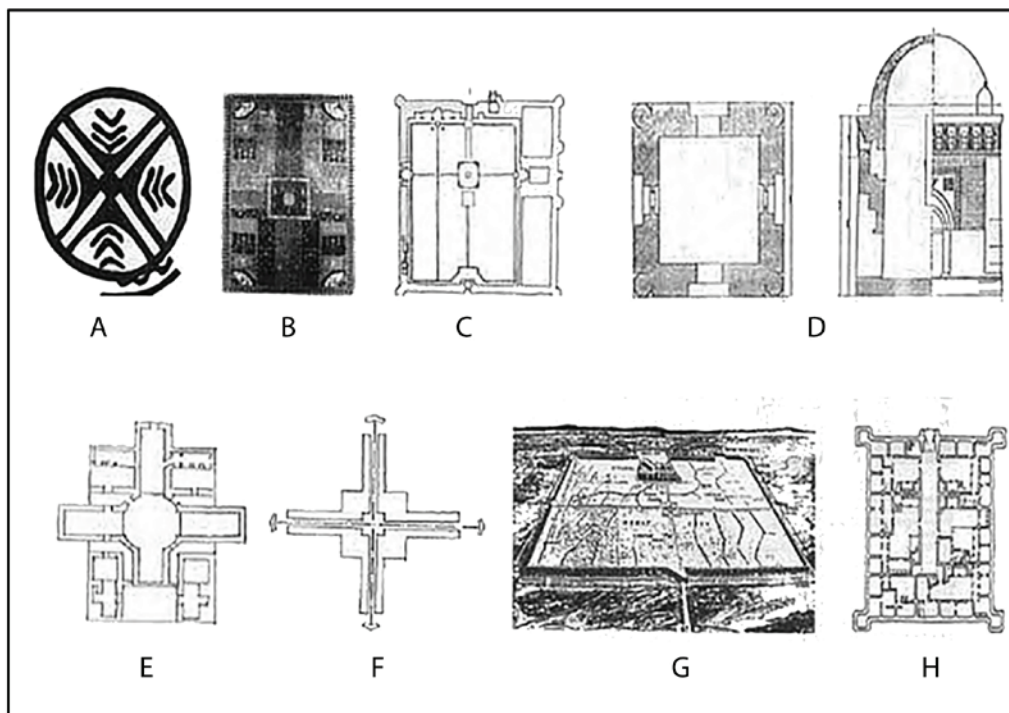


Fig 4. Traces of Mandala on spatial layout of:

A-Pre historic Persian pot (Pop, 1939).

B-Naghsh-I-Golestan carpet (Abolghasemi, 1992).

C-Four Quadrangle Garden, Chahar Bagh, Bagh-I-Fin Kashan.

D-Chahar Taghi or Chahar eyvan, meaning four-arched, Tomb of Ismail Sasanid (Pope, 1939)

E-Delgosha palace in Shiraz.

F-Chahar Suq, Bazaar-I-Lar.

G-Chahar Burja or Four-Towered village.

H- Old town of Herat.

Discussion On Impact Of Culture On Naghsh-I-Jahan Square

The search for the cultural symbolism, which forms the bases of configuration Naghsh-I- Jahan square, has been carried out in regards to three aspects of civilization which are respectively indigenous convention second the religious influences and the third one global impact.

The indigenous impacts: As in other traditional environments, the Naghsh-I-Jahan square is influenced from the cultural context of the country. Traditional values, ideals, ancient, native and mythical patterns of Iranian society under the name of indigenous culture all determined the design concept and strategies of the complex. In this part of study, the indigenous impacts have been carried out in two phases. In the first part, the ancient convention of the Arian race as studied under the title of "Paradise Reproduction" and prevailed in the form of Bondehesh⁸, the Iranian mandala is interpreted, then the second part focuses on the mythological bases of Meidan (square) and Eyvan (portico) respectively.

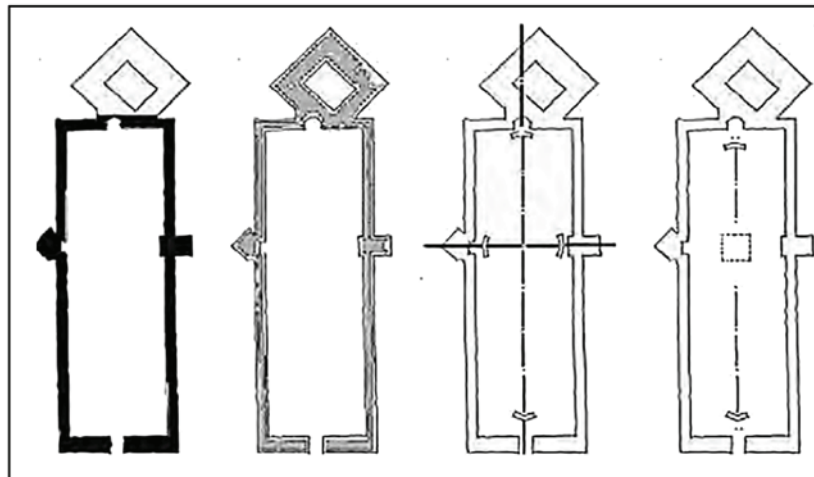


Fig 5. Traces of Mandala in the design of Naghsh- I-Jahan square

According to Arthur Pope (1939) all Iranian artifacts from ceramics to carpets and from house to gardens, village and city center have one basic concept which is the Garden of Eden in its symbolic and abstract form with a general characteristic, which he calls: 'the principle of four'. What Pope did not mention was the connection of the 'principle of four' to paradise. To establish this relationship, we have examined the idea of the 'unconscious psychology'; purported by Carl Yung. According to Yung (1960), man carries within him the memory of the creative process that has taken place from the dawn of time. Accepting the supposition that paradise was experienced by man, as is stated in most of the world's religions, then the recollection of that experience should be possible. The memory of paradise, hidden in man's unconscious, and reproduced in the form of artifacts, could be revealed in symbolic language. Yung writes that some of his patients produced a drawing that resembled a Mandala. Whilst studying this phenomenon he came to believe the universality of the Mandala experience.

⁸ This is the name of a book relating the story of creation, from the Zoroastrian perspective.

He claimed that the Indian Mandala was produced by other cultures; the "Fire womb" in China, the "Wisdom eye" in Bohemia, and the "Fire wheel" in Africa were all different names for the Mandala, which, in its simplest form, looked like a flower or a wheel. How can one relate a Mandala to a building or a city design? By studying the Indian Mandala and related literature, we come to the conclusion that it has certain characteristics. Which are detected as, centralized, four-sided, symmetrical and contoured by a boundary. The same ordered mechanism based on the concept of the harmony of the four, eventually became popular in the spatial layout of Chahar Taq or Chahar Eyvan (meaning four-arched), courtyard buildings, gardens called Chahar Bagh, Four-towered villages called Chahar Burja and walled towns became a popular typology in Iran and central Asia (Fig.4).

A similar term for Mandala, in Iranian terminology, is "Bondehesh" meaning the base of creation. This is the name of a book relating the story of creation, from the Zoroastrian perspective (Dadegi, 1990). In general, the Iranian artifacts including decoration, architecture and city design are examined with the four characteristics of the Mandala. Although Pope believed Naghshe Jahan square was founded on the concept of paradise, it lacks the most basic characteristic of the Mandala, namely centralization and also symmetry (Fig.5).

Thus, the elements of some models other than Mandala should be responsible for the design of this center. For in Naghshe Jahan duality has replaced the centralization concept of the design⁹. Two stone pillars which were the goals for game of polo, played in this square, during the Safavid Dynasty, symbolize this duality at each end of the square (Fig.6).

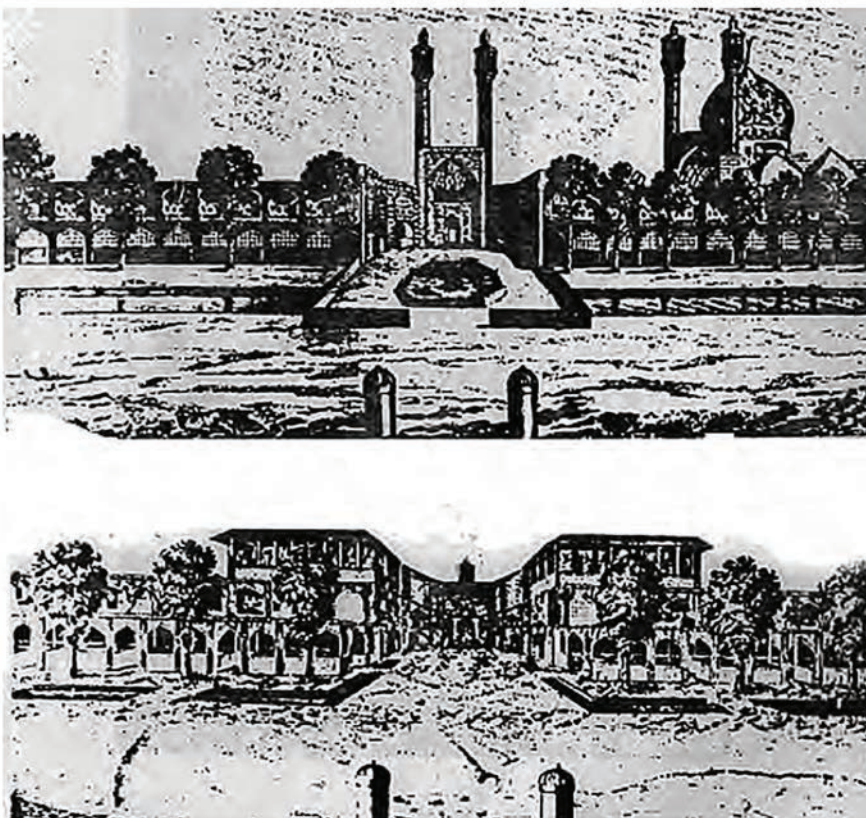


Fig 6. (Homaun, 1969)

⁹ Oliver, Paul in his article "Binarism in an Islamic City", Mimar journal, vol.23, presents duality as the base of design.

Polo¹⁰ has its foundation in Iranian mythology (Encyclopedia of Americana, 1996) (Bahar, 1997). According to the myth of creation, all creatures of god have evil counterparts. In the dawn of creation, Sky Minu is the first creature attacked by its enemy called Ahriman. The battle, which is fought by a cavalry troop and results in victory for Sky, takes place in a field, called Maydan (Square) (Dadegi, 1990), which became the model of polo fields. Maydan Naghshe Jahan has the elements of the mythical model, namely the wall that encompasses it, and the two goals, at each end of the square, symbolizing the duality of creation. Maydan Naghsh-I- Jahan is overlooked by Eyvan Ali Ghapu. The co-existence of Maydan and Eyvan is not a prerequisite for polo games. Therefore, another reason for this should be researched and identified.

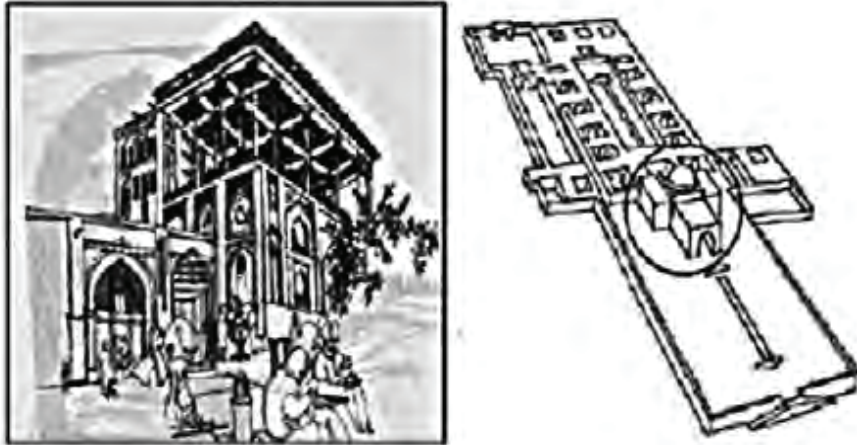


Fig 7. Eyvan-I-Ali Quapu copied from Sasanid Palace. Qasre Shirin, Imaret Khosro Eyvan as Iranian invention in Sasanid palace.

Andrea Godar (1966) has stated that in all Sasanid palaces known to him, the eyvan is the ornamental part of the building. Pope (1939) has mentioned that the eyvan is an Iranian invention. He claims that Ali Ghapu was copied from Sasanid Palace, which, itself, had been copied from Apadana in Perspolis (Fig.7).

In Iranian literature, the maydan is always mentioned together with the eyvan, especially in the legends known as Shahnameh. Mehr, a divine deity who, is the Archetype of the Iranian king, is believed to reside in a house in the sky with a thousand columns, overlooking and guarding the Arian race (Bahar,1997). This could have been the reason for the Eyvan forming the main part of palaces, to reflect the symbolic existence of the archetype king. This design attitude gets much more attention as Iranian shahs was seldom seen by people other than their court servants (Fig.8).

Looking at the Perspolis palace¹¹, Apadana and Sad Setoon Eyvan were both built for those occasions, in which a vast space was required in order to accommodate a vast crowd. So, the Maydan and the Eyvan were designed together. The same treatment was given to The Naghshe Jahan center received the same treatment. **The religious pattern:** Although religious culture and identity are intermixed with the indigenous culture and identity in the Arab states, it is not necessarily so in non-Arab countries. The three identities of indigenous, religious and modernist have been intermingled and placed in each other's' hearts. An Islamic country, like Iran, is a live example of the juxtaposition of these three cultural domains. The national culture was reborn in the framework of the religion that was influenced by the contemporary qualities of the time.

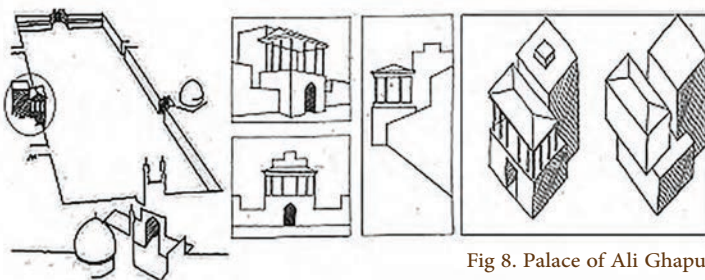


Fig 8. Palace of Ali Ghapu

10 An Iranian game played on horseback by two teams.

11 Royal residence in Achaemenid era (521-329 B.C.)

It is more complicated in the case of a third identity, i.e. our global identity that connects us to the rest of the world. Allegorical metamorphosis has no role here, and we face a kind of juxtaposition and combination of things. We are in a dilemma between our ancient past (influence of tradition) and future changes (influence of communications). There is a third influence involved in the organization of these three layers beside each other.

Hermeneutics were used in Isfahan school (Corbin, 1979). In perceiving urban form, the genesis of technical language with clear principles was developed and established.

The wisdom of Unity of Being is the basis for Sufism metaphysics. The continuation of the relationship between God and the universe that is defined within the testimony of the words: "There is no God except Allah", which means there is no reality except the absolute reality, and that the verse of: "Say, God is one" (Bakhtiyar, 1979), in this faith demonstrates the love of the Islamic culture for a harmonious order that is balanced and calculated. The cosmology of macrocosm and microcosm believes in the hierarchical structure of the universe. The existence of the world of symbols in Iranian- Eastern philosophy was a bridge between the material-physical world and the abstract world. Intuition and conceptualism were, indeed, not separated. Symbolism was always there, in the daily life of human beings. The process of the formation of urban space and urban form was a ritual, not a response to the formal and physical aspects and arrangement of the elements, and irrespective of the wholeness of a superior power higher than a set of elements. The world of symbols is a bridge between the material world and the world of images and abstractions. Any particular (microcosm) constitutes wholeness (macrocosm) in another situation.

Creation, similar to the performance of the human mind, is a system, which makes the objective, subjective or forms a work of art or creates myth and language. This means, all creatures, symbols, and words are transferred from the Divine nature to human nature (Bakhtiyar, 1979) (Corbin, 1979). All creatures are seeking to return to their origins, or in other words, to reduce materialism and increase spirituality. In respect of the issue of urban planning, the desire is to reduce the masses and increase the space. Designing urban spaces in a macro scale, as such has shaped buildings, landscapes, gardens, as well as sacred and secular towns.

The Universal Prototype It comes from the second testimony of Islam, "Muhammad is the prophet of God". Is a sign of God or microcosm which is a sign of macrocosm (Bakhtiyar, 1979) Khoda-Mobed, Khoda-Shah, Khashtara, Kadkhoda, as spiritual leaders all signify the perfect human being, following the archetype of the Iranian king. The belief is very distinct and strong in the religious conscience of the Iranians. The genesis of a new method of urban management, which was organized and planned according to central government control.

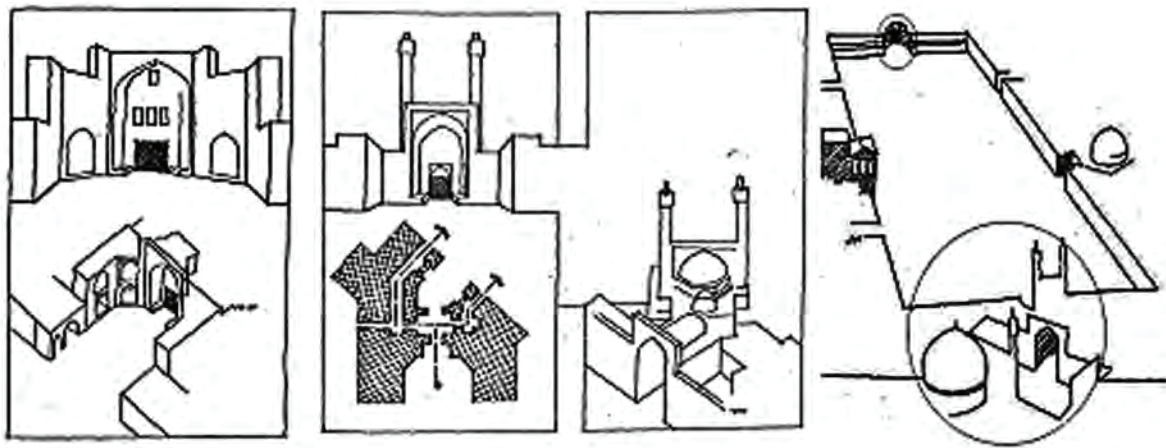


Fig 9. A-Gate of great Bazaar B-Gate of Imam Mosque Gate of great Bazaar Faced on Gate of Imam Mosque

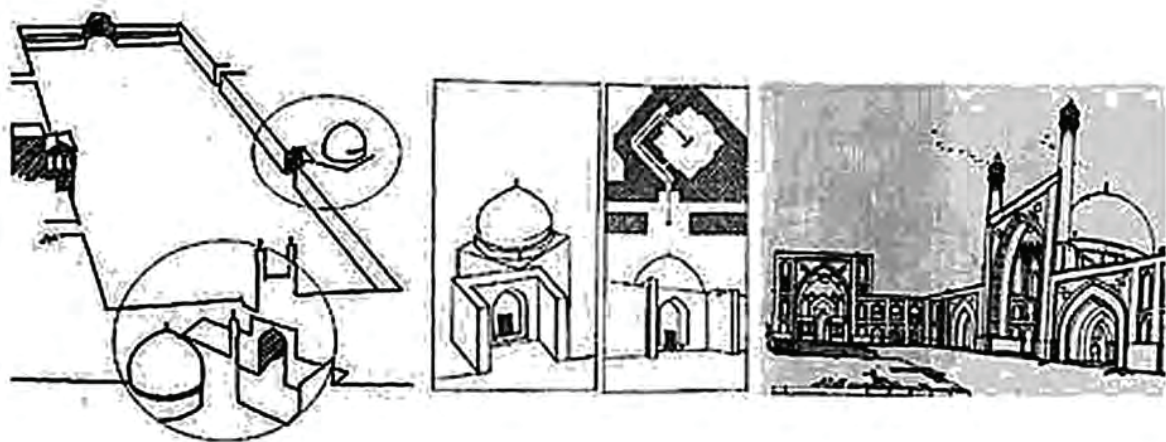


Fig 10. There are two mosques in the Naghshe Jahan square Imam Mosque and Sheikh Lotfollah mosque faced on Ali Ghapu



In studying the theory of the conceptual Islamic bases of the Naghshe Jahan compound, we also see that the presence of a mosque in the bazaar is an Islamic pattern. Moslems, in their campaign against countries like Iran and Egypt, formed head- quarter camps called "Amsar". These camps later became flourishing cities and are believed to be the model for those Islamic cities founded thereafter. The Amsar had two main features: the Bazaar and the Friday Mosque The latter being a part of the Bazaar, was a design model that was subsequently followed in all Islamic cities (Fig.9). Unity within wholeness and multiplicity within parts, become reflections of religious belief, they therefore, convey messages and talk about our inner lives, how we relate to our fellow human being and the mystery of nature and the universe. The indicators which facilitate this emotion in designing are: Harmonious between orders of scared building architecture and randomness in vernacular architecture. Any particular Internal constitutes External in another situation (Table.3).

There are two mosques in the Naghshe Jahan center. One is the Imam (Shah) Mosque that was intended for the use of large numbers of people, whilst the other mosque, known as the Sheikh Mosque, which is much smaller than the other, lacks minarets and a courtyard, is merely a symbolic representation of religious faith (Fig.10).

Indigenous and religious cultural metamorphosis manifesting cosmology depending upon allegorical metamorphoses of Shiite, Zoroastrian and Neo-Platonism as well as religious astrology, in its organic manifestation, i.e. Urban Form.				
Indigenous and Religious Cultural Symbolism				
Mystic language (Hermeneutic)	Unity of being	Macrocosm and Microcosm	Creation and Cosmology	The Universal Prototype
Language one shape of life and myth explaining life	Material, colour, shapes and forms create sense of unity	A microcosm, no matter whether it is confined to a city, a village, a district, a square, crossroad or a house, is indicative of a macrocosm	It is a way, which brings creatures from Divine world to this world	Changing private sector's feudalism to government central feudalism public property
World of symbols a bridge between the material-physical world and the abstract world	Whole works as a unity, and shows united identity	Each city, district, neighborhood, house, is defined with its gravity center	Creatures are always following to go to first source of world i.e. Devine world	Public facilities and security is under supervision of government
Generosity of urban form as a sign system	Wholeness is a process, the urban form is a whole and its parts do not have an independent life	Wholeness is a process, the urban form is a whole and its parts do not have an independent life	Ascent of material to non-material	The genesis of a new method of urban management, which was organized and planned according to central government control
Each building is a word and gathering them is a sentence and a city is a book	Harmonious order that is balanced and calculated.		Decreasing mass, and increasing space	
Genesis of technical language with clear principles	Harmonious between order of scared building architecture and randomness in vernacular architecture		Any particular Internal constitutes External in another situation	New Urban management
	Order & randomness	Whole & part	Internal External	

Table 3.

There is still no reasonable answer as to why these two mosques are present together in this compound. The construction of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque could certainly not have been for the purpose of creating a mosque for public gatherings as with the central mosques, because of its insufficient sanctuary space and the lack of a courtyard. What, then, was the aim behind construction of this mosque? Is this mosque - without a minaret and a courtyard - merely a covered praying chapel to represent a symbolic presence in the whole complex? If yes, the question, is there any similar mosque existing in antiquity needs to be asked? To answer this question, we must seek religious elements in the ancient Persian structures such as Takht-e Jamshid. In the inscription displaying the ceremony in Takht-e Jamshid, we see Daryush leaning against his throne in the company of the crown prince and his companions. The symbol of Ahura Mazda can be seen above his head on the entablature. In Tang-e Chogan the inscription in Neishabour, portrays a similar ceremony connected with this symbol Ardeshir I (Artaxerxes I) and is also displayed with Ahura Mazda in the top middle of the image. In an inscription at Bisetoon, we can see this symbol again. The religious element, therefore, was always strongly present in the ancient ceremonies. Perhaps, the Lotfollah Mosque was for symbolic use on account of its diminutive dimensions and colorful embellishments (intricate trelliswork, detailed and elaborate ceramic works), which conforms to the ancient structural pattern of the "Chahartaghi" or the Chahar Eyvan (meaning four-arched), in the Sasanid period.

The global qualities: The most outstanding feature in this period was the sense of desire for modernism and modernization in culture so that it resulted in the development of many creative impulses in the areas of new cultural and social instinct, the understanding of urban spaces and artistic values.

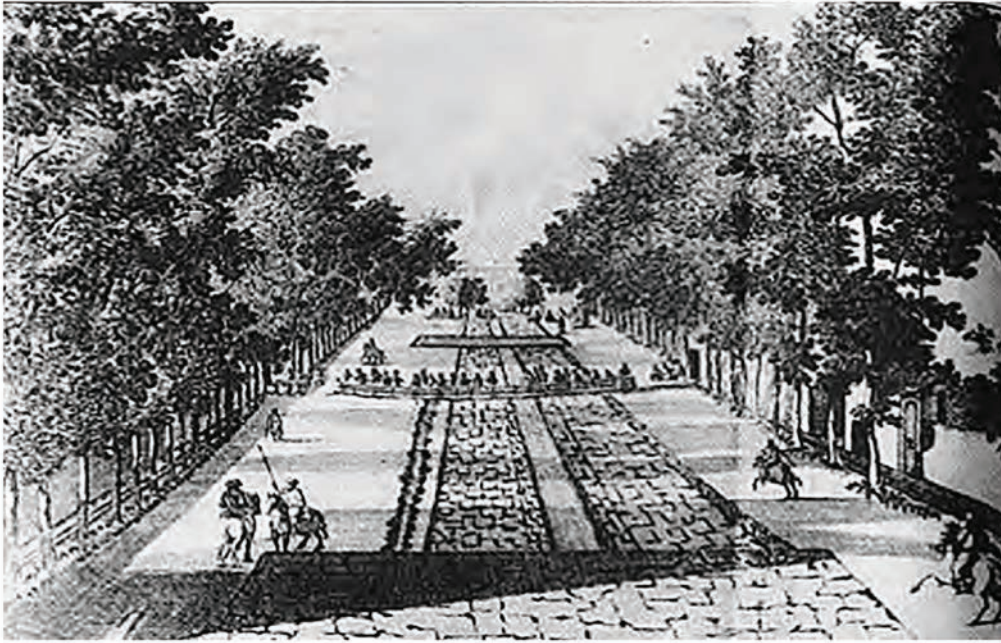


Fig 11.

The new collections of square, bazaar, mosque, palace, passageways and gardens were designed and built for the first time, not in the old city, but adjacent to it. Solutions were proposed for more like a crystal, in which the molecular pieces are polarized with magnetic power. This magnetism is the bazaar's system, and the molecules are the shops, caravansaries, schools, mosques, baths, etc. It was the first time the concept of the "street" was defined in Iran's urban space and it was as beautiful as the Champs-Elysees (Herdeck, 1980). Designing a new axis of urban development, the wise selection of spaces for development (Table.4) (Fig.11).

contemporary social and economic problems without creating disruption or interference in the old structure. Urban development and urban design took place in the same way throughout the country. This initially took place in Qazvin, then in Tabriz and then Isfahan. The new urban development plan was selected and wisely implemented. As far as the design was concerned, it was comparable to the Baroque period in Europe. The humanism and self-assurance of man has been manifested again. Designing city centers, relocating them from their adjacency to the congregational mosque to a new location according to the decisions for the methodical planning and development of the city and the requirements of the period creating public courts as opposed to religious courts, based on cultural and traditional principles, show the separation of the two sources of power: church and state.

Naturalism refers to the dominance of nature on a macro scale, conformity of the artificial environment with nature, and its unity and amity with nature, in respect of the designing of landscapes and the construction of gardens. Reconstruct and revival of the concept of urban design. Urban design is considered a specialty and creating urban space is a combination of the sciences and the arts. It was a new and complex structure with gardens and state mansions scattered around it in geometrical order, which served as complementary to the old structure, although it was of a totally different structure and design. Linking the new city center (Naghsh-e Jahan Sq.) and the old (Old Square) was realized by designing the central bazaar and the new street (Chahar Bagh) so that the bazaar linked the two squares. The ordination of a city is


Modern culture		
The sense of desire for modernism and modernization in culture so that it resulted in the creation of a new culture of social instinct, understanding of city atmosphere and artistic values		
Humanism	Naturalism	Reconstruction and renovation of urban planning as profession
Human self-confidence Changing city centre from site Of state mosque to new location	Harmonizing man made and natural environment	Urban design & Piazza design in macro scale
Separation between government and religion (religious secularism)	City is in concurrence with nature	The first use of the concept of the "street" in Iran urban space
Organizing common law (Orf), according to culture and tradition	City in accord with villages	For the first time Zoning was propounded
Propounding architecture not only for individual building, but also for city complexes, design of new city centre not a new city		
Combination between calculated design and Organic design		Wisdom and sense combination
Totalization of past with new innovation and novelty		Dynamic and movement
The balance & proportion in design go further than simply exhibiting the principle of symmetry		Balance and proportion

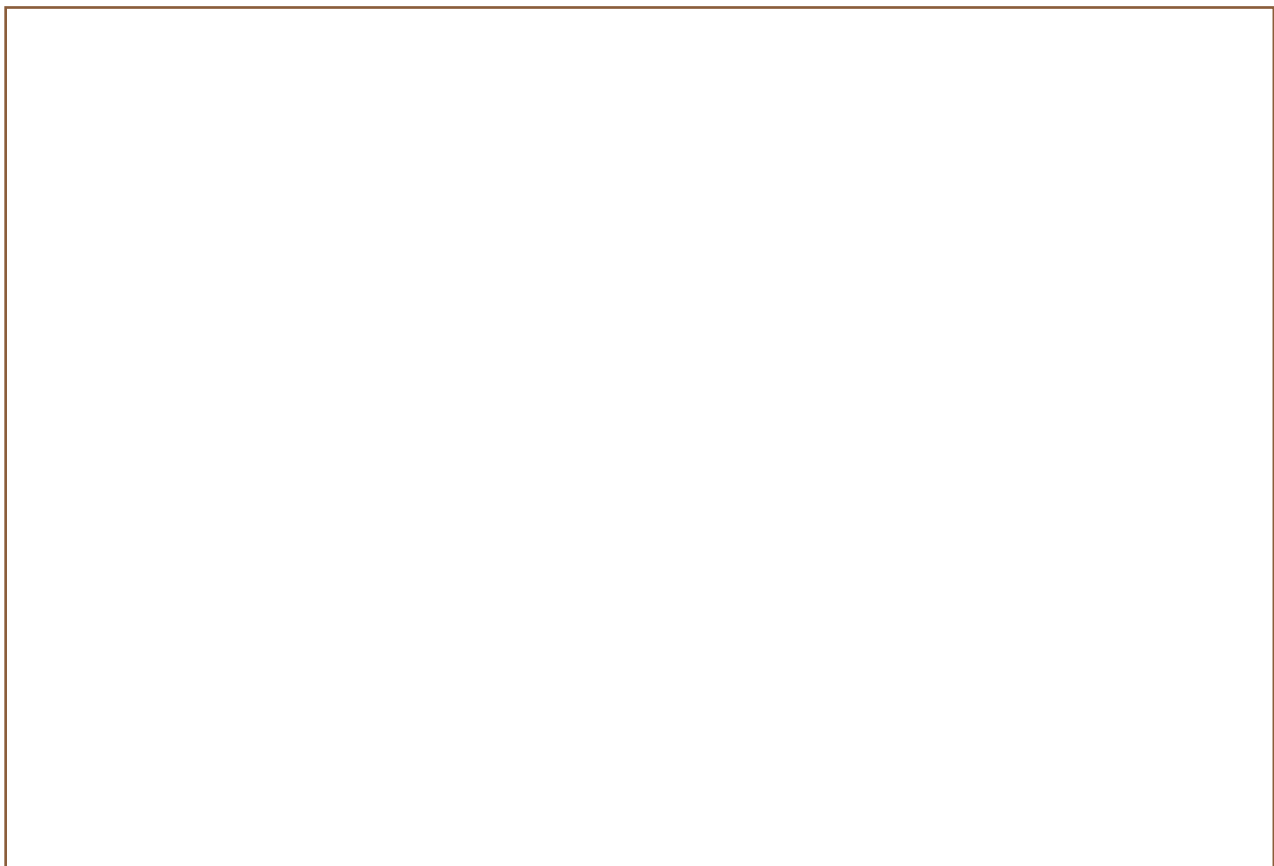
Table 4.

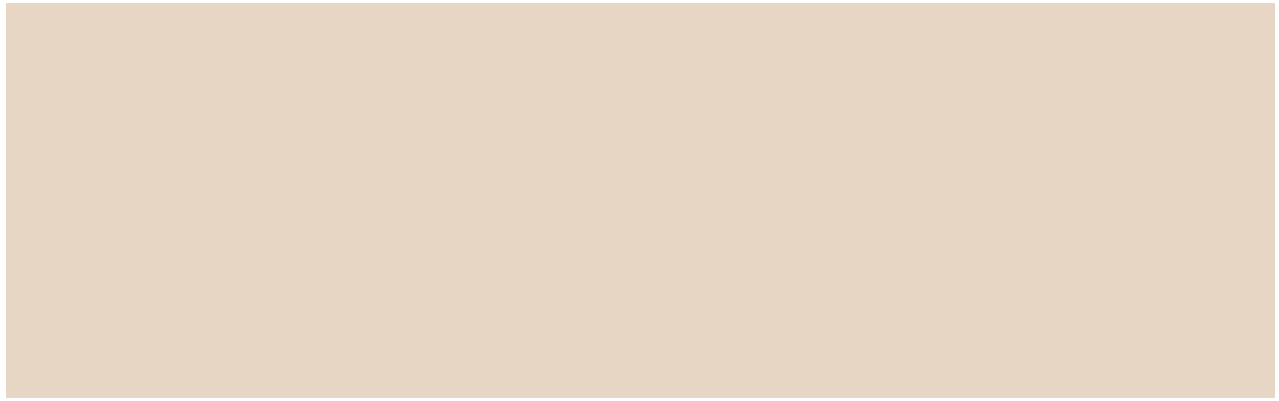
Conclusion

Symbolization of the world of perception is not only a cultural performance but also is actable, sensational and sentimentally relevant. Urban life makes use of all past forms as a symbol and structural personification of political, ideological, economic and social concepts. Societies, operating in any given system, have important (to them) goals and ideals. The major duty of any culture is the demonstration of these ideals and symbols in a palpable form. Urban form is affected by the culture in societies relying on indigenous, religious and contemporary patterns and vice versa. Iranian cultural symbolism forms the basis of the Iranian perception of urban space. When this cultural view is brought together with awareness in the urban form, beauty and promotion of aesthetism emerges. Architecture and Urban planning, therefore, plays a major role in the process of this transformation. One major duty of architects and urban planer is helping the common people establish order in their cultural world and also removing obstacles erected in the way of its addressees and the previously defined incidents. The valuable achievement of urban development in Naghsh-I-Jahan complex was realized with the upgrading of the open spaces, such as linking the old and new districts (the mighty urban complex of Naqsh-I-Jahan Sq. and Chahar Bagh) and the creation of those masterpieces of architecture such as, Pol-e Khajoo, Si-o-se Pol, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, in a period when urban management and affiliated organizations demonstrated a strong tendency towards accepting renovation and preserving the valuable heritage of the art of architecture and the urban planning. In this development organic randomness and calculated order were inter-mingled, using a combination of mind and sentiment, collecting the ancient traditions and the modern attitudes and policies (union of old and new). Urban design in its macro scale, square design in its macro scale, and emergence of the concept of a much larger passageway, known as a street, in modern terms.

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Fereshteh Habibi

She is born on 28 June 1955. Studied Architecture at Shahid Beheshti university of Iran. Master of Architecture and Planning in 1981. PhD in Urbanism at Science and Research Branch, of Islamic Azad University in 2002. PhD in Architecture at Eastern Mediterranean University in 2008. Professor of Architecture in Urbanism at Science and Research Branch, of Islamic Azad University since e 2002. Professor of Architecture at Eastern Mediterranean University since 2008. She has given lecture in different Universities and participated in different academic activities at both national and international levels. And also has been thesis supervisor, advisor and judge at both national and international architectural design competition during 2002 to 2023. Her specific areas of expertise include socio cultural statue in environmental design, she has publications and conferences in methods in cultural landscape especially Green way Planning, environmental design and semiotics of urban space and urban form at both national and international levels. Beside her academic works she has also involved in many architectural and civil society projects as project director or team work, she is also a painter and had several exhibitions at both national and international levels

Persian Gulf Faculty of Art and Architecture - 2007

Bam Citadel of Kerman Consulting Engineers

Introduction

The new building of the Faculty of Art and Architecture in Bushehr addresses the challenge of urban design by offering a solution rooted in the context and the texture of the area, demonstrating a profound understanding of local architecture and regional typology.

Situated on the periphery of Bushehr's historic district, the structure is designed with proportions aligning with neighboring buildings, a façade harmonizing with the surroundings, and materials selected for continuity with the existing urban morphology.

By forming the building around green spaces and courtyards, the project creates an inviting environment for the university community using traditional environmental management techniques. The new design presents a unique presence while paying respect to its adjacent structures, including the historic Nozari House and other nearby buildings. This project provides an exemplary model of contemporary architecture infused with a sense of preserving the spirit of the region's built heritage.

The project of The Faculty of Art and Architecture was developed on a 4000-square-meter plot and designed in 2007, with construction completed in 2016. The main objectives of the design were defined with a focus on preserving and revitalizing the historic texture within the project's boundaries.



Designer's Statement

Shababeddin Arfaei, the project's lead designer, describes the plan as follows:

The project's design was assigned in 2006 by the Cultural Heritage Organization of Bushehr Province to Bam Citadel Consulting Engineers, Kerman. Given the time lost with the previous consulting phase and the urgent need to commence construction swiftly, all stages of design and review were completed within 45 days.

Besides, due to the public benefit nature of the project, no fees were charged for the architectural, electrical, or mechanical design.

The project site, assembled from multiple land parcels, features the following characteristics:



- The historic architecture of Bushehr stands as a distinguished and significant example along the Persian Gulf's coast, serving as an invaluable reference for typological research. The designer's effort has been to convey the essence of this architecture in a modern expression.
- The site's location at the intersection of the historic and newly developed areas of Bushehr subjects it to distinctive sensitivities due to the influence of differing architectural patterns.
- The presence of the registered heritage unit, Nozari House, as part of the complex is significant for the integration and interaction between existing structures and contemporary developments. The Nozari House was restored independently by the Cultural Heritage Organization of the province.
- The presence of one of the oldest trees in the region on the site necessitated that the development plan respect and preserve it as an initial guiding principle for the project.
- Historic pathways, recognized as part of the access network of the texture, directed the design towards an access model from the first-floor level.

This model eventually led to roofing parts of the pathways with traditional regional patterns (Sabat), evoking the philosophy behind the formation of the area's texture after many years.

Asia Pacific Award

The Asia Pacific Award for “New Design in Heritage Contexts” was established in 2005 to honor projects contributing to the revitalization of heritage textures worldwide. This annual competition is judged by a panel of 5 to 7 experts in the field.

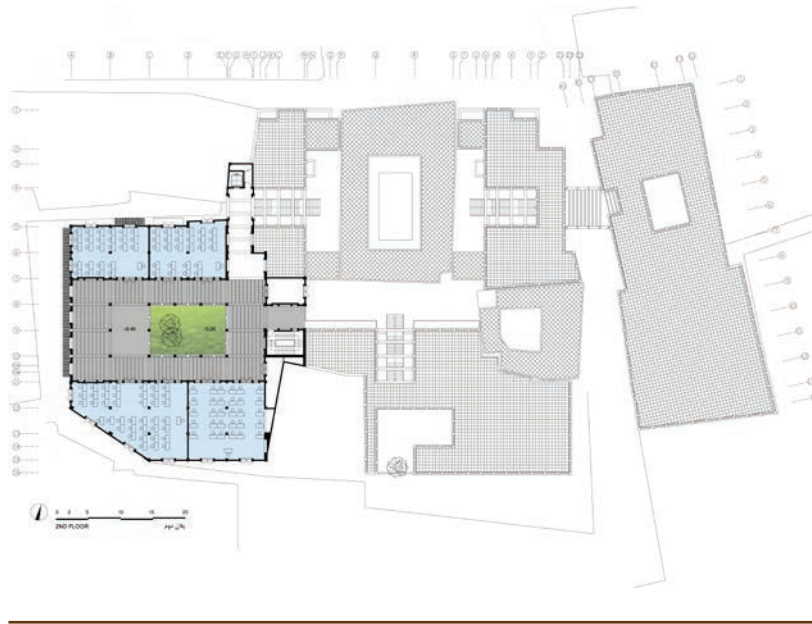
In 2017, the Persian Gulf Faculty of Art and Architecture project (from Iran) participated in the UNESCO-organized Asia Pacific Award for “New Design in Heritage Contexts”, recognized as one of the three winners.

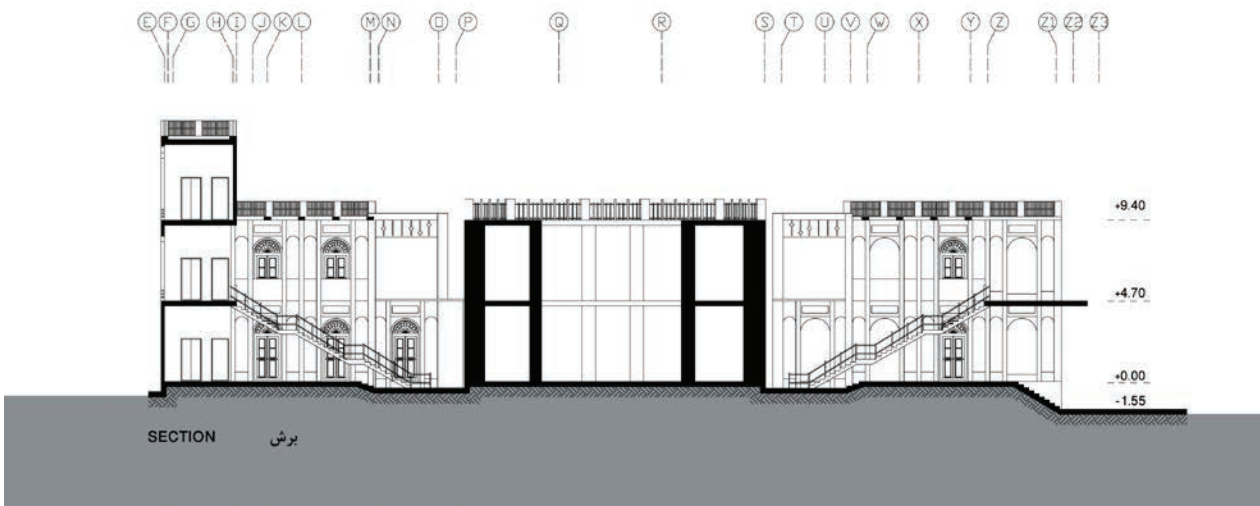
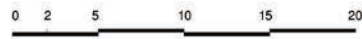
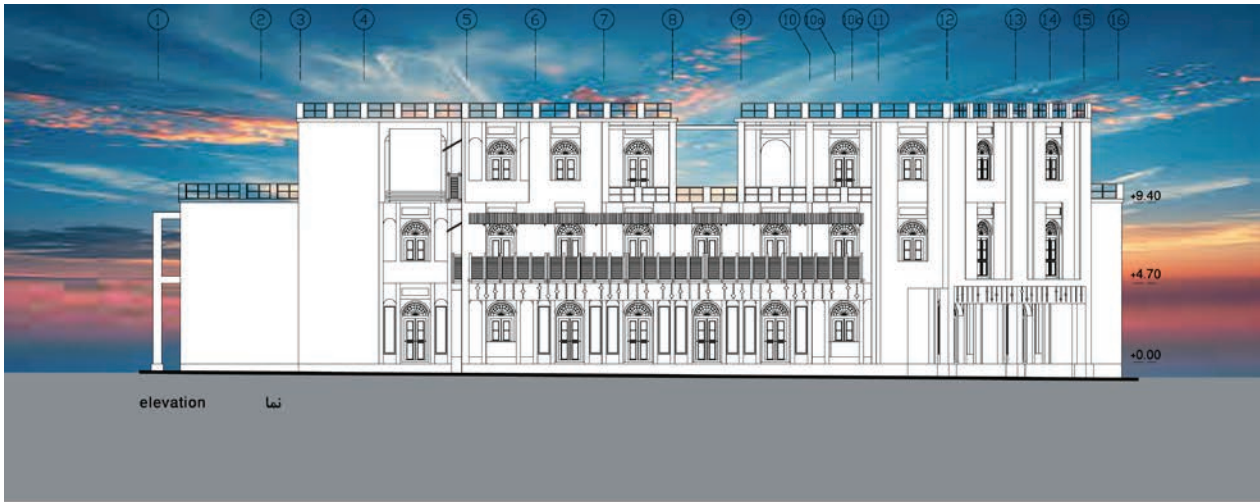


UNESCO Cultural Unit Statement (Bangkok) – 2017

Sixteen projects from six countries – Australia, China, India, Iran, New Zealand, and Singapore – were selected for this cycle of the competition. Dong Beech Han, Chair of the Jury and Head of the UNESCO Cultural Unit in Bangkok, stated: “The jury was impressed by the heroic nature of the restoration and revitalization projects, particularly those that emphasized the importance of protecting heritage rooted in the most vulnerable segments of society”.

This year has witnessed an increase in demand for new designs within historical and cultural contexts. Two projects from China and one from Iran were included in this category. This number of winners marks the highest since the award’s inception in 2005. The prize is awarded to newly constructed structures presenting outstanding designs while considering the historical texture of their context.





The jury, comprising nine international conservation experts, awarded one prize for the best design, two special and distinguished project awards, four awards of merit, six honorable mentions, and three prizes for innovative designs in historical and cultural heritage contexts.

UNESCO's Asia-Pacific heritage conservation sector recognizes the efforts of individuals and private organizations that have successfully designed valuable historical structures and buildings in the region. By appreciating the private sector's initiatives for revitalizing and integrating historic features into new constructions, this program I aimed at encouraging other stakeholders to pursue similar projects in their communities, both independently and through public-private partnerships.

The selected projects highlight a deep understanding of various elements contributing to a sense of place, technical issues, environmental adaptation, and integration with their surroundings, while also emphasizing historical continuity and local cultural identity.

It is a pleasure to announce that the jury, by awarding you the prize for innovative design in the field of historical and cultural heritage, has recognized your success and hopes that you will share your design experiences, inspiring other designers in your country and region.



Project Details

Employer: Bushehr Province Housing and Urban Development Organization.

Design Consultant and Supervisory Authority: Bam Citadel of Krman Consulting Engineers.

Total Area: 7,200 square meters over two floors.

The ground floor is designated for the architecture department, and the first floor is allocated for the urban planning department, encompassing the facilities below:

Architecture/urban planning classrooms and studios, multipurpose hall, exhibition space, amphitheater, administrative offices, faculty rooms, informatics, service areas, and utilities.

The second floor is exclusively dedicated to architecture/urban planning studios.



Shahabeddin Arfaei

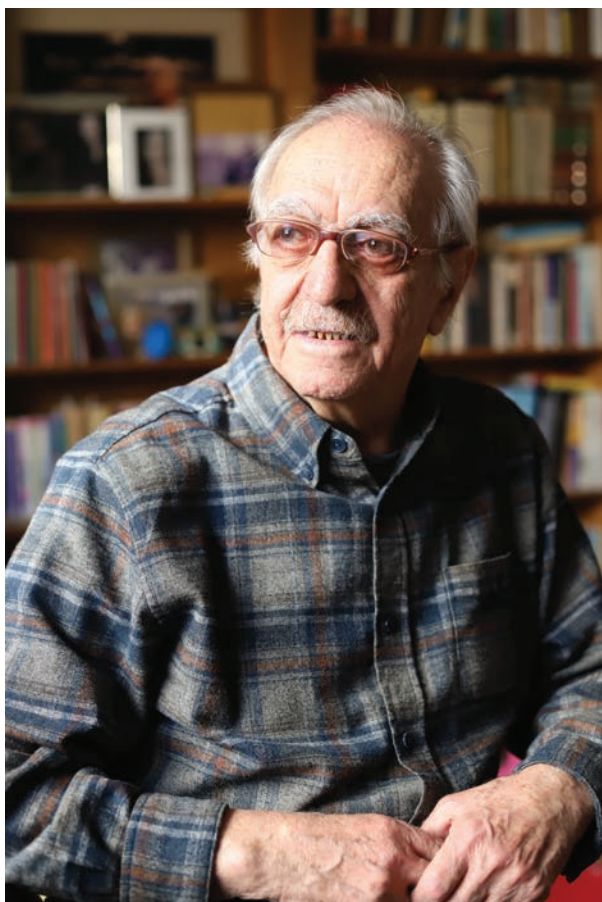
He was born in 1936. He received his master's degree from the College of Fine Arts (University of Tehran) in architectural engineering in 1989. In 1984, while studying at the College of Fine Arts (University of Tehran), he founded a study group with his classmates with the aim of understanding architecture that is adapted to the climate. This group later became a consulting firm in the field of research and architecture, and finally Barn-Citadel of Kerman Consulting Engineers was established in 1995 after five years of continuous work.

He is currently the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Barn-Citadel of Kerman Consulting Engineers, and has also held positions in the government sector, including Deputy Director of the Improvement and Renovation of the Worn Out Textures Office at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, and Head of the Sepehr Tower/ASP Company/Saderat Bank design team.

Shahabuddin Arfaei, who has been a member of the National Committee of Iranian Museums (ICOM), the Iranian Association of Architects, the Iranian Concrete Association, the Council of the Architectural and Inspection Group of the Iranian Society of Consulting Engineers, has been responsible for judging competitions in the fields of architecture and urban planning. He has also worked as a designer of the Sharif University of Technology Main Entrance, in the field of teaching architecture courses at Iran University of Science and Technology and Azad University of Tehran, Bandar Abbas and Tabriz. He is one of the followers of the school of designing this religious building, utilizing local architectural patterns compatible with the climate, while being active in various fields of architecture, including commercial, administrative, residential, educational, tourism, and restoration, designing more than 180 mosque buildings within the country and in countries such as Oman, Nigeria, Kazakhstan, and Saudi Arabia.

Architect director

Mohammad Ali Najafi Biography and works

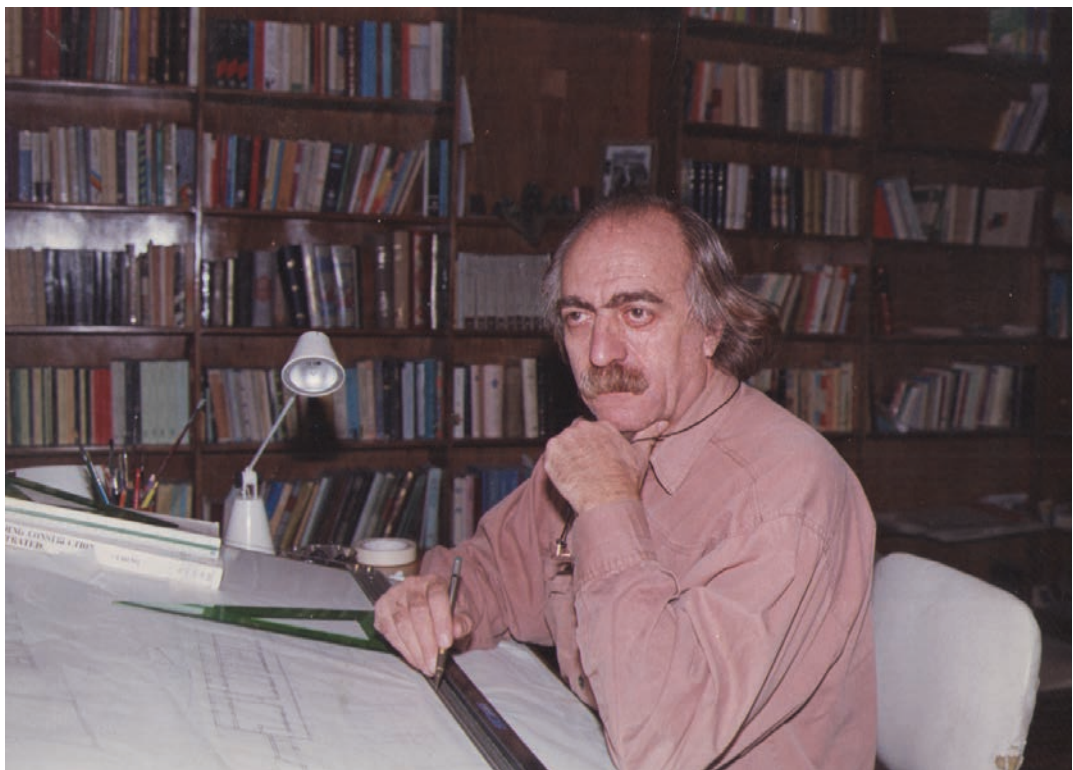


Mohammad Ali Najafi was born on July 14, 1945 in the city of Isfahan. After completing his K-12 education (Kindergarten to grade 12), he received his diploma from Dār ul-Funun High School in Tehran and in 1964, and later he was admitted into the faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning of the National University of Iran, and received his Master's Degree in Architecture in 1973.

Najafi is well known more as a director than an architect due to his perceptions and notions in artistic activities, since during his architectural education, he had a great concern and inclination towards the art of cinema. His artistic career initiated with directing the play Sarbedaran in Hosseiniyeh Ershad (a mosque in Tehran), and one of the influential people in his entry into the field of performing arts was the late Dr. Ali Shariati. Najafi founded the "Ayat Film Institute" in 1977 in collaboration with the "Islamic Society of Engineers". In the same year, he directed his first movie, "Jung-e Athar" (Athar's theatrical plays), and continued to create valuable film and television works. Najafi was honored for his forty years of artistic pursuit at the 36th Fajr Film Festival held on February 1, 2018. Later, he was elected as the chairman of the board of directors of the Cinema House in the first meeting of internal elections of the 15th board of directors of the Cinema House being held on September 5, 2020.

The research and Interview group conducted a detailed interview with Mohammad Ali Najafi. In some parts of the interview, he talked about his college days and how he entered the cinema as follows:

In 1965, at the Radio City Cinema, I came to watch a movie entitled "Mirror Brick" by Ebrahim Golestan. For the first time in that movie, we saw Tehran as it was, not the Tehran of the Persian movies! The film caught my attention greatly; I was a second-year university student when I took cinema seriously. At the same time, I took some pictures of our college for the college administrators. It was since then I made up my mind to watch movies from a distinctive perspective and perception. I got fascinated by Antonioni's works, hence, I turned into a cinema fan and an admirer of architecture. I came to learn construction out of architecture and modernism out of cinema. If one makes a movie without architecture, the movie is nothing but a radio story, for which one would create the mental image based on what one hears. I assume that cinema has a diverse meaning. Cinema is a give-and-take of images that, irrespective of modernity, takes away the associations of meanings from you in the flow of thought in dealing with concerns. Modernity takes you into a zone that lacks associations of meanings. Film and cinema do something to the audience that, by eliminating the associations of meanings, opens other zones. This is where architecture plays the crux role in cinema. One of the professors who introduced me to cinema was the late Dr. Tehrani, who later left the faculty for political reasons. At that time, a magazine called "Cinema Monthly" published in pocket size dimensions. Dr. Tehrani used to read parts of this monthly magazine to us in class and talked about movies. From that time on, the debate over cinema became more serious to me. In another part of this conversation, Dr. Najafi explains how he continued his education as;

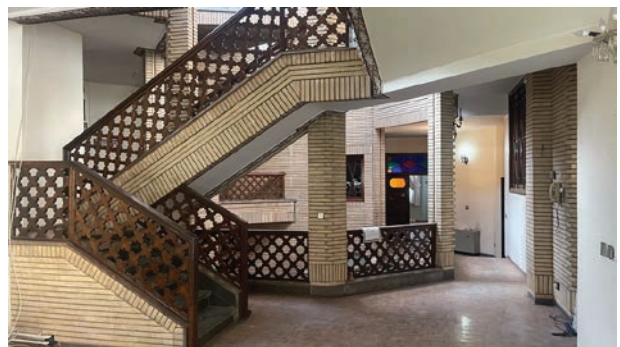


When I was a fourth-year college student, Dr. Olya asked me to teach visual design (scheme) to the first-year students. At that time, Dr. Olya told me: "You will continue teaching to kids". At that time, I abruptly left college and pursued cinema.

Sometime later, upon my friends' request, I returned to the college to submit my diploma project, in any case. After nine years of college, I received my diploma project under the title "Comprehensive Plan of the City of Najafabad, Isfahan" from Dr. Olya.

Najafabad of Isfahan was the first city with a map in those years. This matter had a special charm to me. As a result, I began my academic studies, however I knew it could be insubstantial due to being in a dissimilar mental zone. I got the outcome, because later on, I focused more on cinema.

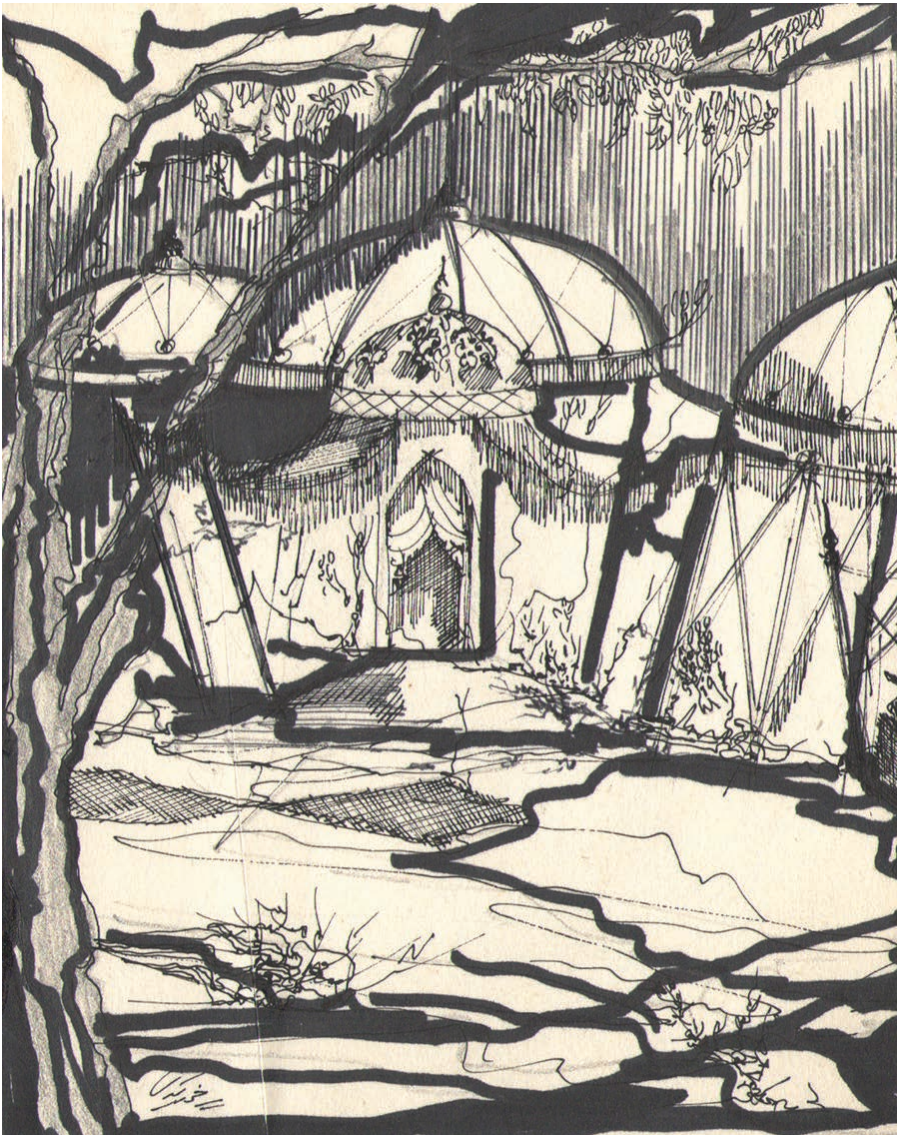
Najafi delineates the link between architecture and cinema as follows:
... If I hadn't studied architecture, I would have never been able to produce a series like "The Captains"! In that series, one cannot separate architecture from zones. In Toqay Palace, we recreated all the miniature works and stucco. This is what architecture is all about! The only rival of God is the architect. Only architects create everything from nothing. We have a verse in the Quran that says: "Blessed be Allah, the best of creators", meaning that beside God there are other creators



A house in Esfahan - Architect & Designer: Mohammad Ali Najafi

In my humble opinion, that one of those creators is the architect, and in this sense, architecture walks ahead of cinema, since for an architect, a brick is not an object to hammer a nail on a wall with! It is a living creature that lives with us; an object that comes to life by the architects. An architect transforms non-existence into existence, and in this sense, the architect feels that his only rival is God!

One of Mohammad Ali Najafi's works in which architecture plays an important role was the Sarbedaran TV series. Mohammad Ali Najafi states that, "The Sarbedaran TV series was made at a time in Iranian history when the post-revolutionary government had not yet made a decision regarding filmmaking, and our artists were skeptical about whether or not post-revolutionary cinema could revive." Denoting the set and costume design, Najafi proceeds: "Set and costume design were first introduced in the Sarbedaran TV series". People came to believe that cinema was beyond what they had imagined before the revolution.



Stage setting design for the Sarbedaran TV series - Khosrow Khorshidi's work
People entering the city square of Bashtin and carrying Judge Shareh throne (bench)

Historical studies show that the second influential person in the country was an architect. How were the Egyptian pyramids built? Is there anything else to the Safavid era besides architecture? When you visit Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, you realize that the mosque does not have a latrine (sanitary facilities- wash-rooms). It is as if the architect of the mosque states that: no one is supposed to pray here. Anyone who enters this space has already prayed. We architects can understand what a "particle of space" is. In the Mihrab (altar) of Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, there are tiles that are the size of a fingernail. You see a collection consisting of small and large elements, unity in plurality, and plurality in unity.

The name of another movie of mine films is called "Heavenly Earth". The name of the film is taken from Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque. As you enter the space under the dome, a turquoise space would surround you. As you move towards mihrab (altar), when you turn your head, a hole appears where you only see the sky. You lower your head, as if this earth is a piece of the sky that has fallen down here.



Stage setting design for Sarbadaran TV series - Khosrow Khorshidi's work
The Palace and Toqay Camp

Mohammad Ali Najafi goes on talking about his cinematic works: I am an architect and I have always moved with my works. In Sarbedaran TV series, I explored and considered the political conditions of the day in society, in the film *The Night Nurse*, I explored and considered the issue of war, and in the film *Eshghe Taher*. Referring to his research for the film *Earth and the Sky*, he explained: In 1992, I went to Pilgrimage to Hajj with my assistant, "Abbas Ardakani," and we conducted detailed research. Usually, during the Pilgrimage to Hajj, they go to Medina once. However, the issue was so serious that we had to go to Medina before and after the Hajj rituals. Then, by Dr. Faridzadeh's advice, a professor of philosophy, and in collaboration with cinematographer Mohammad Reza Sharifi, we wrote the screenplay.



Night Nurse – Saint Mary's Church in Isfahan - Mahnaz Afzali playing as a Christian nurse
(Her second role with Mohammad Ali Najafi)

With no words being gushed out, an architect is a philosopher. Knowing sociology and philosophy, you can turn into a successful architect. By the same token, when the revolution took place, at the beginning, architects took control of things. Cinema, economy, and culture were all in the hands of architects. It was only later that the path slowly changed, the architects became fewer and the country went in a diverse direction.



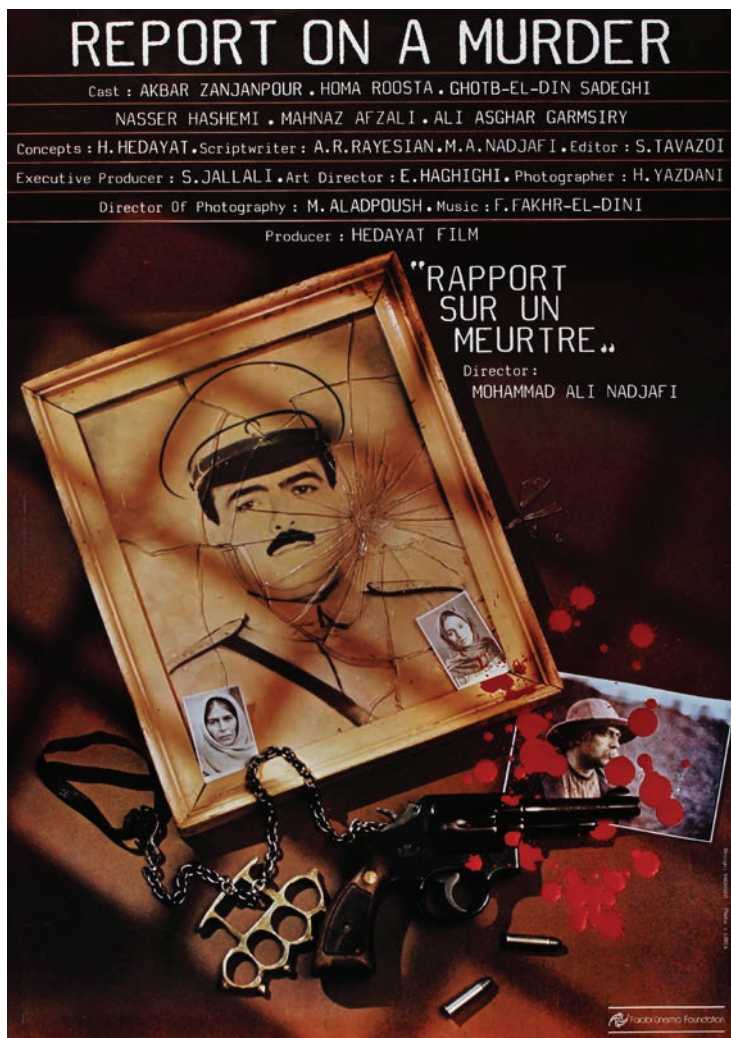


In addition to feature-length movies, Najafi has also worked in the production of other series, documentaries, and short films. His works include setting stage design, acting, production, and writing. The films *Junge Athar* (1979), *Report on a Murder* (1986), *Night nurse* (1987), *Zamin-E Asemani* (1994), *Eshghe Taher* (1998), and *Strolling in Shahr- e Lajevardi* (2015) are some of his valuable cinematic works. *Sarbedaran* (1984) and *Zaman Shuridegi* (*Time to be Disheveled*) (2000) are among his series and shows. Mohammad Ali Najafi has acted in a number of films and series as an actor. *The Eye of Wind* (2003), *Zamin-E Asemani* (1994), and *Ansuy-E Meh* (2005) are some of these works.



The series "Haft Shahr- E Eshgh" - The Fifties - Mohammad Ali Najafi on the Throne Directing, Cinematographer, Reza Nabavi. The making of the series was stopped by the government after about 10 minutes of filming due to the issue of dealing with the Shah army and SAVAK (The Intelligence Service Agency).`

In addition to feature-length movies, Najafi has also worked in the production of other series, documentaries, and short films. His works include setting stage design, acting, production, and writing. The films *Junge Athar* (1979), *Report on a Murder* (1986), *Night nurse* (1987), *Zamin-E Asemani* (1994), *Eshghe Taher* (1998), and *Strolling in Shahr- e Lajevardi* (2015) are some of his valuable cinematic works. *Sarbedaran* (1984) and *Zaman Shuridegi* (*Time to be Disheveled*) (2000) are among his series and shows. Mohammad Ali Najafi has acted in a number of films and series as an actor. *The Eye of Wind* (2003), *Zamin-E Asemani* (1994), and *Ansuy-E Meh* (2005) are some of these works.



His collaboration and participation as a jury in different periods of the Fajr Film Festival:

- In (1979), the participation of the film Jung-e Athar in the professional cinema section at the Moscow Film Festival.
- Member of the jury from 1984 to 1987 (third to sixth period).
- Sixth period (1987) - Winner of music (Farhad Fakhreddini) for the films Report on a Murder and Night Nurse and winner of set design for the film Night Nurse (directed by Mohsen Shah Ebrahimi)
- Thirteenth period (1994) - Nominated for best cinematography for the film "Heavenly Land"
- Seventeenth period (1998) - Nominated for best set and costume design for the film "Sheida"

Mohammad Ali Najafi loves to wander and walk in urban spaces. He says: ... Wandering and contemplating the urban space and architecture of the city, meeting people and paying attention to social movements and different voices among the different strata of society will expand the worldview for important life decisions.



Jung-e Athar-(Athar's theatrical plays)

Sources and references:

- Artist Archives
- Khaneh Film Archives
- Research and Interview Group Archives

"A time-frozen zone" for "Discourse"

Maziar Ghaseminia PhD - Reza Farashi PhD

There stands a house erected, a two-story building, not only to live in, but to listen, observe, and read. Three types of home zones with three distinct functions being interconnected despite their divergence, where activities transcend the regular meanings of a home, and where groups of students, artists, engineers, employees, youngsters, middle-aged individuals, women, and mothers of this land come together to enjoy its unique ambiance. The house is an enthralling and convivial zone for every social stratum, where they can listen, watch, and read within a single timeframe.

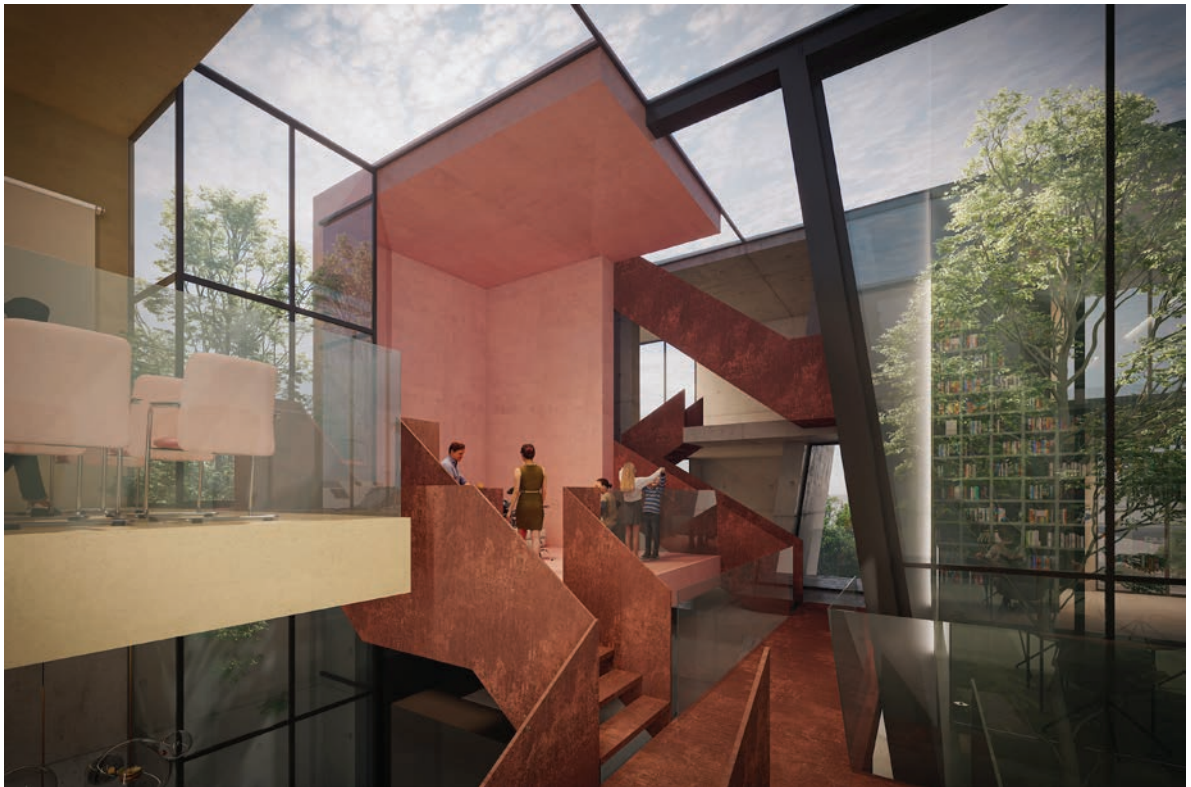
The house holds value not solely because it is chiefly designed for its owner, but because it offers a zone in which various people can escape the chaos of a disoriented urban life and find themselves in a time-frozen zone in a unique environment. In this time-frozen zone, one can listen to, read, and witness tales from "One Thousand and One Nights." Over successive nights and days, visitors can review "The Righteous Stories," enjoy "The Godfather" trilogy, and listen to Vivaldi's "Four Seasons."



The house measures about 318 Sqm. The landlord's demand was to build a house with a reclusive villa with minimal contact with the neighbors. On top of that, due to the landlord's close bonds with artists and intellectuals, they sought to create a zone that fosters multilateral discourse.

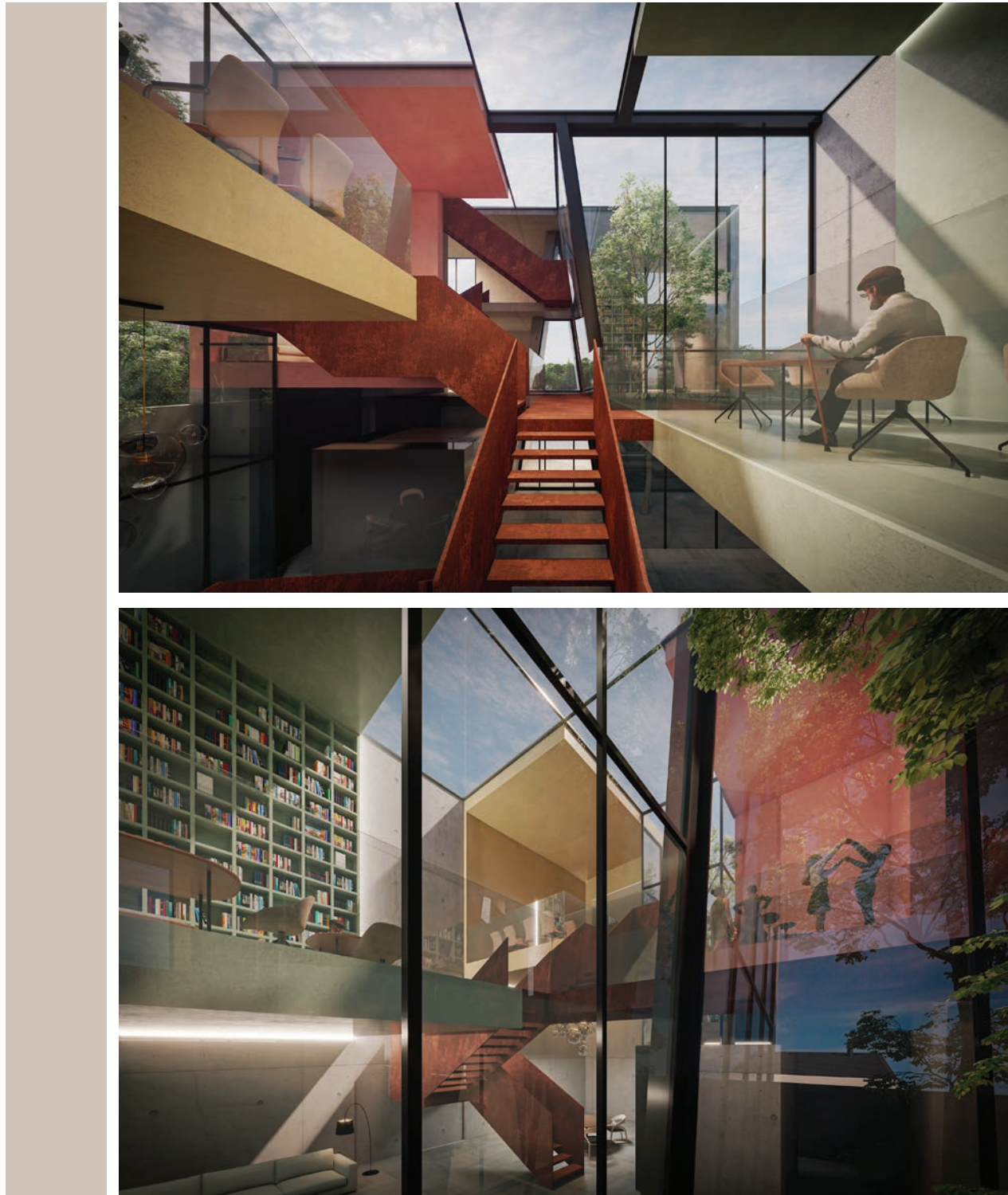






The design concept stems from the dual features of being engulfed by the surroundings and featuring unified micro-zones within. The features of the structure are outlined along a central translucent fissure defining the main entrance and connecting the exterior courtyard to the interior. The result of this linkage is a 3-D space in fragment, extending into the structure and forming three suspended boxes within the interior zone: library, theatres, and music. These transparent zones serve three distinct yet unified functions, embraced by a sculptural staircase that ties them together. Movement and fluidity between these three zones, while creating dynamic and novel sequences, provide a room for interaction and clash of ideas.

"Time-frozen zone" is a frozen zone in terms of structure and function. The zone is not bound to the default role of a private villa. It is simply in constant interface and sharing between the private roles of a house and the discourse amid art enthusiasts.



Project Data:

Architects: Maziar Ghaseminia, Reza Farashi

Collaborating Architect: Alireza Shiripour

Structural Engineer: Mahyar Ghaseminia, Mohsen Varmazyari

Rendering: Peyman Nozari

Graphic: Shadi Bitaraf

Contractor: Seyed Mohammad Lorgani, Yazdgerd Karimi

Head Of Supervisors: Maziar Ghaseminia, Reza Farashi

Architectural Supervisors: Hassan Ojani

Structural Supervisors: Nurala Sharajpour

Accountant Supervisopr: Morteza Mahmoodi Gaznavi

Client: Fali Fadaie, Alireza Shiripour

Project Manager: Amir Masoud Bahrami

Technical Officer (Central Abbas Abad District): Mohammad Sadegi Dehbani

Location: Iran-mazandaran Province

Site Area: 318 m²

Built Area: 400 m²

The Project is under condtruction and will completed on winter 2024 based on schedule.



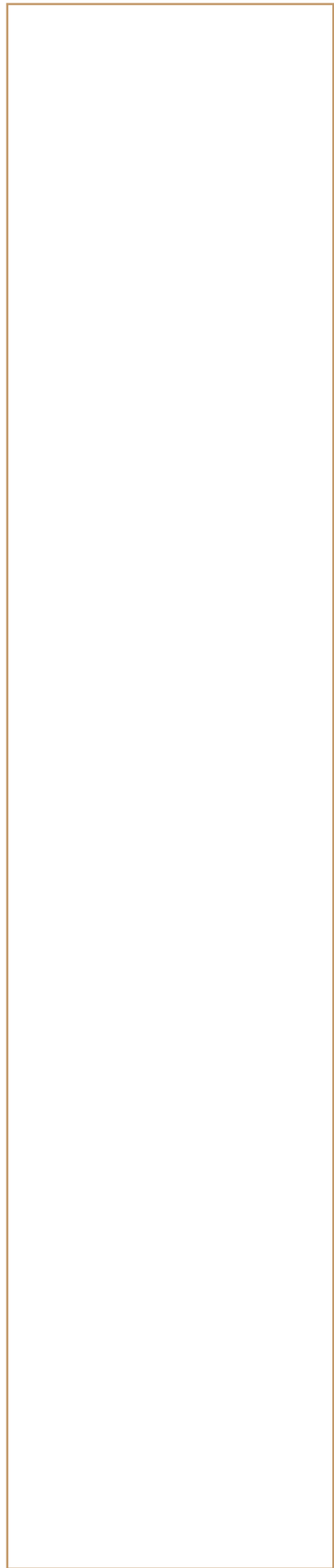


Maziar Ghaseminia

Maziar Ghaseminia received his PhD in architecture from the Islamic Azad University of Qazvin in 2017 and then began his professional career. He worked as a designer and project manager at the “Fundamental Experience of Architecture”, an architectural office for two years and as a designer and project manager at “DIGAR” architectural office for eight years. In 2012, Ghaseminia was selected as a finalist for the Memar Award in the residential apartment category for the “Intertextual 124” project, and in 2013, he took the second place in the Memar Award in the public buildings category for the “A Stage for the City Event” project. In the same year, he was selected by the Red Event in the ready-to-build projects category for the “Jondaq Library” project and the built projects for the “A Stage for the City Event” project. His specialization is intertextual relations in “Inter-architecture” design. As a faculty member at University, he has a background in education and teaching.

Reza Farashi

Reza Farashi received his bachelor’s degree in architecture from the Islamic Azad University of Tabriz in 2005. In 2012, he received his master’s degree from Azad University of Qazvin and then continued his studies with a doctoral degree from Najafabad Azad University of Isfahan. Reza Farashi began his professional career in 2015 and was introduced to the architectural community in the same year as a semi-finalist in the residential apartment group for the “Three-dimensional Villa-Apartment” project. In 2023, he was elected as a semi-finalist in the renovation group for the "Face-to-Face House" project with his “Reflection Villa”. In 2023, Farashi won the Memar Award in the general category and was selected as a "Red Event" for the project "A Scene for the City Event". His specialization is in the field of “Design Research”. In addition to architecture, Farashi has a background in education and teaching as a faculty member of the Azad University.

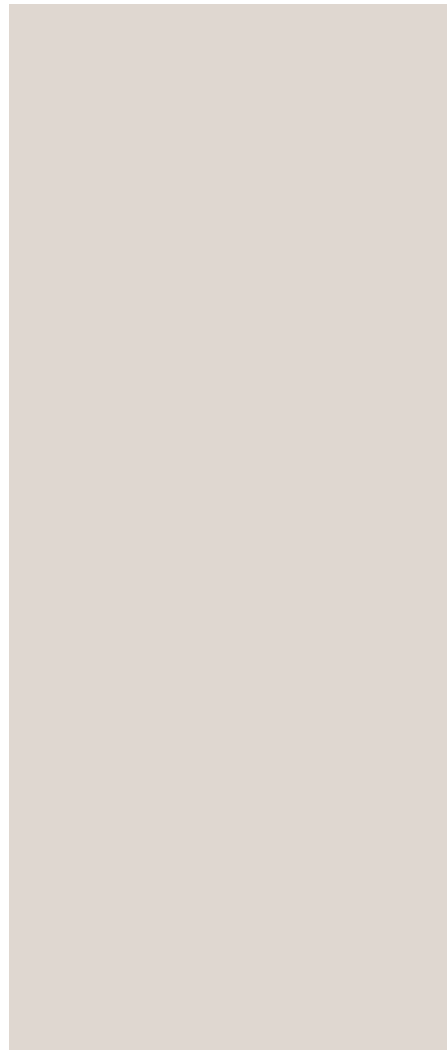


Architect and University Professor

Djahanguir Darvich Biography and works

Djahanguir Darvich (1933–2024), hailing from a family in the Mazandaran region of Iran. His father, Sa'dollah Khan Darvich, a prominent figure in the Jungle Movement of Gilan, was forced to migrate to Tehran for political reasons. Consequently, Jahangir completed his primary education at Adib Elementary School and his secondary education at Alborz and Iranshahr high schools. In 1955, he entered the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Tehran, spending two years learning architecture at Foroughi's atelier. In 1957, he went to Italy to further his education, earning a Master's degree in Architecture from Rome. Later, in 1962, he obtained his PhD with distinction from the Polytechnic University of Turin. That same year, he established "Atelier Darvich" and embarked on his professional career. Between 1962 and 1967, he designed numerous projects, including residential, educational, commercial, and industrial structures, during his five years in Italy:

- Two Mercedes-Benz showrooms (1964-1968)
- Two school buildings in Turin (1966-1973)
- Design of "La Quinka" Coffee Factory (1965-1966)
- Design of "Bergamo" Textile Factory (1967)
- Urban planning projects in Rivarolo, Castellamonte, and Ozegna (1965-1971)
- Several villas in Piedmont (1963-1972)

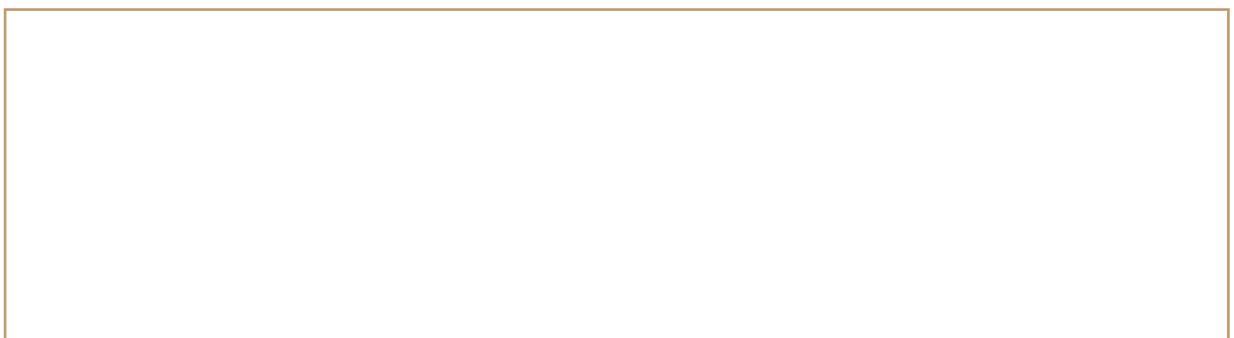
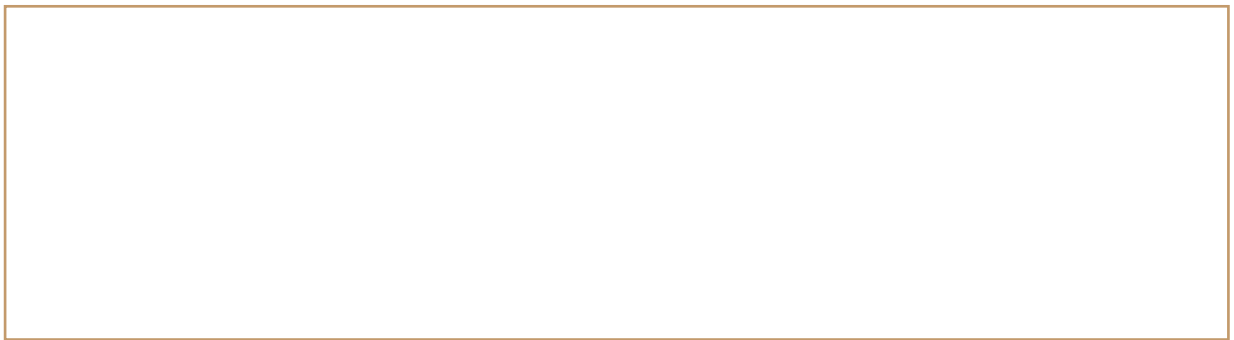




Darvich also pursued research initiatives, including the Sanremo Flower Market, the Genoa Maritime Passenger Terminal and the Sorbonne Cultural Center (1962). the Marine Research Laboratory of the Olivetti Complex in Sabotya (1965),

Upon returning to Iran, he established the Darvich Architecture Institute in 1966 and expanded his architectural practice. His notable works include the Radio and Television Centers in Tehran, Shiraz, Tabriz, Urmia, and Bandar Abbas (1973–1978) and Takhti Sports Complex (formerly Farah Sports Complex) in 1967. Beyond Iran and Italy, Darvich also undertook significant projects in the United States, such as:

- Several villas in California, Washington, Indiana, Maryland, Texas, and Virginia (1981–1999)
- Feasibility and design of five automobile showrooms for Chrysler, Toyota, Mazda, AMC, Jeep, and Renault (1982–1991)
- Feasibility and design of “Fame City” Recreation Center in Houston, Texas (1987)





Mercedes Benz Building



AMC - Jeep - Renault

In an interview with the Research and Interview Group in May 2018, Djahanguir Darvich described his entry into teaching at the National University of Iran's Faculty of Architecture:

"Upon returning from Italy, I joined the faculty at the invitation of several friends. In 1967, with the approval of the late Mr. Jahan Ara and Mrs. Fataneh Naraghi, I began teaching. In my first year, about 40 students enrolled in my atelier. I told them: "You are 40 individuals; therefore, you must select 40 different topics for your designs." Many of those designs were later executed. Over nearly a decade of teaching, I dedicated all my energy and sincerity to educating the students and spared no effort."



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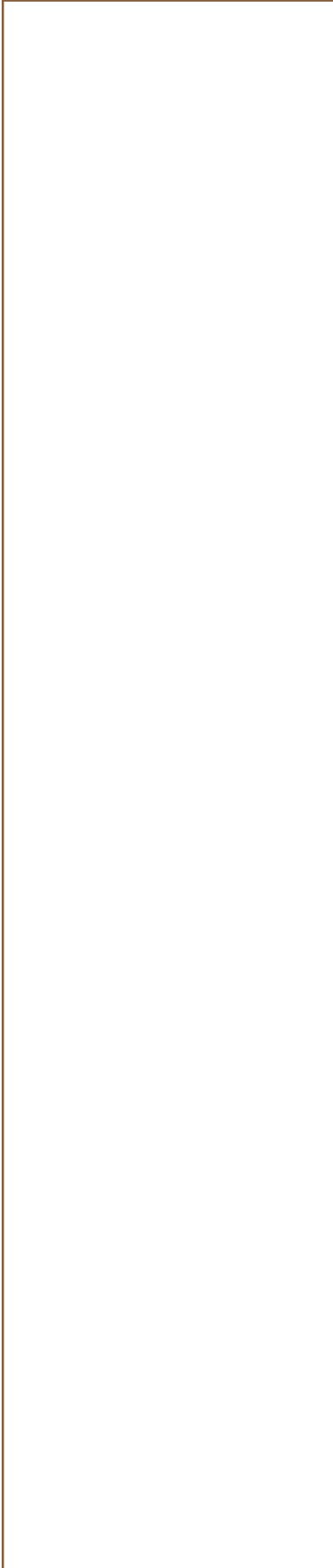


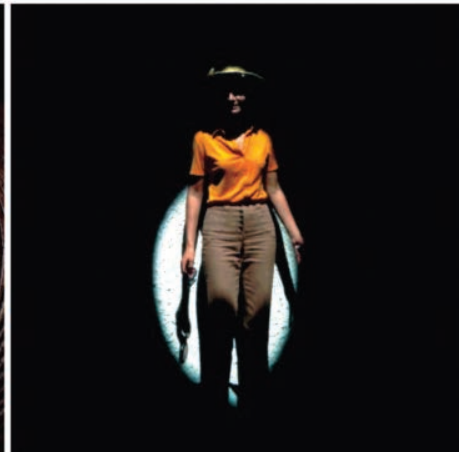
Radio and Television Building - Tehran



Radio and Television Building - Urmia

Radio and Television Building - Bandar Abbas





Radio and Television Building - Bandar Abbas



Radio and Television Building - Shiraz



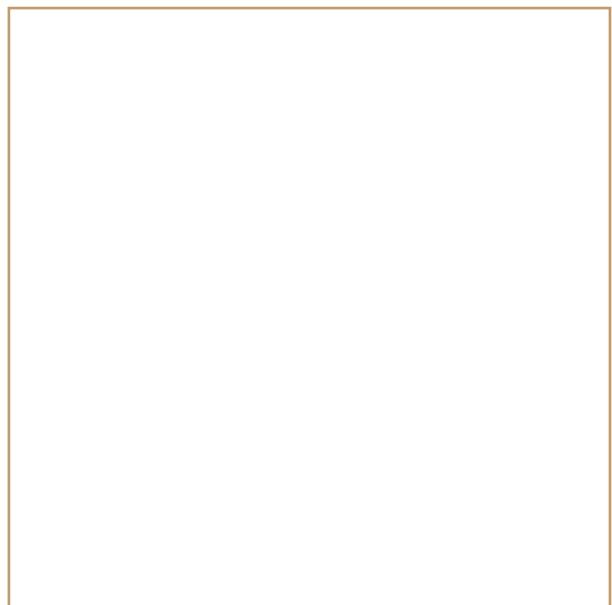
Villa Borgo Franco - Italy



Villa Aldiano - Italy



Villa Azarba - Iran

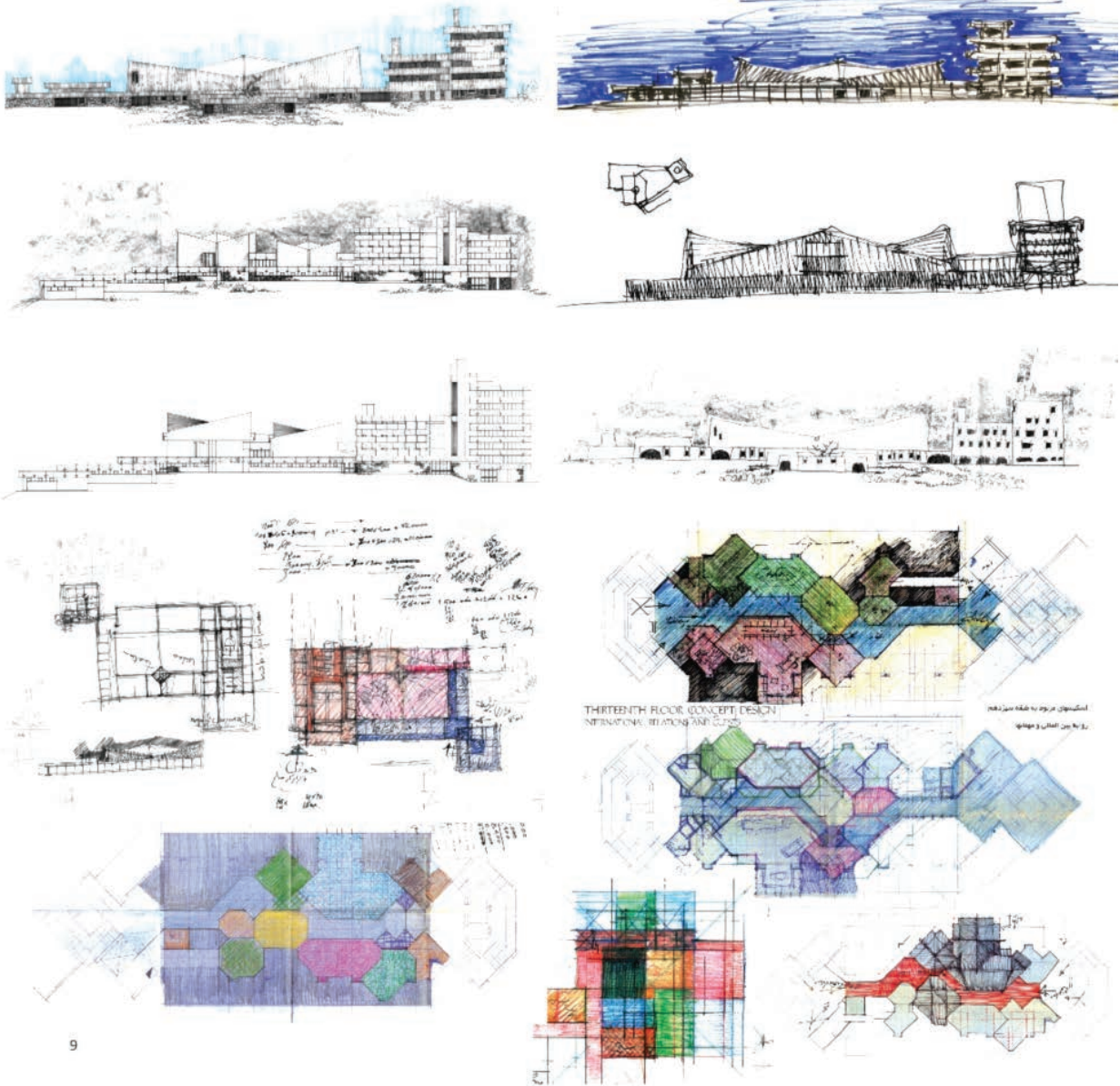




Rafael
19-17

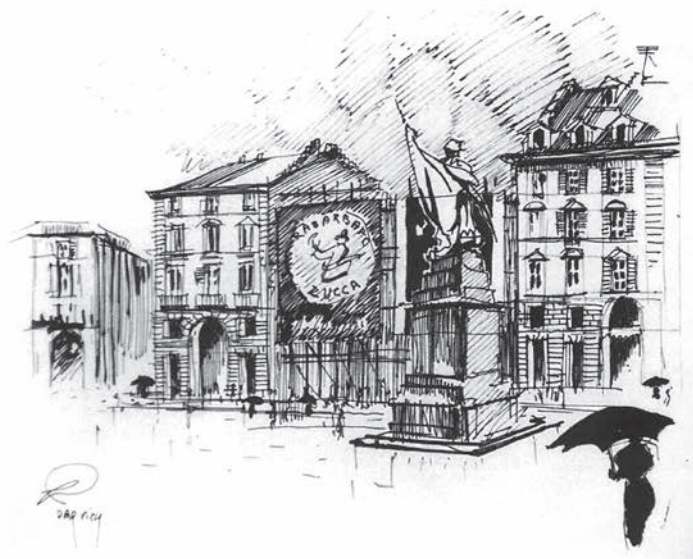






Darvich did not adhere to any specific architectural style, believing that a comprehensive understanding of all sciences is necessary, enhancing an architect's worldview. As a result, no two of his works are alike. He maintained that architecture and structure should operate in harmony and integration. Darvich's final design was the "Iran Doroudi Museum", intended to showcase the works of artist "Iran Doroudi". The building was to be constructed in the Yousef abad district of Tehran, with a design that, like his other works, blended architecture and structure. Unfortunately, the project was not executed for various reasons. The museum was meant to open during Iran Doroudi's lifetime, but this aspiration was never realized. In addition to his enduring architectural legacy, Darvich left behind a collection of stunning artwork in painting. He began painting during his student years and continued throughout his life. After several decades of contributions to architecture and education, Djahanguir Darvich passed away in the fall of 2024 in the United States.

May his soul rest in peace.



Dall'engo. Chiesa di S. Pietro



Pierone. Gesion.

Sources and references:

- Architect Archives
- Research and Interview Group Archives

The Aga Khan Award for Architecture

Prologue

The Aga Khan Award for Architecture is given every three years to projects that set new standards of excellence in architecture, planning practices, historic preservation, and landscape architecture.

Needless to say, agreeing to what defines “new standards of excellence” might well consume a jury’s entire meeting time and so the Steering Committee offers this document to the Master Jury to aid in framing their deliberations and discussions of the projects under consideration for this cycle.

The Aga Khan Award has a distinct advantage over other design awards in that the process includes on-site reviews of the finalist projects, thereby enabling jury members to experience and evaluate the works in context, rather than judging them on image or reputation. The visits also permit a more profound understanding of a project’s programme, process, and client and community engagement. Finally, these reviews permit a “proof of concept” consideration, given that the success of the effort can be measured by experiencing the project as well as communicating with the project’s beneficiaries, as well as its clients.



Given the role of the on-site reviews, the Award has consistently addressed issues of context and process, with an eye to projects that reimagine processes and empower new constituents. While it may be easier to locate such impacts in projects that are community-based in their origin and modest in their means and execution, the Master Jury evaluate every project in terms of how it reimagines or rearranges economic and social realities, technologies, materials, ecologies, politics, communal opportunities, and even financing. This cycle’s submissions include more cultural projects than office facilities and private residences.

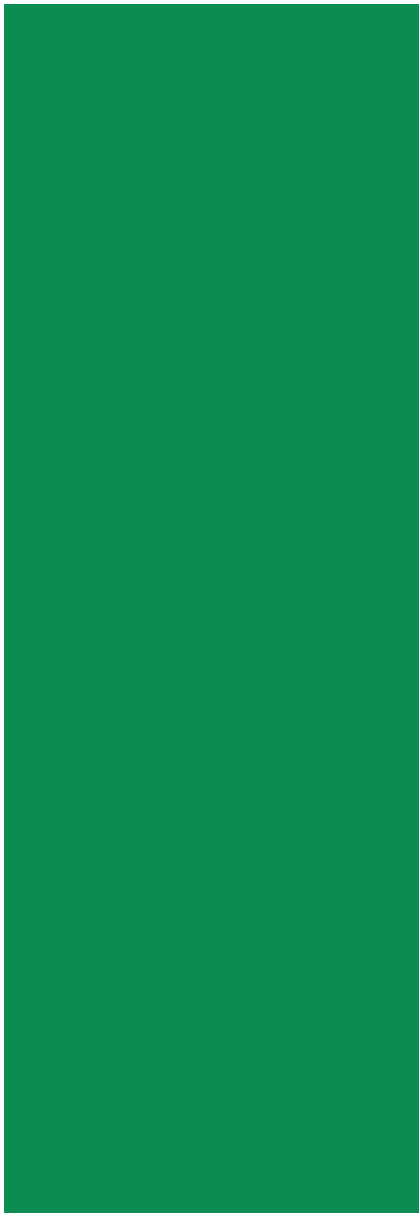
Argo

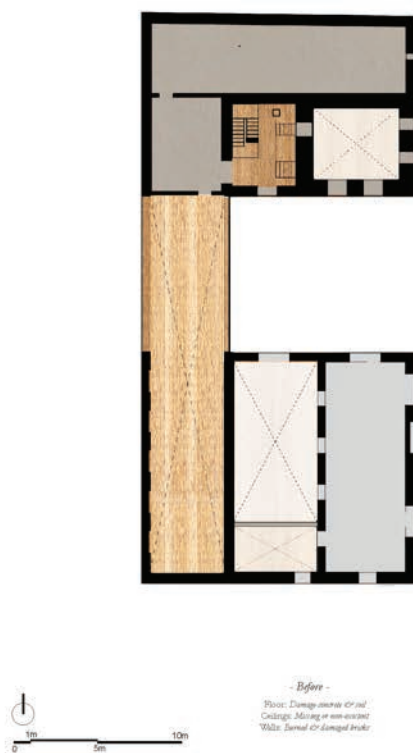
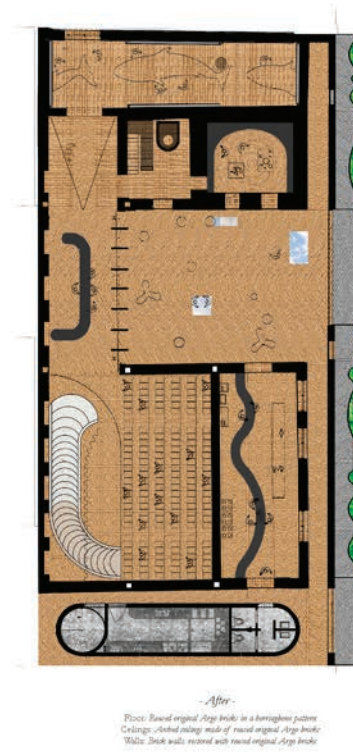
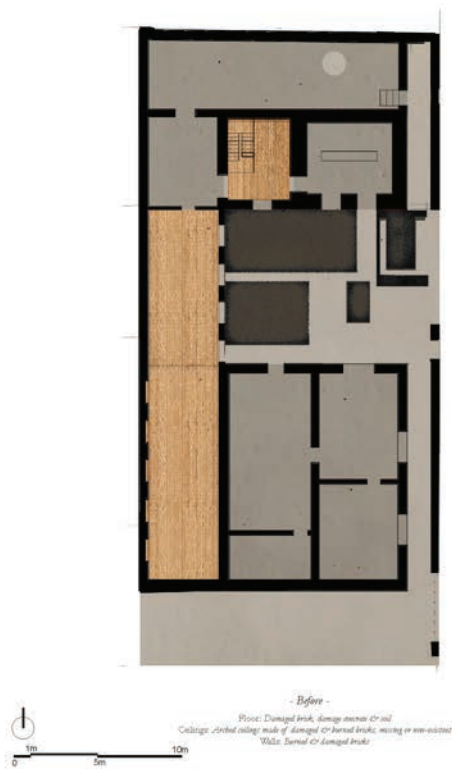
Contemporary Art Museum and Cultural Centre One of the 6 Winners of Aga Khan Award for Architecture

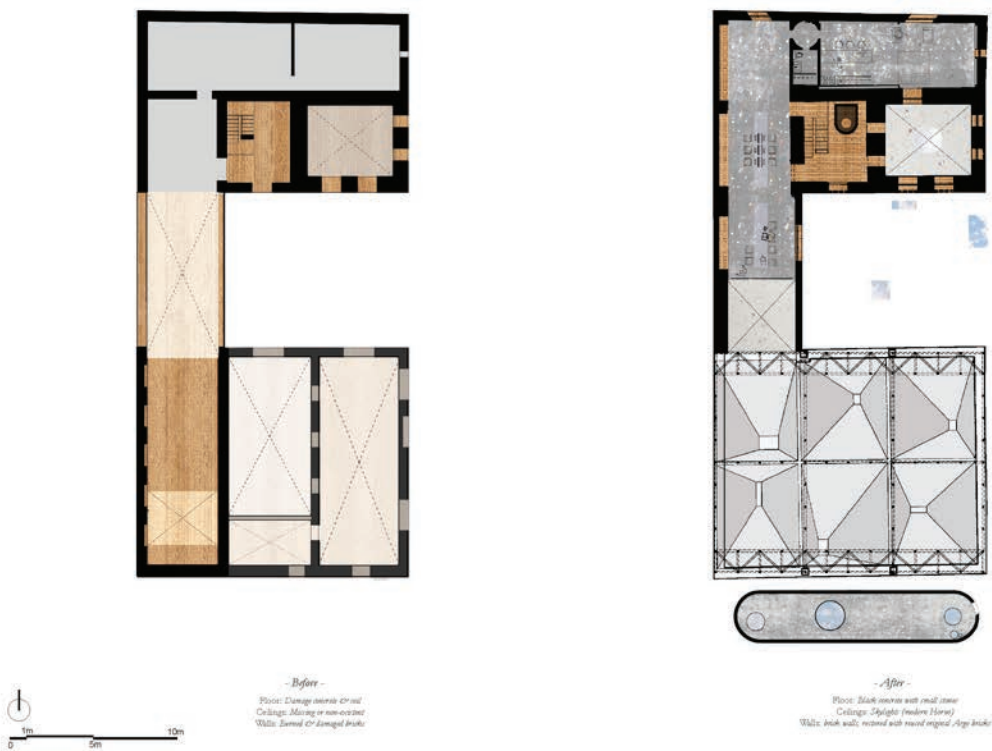
Architecture is a collective enterprise that entails the creativity, innovation, vision and input from each host of players – from architects and clients, to fabricators, masons and craftspeople. We see in the six projects we celebrate this evening a spirit of inclusivity and pluralism that is the essence of the Award in its ongoing mission to recognize excellence in architecture.

Farrokh Derakhshani, Director of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture

At the final of the 15th cycle of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, six winning projects were recognized at a prize-giving ceremony in Muscat, Oman. His Excellency Sayyid bin Sultan Al-Busaidi and Princess Zahra Aga Khan spoke at the ceremony, which included a performance by the Aga Khan Master Musicians with special guest Yurdal Tokcan. Guests from around the world also attended a seminar, discussing the social impact of architecture in the context of Oman.



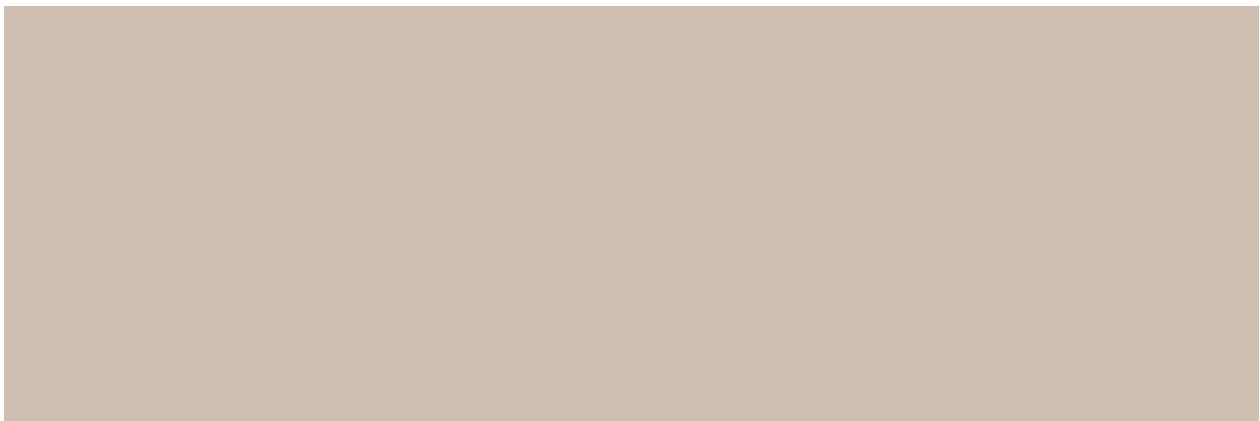




Project description

Despite decades of abandonment having reduced it to a roofless shell, the Argo Factory – a former brewery, over a century old – had intrigued Hamidreza Pejman for years. Hence his choice of it as home to Tehran’s first independent contemporary art museum, as well as to the Pejman Foundation, which seeks to create opportunities for Iranian artists to be visible on and exchange with the global art scene.

ASA North’s designs for the adaptive reuse project retained the full integrity and raw beauty of the historic building by adding a new, underpinned, self-supporting structure within it, based around steel columns inset from the existing walls. Great care was taken to ensure that new interventions are distinguishable from original fabric: reinstated brickwork has deep-set pointing, and the new, soaring white concrete staircase, metal lift and brass public bar offer a contrast with the old brewery’s brick recti linearity through both their materials and their curved forms. False ceilings echoing some of the original brick vaults are again inset from the walls for clarity.





Five striated, pitched concrete roof structures, whose shapes are an asymmetrical reinterpretation of nearby vernacular roofs, appear to float above the building – a “tip of the hat” symbolizing its return to life. They act as deep, insulating skylights, filtering light through the gap around the tops of the walls and into the gallery spaces.

The entrance courtyard has three glass panels in its floor offering views down into former brewing pools that are now archive rooms and service spaces. Around this, with generous openings to connect it to the street, the main block contains a public bar/café and shop; a series of spaces of different heights and textures for exhibitions, talks and films; a rooftop terrace; and the Pejman Foundation offices. In a narrow detached building to the rear, visibly new with its curved concrete structure poured in layers of varying shades of grey, are a kitchen for the bar/café with an artist residence above.

The project has reinvigorated this historic neighborhood and attracts not only art-lovers but also members of the general public curious to discover what lies within.





Jury Citation

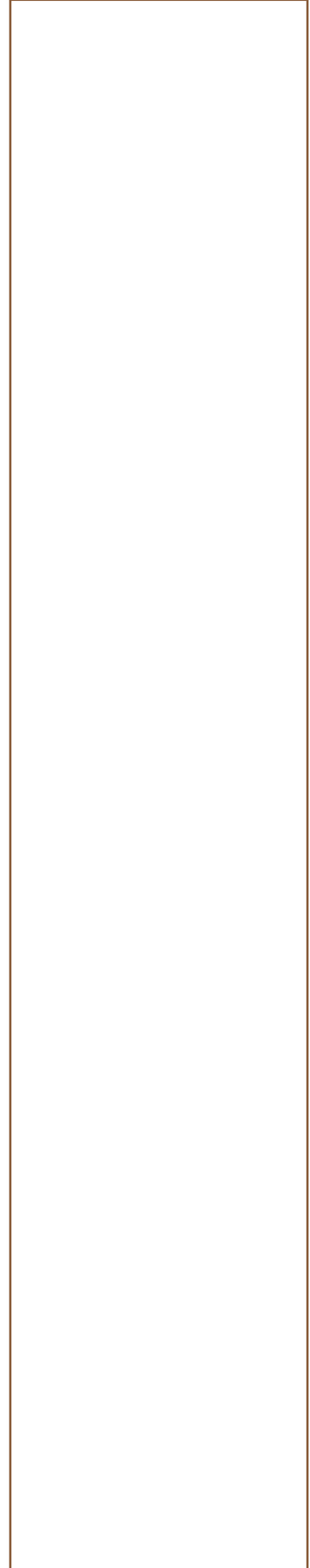
In the dense urban neighborhood that is Tehran's historical Centre, this untypical reuse and conservation project has transformed the Argo Factory – a former brewery whose activities were moved 10 years before the Iranian Revolution, for pollution reasons, to a site outside the city – into a private museum for contemporary art. From the ruins of the original building, the existing was renovated and new surfaces built with a subtle approach and design. A variety of spaces for exhibitions, talks and films were developed over four levels, and a new artist residence was built adjacent to the museum.

A central courtyard invites visitors to enter, interacts directly with the street and makes it possible for large events to extend to the street. Wide stairs connect to the upper level through a double-height space which reveals the interior of the new roof. The distinctive shape of the concrete roof creates a new identity as well as beautiful volumes inside.

Since this was an industrial building, no decorative or traditional ornamental features are seen in the original structure or the new addition. Respect for the building's history is shown by keeping traces, not in a sense of passive memory but as an active recognition of the will to accumulate value and to maintain the reading of time. This building has a chaotic history. After the threat of demolition, its rebirth as a new place is a positive, restorative act that has given the site a second life, its history influencing the whole life of the district. The relationship between the exhibition and meeting spaces is balanced. Even though the entrance area is much larger, the exhibition spaces offer a wide range of possibilities. Large sculptures, paintings and installations can be displayed here. Visitor circulation through the spaces follows an uninterrupted loop, flowing freely through from the entrance to the exhibitions. Argo is an urban place that goes far beyond the initial function of a contemporary art Centre. It is an appropriable complex for collective life that is much more inclusive than the classic contemporary museum and brings a new public to art.







Project Data

Project Information

Site Area: 750 m²

Ground Floor Area: 530 m²

Built Area: 1,890 m²

Cost without Land: 900,000 USD

Commission: August 2017

Design: April 2017 to October 2017

Construction: December 2017 to December 2019

Occupancy: January 2020

CLIENT:

Pejman Foundation, Tehran, Iran:

Hamidreza Pejman, founder & director

Architects

Ahmadreza Schricker Architecture North (ASA North),

Tehran, Iran – New York, USA:

Ahmadreza Schricker, founder & principal

Mehdi Holakoui, job captain

Mona Janghorban, project manager

Amin Mahdavi, special advisor

Collaborating Architect

Hobgood Architects, Raleigh, USA:

Patrick Hobgood, architect

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Behrang Bani-Adam, Tehran, Iran

Contractor

Vandad Ghooparanloo, Tehran, Iran, general contractor

Concrete

Brutal Beton Co., Tehran, Iran, concrete manufacturer & sponsor

Amir Sahra-Navard, Tehran, Iran, concrete repair and waterproofing

MEP

Alireza Mir-Taheri, Tehran, Iran

Electricity

Aydin Afshar, Tehran, Iran, electrical operator

Painting

Barad Painting, Tehran, Iran:

Sina Asgari, owner

Lighting Consultant

The SEED, New York, USA:

Golsana Heshmati, founder

In an interview with the Research and Interview Group in Feb 2025, Ahmadreza Schricker says about the ARGO:

First, I have to talk about something in the field of architecture and art. In general, architecture refers to something that all citizens have access to, and this reveals the difference between art and architecture. Not everyone has access to all art. A good book, good music, and even a good painting are not easily accessible to everyone. But architecture and its impact on everyone are obvious and obvious. That is why it is very important. Architecture has a function, having a shelter is a priority that can protect you in the weather of that season and it doesn't matter what season of the year you are in. Therefore, architecture does not take shape without responsibility. But an artist has the pulse of society in his hands. Sometimes he criticizes society, and sometimes he is mischievous, and he does not allow any of them to give explanations. But an architect never enjoys this freedom. Every building sometimes lasts a few years, sometimes centuries, which is determined by the citizens and time.

We decided to participate in the Argo competition based on this perspective. In 2018, we were informed from Iran that a limited competition was going to be held for the architectural design of the renovation of the abandoned Argo factory in Tehran. At that time, I had been establishing my own office called "(ASA North)" for about two years. Our office presented four options for the Argo project, considering the conditions at that time, Option 1: Full Touch plus _Option 2: Full Touch _Option 3: Medium Touch _Option 4: Light Touch. The director of the foundation and the project's client, Mr. Hamidreza Pejman, chose the option4: Light Touch, given his dominance over his own point of view, which, given the passage of such a short time, can be said to have been the most logical choice. It seems that traveling through space and creating it is an aspect of the project, Ahmad Reza main concern, which forces man to reflect and think about the six senses. In another part of the interview, he says:

... Some of the project's audience experience its spaces as very modern, while others describe them as remnants of an industrial factory, and some as neither. In my opinion, one of the most successful aspects of the project is the tension between these ideas and the unconventionality of this new space. The presence of engineer Behrang Bani-Adam had a profound impact on the design process. The creative and innovative design of the project structure gave the architectural team the freedom to create their own ideas. Another factor in the success of the Argo project was the audacity of the project's construction manager, engineer Vandad Ghooparanloo, who turned the plan into reality. In fact, this project was a vast "Kaleidoscope" of ideas, wishes, and contributions from hundreds of authors, which at that time led to the project's fruition.

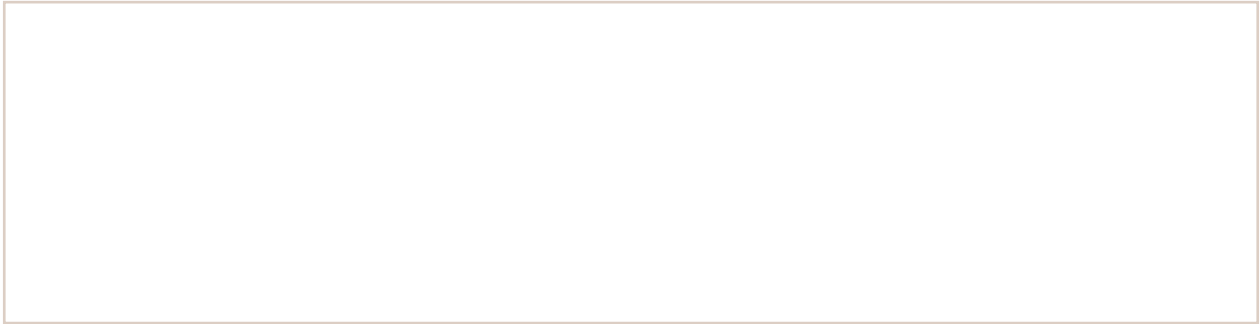
Schricker explain the use of materials:

... This is an Iranian-made project. In order to convey the old and new feel of this factory in the center of Tehran, we implemented the added sections in a way that is recognizable. For example, all new elements are curved volumes and all new brick walls are executed with recessed joints to differentiate them from the existing old elements. Also, the sloping concrete roofs, modeled after the tin roofs of old neighborhoods and respecting the history of the building, are implemented as floating, like a citizen greeting by taking off his hat.

Regarding participating in the Aga Khan Competition, Schricker says:

... Well, our priority was to sincerely implement the option "Light Touch" option chosen by Mr. Pejman. Receiving the Aga Khan Award[] has placed us at the center of a beautiful whirlwind, with whose circular motion we are currently dancing.





Ahmadreza Schricker

Ahmadreza Schricker graduated from Harvard University in 2008 and later oversaw multiple projects at Rem Koolhaas's OMA in New York, USA, and at Herzog & de Meuron in Basel, Switzerland.

Ahmadreza Schricker Architecture North (ASA North) is an international architecture office. Founded in 2015, ASA North's team of engineers, architects, curators and researchers collaborates with artists around the world to design and execute interdisciplinary projects that range in scale from exhibitions to private residences and urban master plans. Ahmadreza expanded the office to the four poles in 2022, which allowed to operate in a wider range. ASA North is a more "traditional" architectural practice, while its sister studio, ASA South, operates in the "virtual" realm and is focused on innovation in art, technology, social interaction and lifestyle.

ASA -East, is architecture for respect for the past, and ASA -West, is active in the search for the architecture of the future. The four poles of "ASA" are always engaged in criticism, discussion, and exchange of ideas, and revolve in the desire to discover the logical direction of each situation.





Pejman Foundation

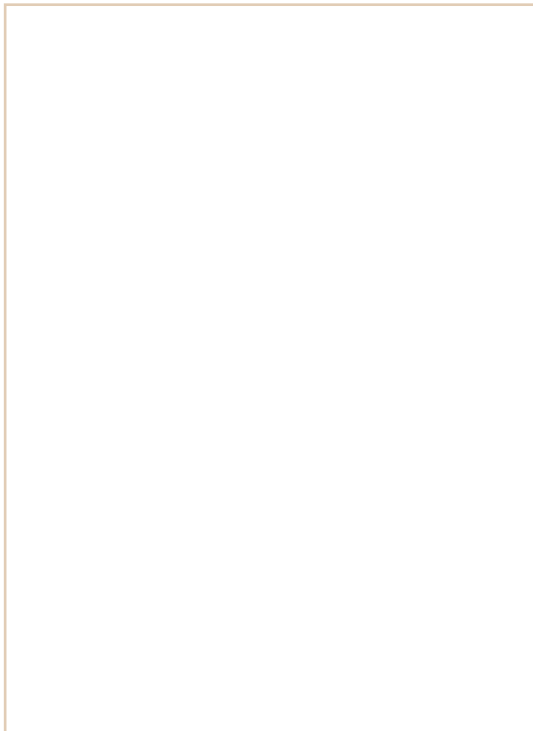
Established by Hamidreza Pejman, a collector, patron and movie producer, the Pejman Foundation is a non-profit organization that began its activities in 2015 with a focus on contemporary Iranian and international art. Throughout recent years, the activities of the Pejman Foundation have been expanded beyond building its collection and its grant and sponsorship programmer. Through the organization of workshops, lectures and panel discussions, the invitation of international experts, and its support for cultural research and publications, the Pejman Foundation has become a creative hub for art practitioners and initiatives in Iran and abroad. Today, the organization supports the arts and culture through a vibrant programmed. of exhibitions, talks and events at its multiple sites, including Argo Factory and Kandovan in Iran.





His Highness Prince Karim al-Hussaini Aga Khan IV

Born on 13th December 1936 in Geneva. Passed away on 4 February 2025, in Lisbon, Portugal, at the age of 88.



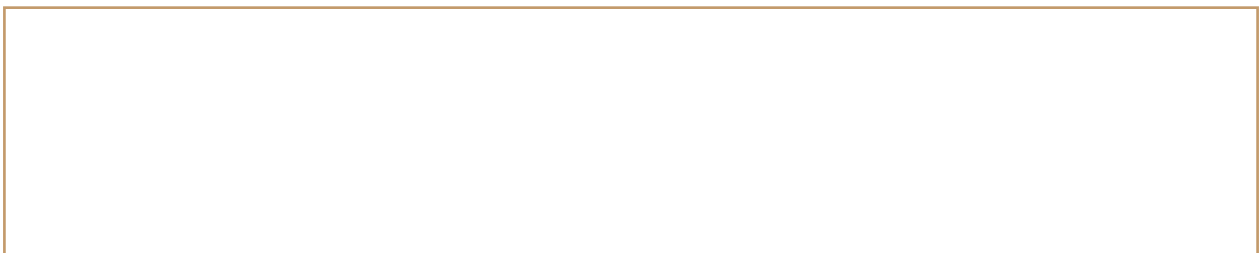
*On his way to Government House, Nairobi, Kenya, 1959
Credit: Verjee*

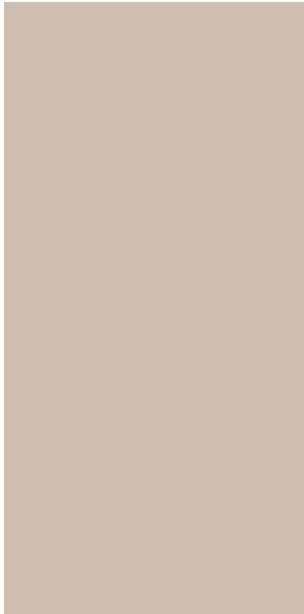
His Highness Prince Karim al-Hussaini Aga Khan IV. Was the 49th hereditary Imam (spiritual leader) of the Shia Ismaili Muslims. He held the position for 67 years after he succeeded his grandfather, Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan III, in 1957, at the age of 20. He was The eldest son of Prince Aly Khan by his first wife, Joan Yarde-Buller, he spent his early childhood in Nairobi, Kenya and attended the Institute Le Rosey in witzerland. He graduated from Harvard University in 1959 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Islamic history. In his role as Imam of the Ismaili community, The Ismailis belong to the Shia branch of Islam, one of the two major interpretations of Islam, the Sunni being the other. Like all Muslims, Ismailis believe that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) was the last and final Prophet of Allah, and that the Holy Qur'an, Allah's final message to humankind, was revealed through him. His Highness was married twice. In 1969, he married Sarah Frances Croker Poole, who assumed the Muslim name Begum Salimah. They divorced in 1995. In 1998, His Highness married Gabriele Renate Thyssen, who assumed the Muslim name Begum Inaara. They divorced in 2011. He is survived by his children Princess Zahra, Prince Rahim, Prince Hussain and Prince Aly Muhammad, his brother Prince Ayn Muhammad, half-sister Princess Yasmin, and four grandchildren. His Highness dedicated his efforts to the spiritual and material well-being of over 15 million Ismailis in more than 25 countries across Central Asia, the Middle East, South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, Australasia, the Far East, Europe and North America. He was committed to improving the quality of life of vulnerable populations through the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), and was recognized globally as a statesman and humanitarian Throughout his life, His Highness emphasized the view of Islam as a thinking, spiritual faith: one that teaches compassion and tolerance and that upholds the dignity of humankind. As such, pluralism — the embrace and celebration of diversity — has formed a central pillar of the Ismaili Imamats work. In partnership with the Government of Canada, the Aga Khan founded the Global Centre for Pluralism in 2006. The Centre works with policy leaders, educators, and community builders around the world to amplify and implement the transformative power of pluralism.

His Highness founded what is today known as the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) more than 50 years ago. Its purpose is to improve the quality of life of those in need — regardless of origin, race, gender, or religion — through efforts in healthcare, education, habitat, culture, and the creation of economic opportunity. The AKDN is active in more than 30 countries, with a particular focus on some of the poorest parts of Asia and Africa. This institutional framework and holistic approach has led to the establishment of two universities; over 200 schools; more than 700 health facilities. There are parks and gardens; foundations that work in social and cultural development, as well as microfinance; programmes in environmental protection and climate change mitigation, habitat planning, disaster preparedness, and humanitarian assistance. There are also businesses in commercial banking, insurance, telecommunications, energy, tourism, and media. The AKDN's impact is wide. For example, it annually generates electricity for 10 million people; provides healthcare to 5 million, educates 2 million students, and hosts 5 million visitors at its parks and gardens. With an annual budget of approximately US\$1 billion for its non-profit activities, AKDN agencies employ some 96,000 people, the vast majority of whom are Asians and Africans living and working in their home countries or regions.



Following the tradition of his ancestors, who founded Al-Azhar University in Cairo in 1970, His Highness placed great importance on tertiary education. He established the Aga Khan University in 1983 as Pakistan's first private, internationally chartered university, which is home to leading medical, nursing, and education faculties and programmes. It operates in six countries. In partnership with the governments of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan through an international treaty, he founded the University of Central Asia in 2000 to improve the social and economic development of Central Asia with special attention to its high mountain societies. His Highness also welcomed and supported partnerships with leading universities across the world, and endowed programmes at Harvard, MIT, and Brown. The Aga Khan was deeply engaged in the arts and cultural matters, and established programmes and initiatives to support architecture, music, and conservation. The Aga Khan Award for Architecture — established in 1977, and with a prize fund of \$1 million — is awarded every three years to projects that set new standards of excellence in architecture, planning practices, preservation and landscape architecture, while the Aga Khan Music Programme fosters the development of musical heritage in societies where Muslims have a significant presence. The Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme supports the delivery of restoration and conservation projects and the creation of parks and gardens, such as the Al-Azhar Park in Cairo. Underlining his commitment to preserving Muslim heritage, in 2014 His Highness opened the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, home to over 1,000 masterpieces showcasing the arts of Muslim civilizations.





*Portrait of His Highness the Aga Khan IV, 49th Hereditary Imam (Spiritual Leader) of the Shia Ismaili Muslims and Founder and Chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network, 2014
Credit: Anyo Campbell*

In keeping with the recognition accorded to the previous three Aga Khans by the British monarchs, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II granted the title His Highness to Aga Khan IV in 1957. In acknowledgement of his exceptional contributions to human development and improving the social condition of societies globally, His Highness received distinctions of honor from France, Portugal, Kenya, Canada, the United Kingdom, Iran, India, Pakistan, and Senegal. He received 44 international awards, including honorary Canadian citizenship and the UN Champion for Global Change Award, and was the recipient of 24 honorary degrees from leading institutions such as Cambridge, Harvard, and McGill.



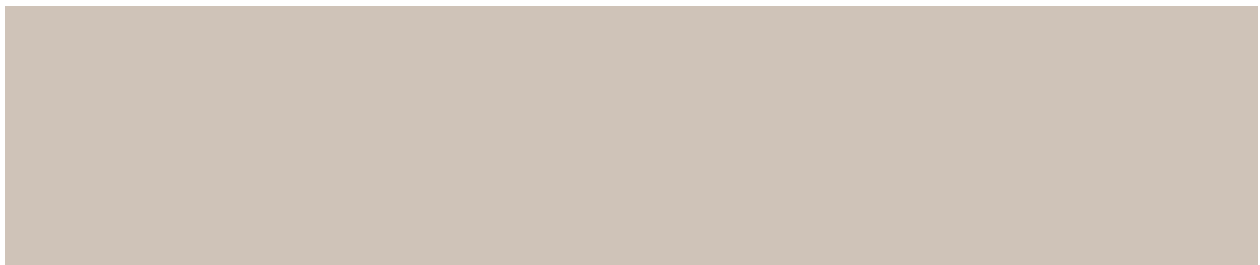
Prince Rahim Aga Khan V Named 50th Hereditary Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims Lisbon, Portugal, 5 February 2025

Prince Rahim Aga Khan V

Prince Rahim Al-Hussaini Aga Khan V was named the 50th hereditary Imam (spiritual leader) of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, following the unsealing of the Will of his late father, Prince Karim Al-Hussaini Aga Khan IV. Prince Rahim Aga Khan V is a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) through his daughter, Hazrat Bibi Fatima, and the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, Hazrat Ali, the fourth Rightly Guided Caliph of Islam and the first Shia Imam. Throughout their 1,400 year history, the Ismailis have been led by a living, hereditary Imam. The Ismailis live in over 35 countries and number approximately 12 to 15 million.



Prince Rahim Aga Khan V with members of the jamat in Hunza valley, Gilgit – Baltistan. Credit: Akbar Hakim



Lisbon, Portugal, 8 February 2025

The funeral ceremony for His Highness Prince Karim al-Hussaini Aga Khan IV, the 49th Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, took place at the Ismaili Centre Lisbon. Prince Rahim Aga Khan V, the 50th Ismaili Imam, and other members of Aga Khan IV’s family were present, alongside leaders of the Ismaili community and the Aga Khan Development Network, and international dignitaries. Amongst global leaders in attendance were President Rebelo de Sousa of Portugal, Prime Minister Trudeau of Canada, and senior officials from Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Portugal, Qatar, Spain, United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom, amongst others.



Prince Rahim Aga Khan V & Prince Ameen Aga Khan carry the casket of His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan IV out of Ismaili Centre Lisbon
Credit: Garry Otte / IPL



Prince Rahim Aga Khan V and members of His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan IV’s family seated in the funeral hall at the Ismaili Centre Lisbon
Credit: Garry Otte / IPL



Portrait of His Highness the Aga Khan (1936 - 2025)