IN TRANSITION

Re-contextualizing the Persian Garden Paradigm as a Platform for Persian Cultural Celebrations in Toronto

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Life is understanding the present moment

Life is the passion of reaching

To the tomorrow, when it never comes

You are neither in yesterday nor in tomorrow [1] *...*

زندگی درک همین اکنون است

زندگی شوق رسیدن به همان

فردایی است، که نخواهد آمد

تو نه در دیروزی، و نه در فردایی...

[1] "Life Poem", by Sohrab Sepehri

Abstract

Iranian communities constitute one of the largest settler ethnic groups in Toronto. Coming from diverse cultural backgrounds, Iranians become disconnected from their cultural norms and geographical roots following their migration to Canada. Despite diverse cultural backgrounds, social events and community gatherings in public spaces are consistent and important parts of Iranian cultural identity and lifestyle. However, the suburban context of Toronto forms an urban fabric and corresponding lifestyle that imposes limitations on social interactions and restricts gatherings to small meetings in private places. Emotional detachment and the feeling of being somewhere "in between" are the most notable consequences of living in this urban context. The aim of this thesis is to examine how a Persian cultural archetype can contribute to the creation of a sense of belonging for Persian communities living abroad. Here, the challenge was selecting urban forms that may more appropriately manifest Persian socio-cultural values.

In this study, the paradigm of Persian gardens is discussed as an element of the built environment that is vital to Iranian national identity. An analysis of existing Persian cultural spaces in Toronto framed the approach of this thesis regarding the re-contextualization of the Persian garden paradigm. "In Transition" examines the flexibility and potential of a Persian archetype to be applied in a new urban context to provide a platform for Persian cultural celebrations in Toronto. This study investigates how a contemporary Persian garden can contribute to cross-cultural dialogue, providing a dynamic space for social integration, while remaining an anchor for the memory of a homeland. In doing so, two temporary wire mesh structures have been proposed to be installed in two different locations where a Persian cultural festival in Toronto is being celebrated. These two installations are designed based on the long-lasting principles of the Persian garden paradigm. The manifestation of this paradigm can be observed through the entire parts of the projects from determining the location of the installations on the site to the organization of the whole space and the material selection. While providing a home-like space for promoting social interactions during the Persian cultural festival, these two installations open a new insight toward re-interpretation of a Persian archetype and provide a learning platform to share the Persian history, art, and culture with Torontonians.

Key Words: Cultural Archetype, Collective Memory, Socio-Cultural Identity, Temporary Structures

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To my Homeland.

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

هرکجـاهستم،باشم،

آســمان‌مال‌من‌است.

پنجره،فکر،هوا،عشق،زمین‌مــال‌من‌است.

چه‌اهمیت‌دارد

گاه‌اگرمی‌رویند

قارچهای‌غربت؟[1]

Wherever I am, so let me be,

The sky is mine

The window, thinking, air, love, the Earth are mine

What importance does it have then,

Sometimes if they grow,

Mushrooms of nostalgia?[2]

1 “The Footsteps of Water” by Sohrab Sepehri (1964)
2 Kashan, village of Chenar (plane tree), summer of 1343 (1964)
Translated from Persian by Ikram Hawramani, Slêmanî, Iraq, 2008.

1.1 Research Objectives + Methodology

The aim of this research is to support the cultural identity of the Persian communities in Toronto through re-contextualization of a Persian cultural archetype. This archetypal element is manifestation of a common socio-cultural context in Iran which can be reinterpreted in order to recall some shared experiences of a sense of place for Iranians living abroad. This study consider these cultural forms as a precious element for Iranians and examines the possibility of experiencing those spaces and make them tangible in a new context. What are the underlying characteristics of those particular spaces? Why they are appreciated throughout the history of a country?

Starting Point

Focusing on the growing population of Iranians in Toronto, the initial question of this research was how I can support the cultural identity of the Persian community through creating a space inspired by one of the most significant cultural element of Iran, the paradigm of the Persian garden.

In doing so, the first attempt is to understand why Persian gardens have formed a "paradigm" and why they are a strong archetype in Persian culture. With the application of the content analysis method, the design principles and various frameworks contributing to the formation of this paradigm are specified. This analysis is based mostly on the contents of two reference books, *The Paradise Paradigm*[*] by Azadeh Shahcheraghi and *Iranian Gardens*[**] by Gholamreza Naima. The results of this study are used as a reference to select three case studies of historical Persian gardens that actively respond to the social needs of people in their context: Dolat-Abad Garden in Yazd, El-Goli Garden in Tabriz, and Fin Garden in Kashan. Each of these gardens was designed based on specific principles and geometry assigned to their geographical location and function.

Homeland

These case studies helped in developing a framework and creating an analytical guideline based on the original layout of the gardens. Here the question is how these archetypal principles can be recalled and re-appropriated in a new context? What could be the source of inspiration here, tangible characteristics or intangible aspects? And most importantly, what makes the process of recalling those principles valuable in another context?

* The Paradise Paradigm, Azadeh Shahcheraghi, 2010

پارادایم‌های پردیس: درآمدی بر بازشناسی و بازآفرینی باغ ایرانی/ نویسنده آزاده شاهچراغی، تهران: جهاد دانشگاهی، واحد تهران، ۱۳۸۹

** Iranian Gardens, Gholamreza Naeima, 2016

باغ های ایران غلامرضا نعیما، ۱۳۹۵

To answer these questions, the next step was to apply the case study method to investigate how contemporary architects are inspired by the paradigm of the Persian garden in their projects. Here, the most significant point was to study the level of flexibility and adaptability of the Persian garden paradigm. These gardens in their original context have been a source of inspiration at various scales for different purposes, from designing a courtyard in a house to a contemporary museum, to a public park.

Apart from the design principles and tangible characteristics of these gardens, Persian gardens were places to celebrate different cultural events, as well as for learning and thinking. Most studies focus on the physical aspects and historical patterns of these gardens, but there is a lot to learn from their cultural impact on Iranian life. The ways these gardens were used by people might be another reason for their long-lasting legacy in Iranian culture. As a result, the categorization of their physical, cultural, and social characteristics is critical in designing an inspiration framework and re-practicing them in a different socio-cultural context.

Considering Toronto as the setting of this research and the location for implementing this paradigm, there is a need to study the characteristics of the Persian communities and Persian public spaces within the suburban context of the city. Through archival research, reading, and photography, the cultural needs of the Persian community in Toronto are identified. The aim of "Host Land" is to study the possibility of designing a temporary platform, based on the most practiced Persian pattern, with the potential for duplication and expansion for any Persian cultural event. This study also aims to characterize the symbolic, material, and socio-cultural aspects of Persian gardens so that they can also be experienced and appreciated by people of diverse cultures.

Host Land

In Between

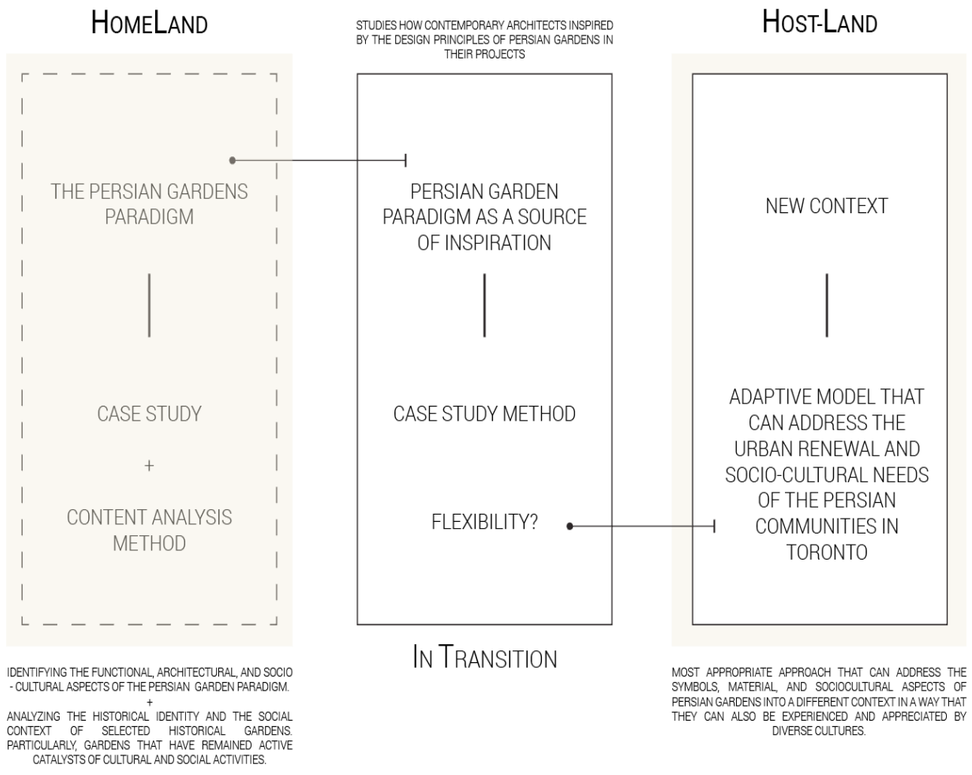
The Culture in Development organization (CiD) defines cultural heritage as "the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions, and values."[3] This definition suggests a direct continuity of cultural norms, communicated through tangible and intangible elements throughout the history of a region. But how are these cultural norms learned and experienced by a diaspora in other countries? In terms of learning, these cultural norms are likely passed on from parents to children with some filtration based on their ideology and religious beliefs.

The aim of "In Between" is to provide an opportunity for the Persian diaspora to experience a familiar sense of place, which people who moved from Iran may have forgotten, or, for the next generation of Iranians born in Canada, may never have been experienced before.

3 What is Cultural Heritage, ICOMOS, 2002

1.2 Research Outline

This research consists of three main steps with different research methods and strategies. The illustrated outline provides a complete framework for this research. Some studies are developed in parallel with one another.



While the study of Homeland focuses mainly on understanding the paradigm of a cultural form, the main focus of the Host Land will be on exploring related cultural functions within the Persian communities in Toronto.

1.3 Living in a Third Space: In Between

Cultural transformation might be experienced by people who migrate to live in another country for the long term.[4] Leaving behind familiar cultural norms and social networks are the most notable stressful processes involved with immigration.[5] For immigrants, making friendship ties with people from the same cultural background can enhance their ethnic identification. However, failing to make these connections will lead to weak ethnic identification.[6] Making these ethnic identifications is not in contradiction with forming a sense of belonging in the host country.[7] A sense of attachment and belonging to the home country for immigrants can play the role of cultural anchor in their transition to the host country. They can experience the feeling of being "at home," secure, and accepted if they feel they belong to the receiving society.[8]

As a sociological fact, multiculturalism is defined as the presence of people from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds in a country. Although multiculturalism is a fact that many societies and cities are facing today, not many countries welcome and accept the policy of multiculturalism.[9] As part of the statement in Canada's multiculturalism policy, "all Canadian citizens are equal, can preserve their identities, can take pride in their ancestry, and can have a sense of belonging both to their cultural community and to Canada as a whole."[11]

Supporters of the idea of cultural globalization argue that as the world becomes more connected, national identity is not a matter to advocate anymore.[10] Although today national identity is defined in a flexible and adaptable way, there is still a strong tie between people and the home country in which they were born.[12] The organized spatial structure of cities, urban forms, and their functions can impact ethnic communities and act as a cultural representative for that specific community. Through social networks, language, religion, or culture, the second generation of immigrants may also keep strong ties to their origins.[11]

4 Taylor 1994.
5 Rogers-Sirin and Gupta 2012.
6 Kashima and Pillai 2011.
7 Christoph M. Schimmele and Zheng Wu.
8 Berry and Hou 2016.
9 Shahrzad Faryadi 2008.
10 Pete.
11 Kelly 2016.

Numerous studies such as *"Racial Inequality, Social Cohesion and Policy Issues in Canada"* by Reitz and Banerjee in 2007, "*When No Place is Home*" by Aixa Perez-Prado, and *"Feeling at Home in Europe"* by Jennifer Mitzen in 2018, have shown that the most desirable sense for a newcomer is the feeling of being "at home." Any familiar sign, element, sound, form or even smell can connect people virtually to the country of their origin. But why is this sense so highly dominant in every aspect of our lives? That's a new and unfamiliar feeling which someone might have never experienced until they leave their home country… The bright side of the story is that immigration provides opportunities to explore and experience new feelings. Although it gives people the freedom to select and move away from traditional methods of categorization, it also provides a level of consciousness through which they may feel how strongly they are attached to their home country.

Apart from family bonds and friendship ties, what is called "transition" in this thesis refers to the fluid characteristics of the physical sense of belonging. People might feel they belong to multiple places as a result of globalization and technology. This means that, in a given moment and location in the world, as well as the people with whom we are communicating, our sense of belonging might shift from one place to another. However, in order to ensure the continuity of social identity there should be a link between the past, the present and the future.[12]

As Kevin Laland and Rendell describe in their article "Cultural Memory", "Humans have a form of externalized memory. They are able to transmit information across generations in the form of learned cultural traditions and preserve this knowledge in artifacts."[13] But what are the barriers faced by immigrants in celebrating their cultural identity in a new context? Even in a multicultural society such as Canada, why might people still feel disconnected to the place where they live? Focusing on the Iranian diaspora in Canada, what is a common cultural value which gives people motivation to act regarding its preservation and helps reconstruct their feelings of attachment to their new context?

12 Stefanenko et al. 2017.
13 Laland and Rendell 2013.

Figure 1. Iranian Plaza, North York

There are many reasons that force people to leave their home country, where they feel they belong and reside in a country in which they never feel a sense of belonging. These include economic conditions, war, poverty, ethical conflicts, racial discrimination, cultural and political issues.[14] Canada is home to many people from different cultural backgrounds who communicate in languages other than French or English.[15]

Political shifts have always been significant reasons for people's migration. Due to Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979, there was a jump in the number of Iranian immigrants to Canada. Due to the war between Iran and Iraq, 20,000 Iranians moved to Canada during the 1980s.[18] This population continued to increase throughout the 1990s as a result of the side effects of the war. Between 1990 and 2000, over 40,000 Iranians entered Canada, with forty-four percent settling in Toronto.[16] According to the 2016 census, 7.5 million foreign-born people from more than 200 countries of birth live in Canada. Within this group, people of Iranian ethnic origin are one of the top ten fastest-growing populations.[17]

14 Moghissi and Goodman 1999.
15 Dastjerdi 2012.
16 Negin Khaleghi 2011.
17 Statistics Canada 2016.

It is thus not surprising if some people refer to Toronto as "Tehranto." Twenty years ago, the Iranian community in Toronto was very small and insular.[18] But due to the constant migration of Iranians to Canada, there is a large population of Iranians in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), which is mostly concentrated in Richmond Hill, North York, and York Region.[19]

The question here is how much of Iranians' cultural memory is in the tangible form of artifacts in these neighbourhoods? Apart from store signs written in the Farsi language, it is hard to find a distinctive characteristic that defines the connection between these places and a Persian cultural identity. It seems that cultural spaces in the region are not successful in the creation of a cognitive sense of being "at home" for newcomers. Some believe that there is a relationship between living in a distinctive place and the creation of a sense of identity. Preserving some fundamental, common, and continued beliefs of a culture can provide support for identity in a multicultural environment.

Iranians come from diverse subcultural backgrounds. They might have different group histories or religions, which create great variations in cultural customs and social codes. Despite a wide range of cultural codes within Iranian communities, a sense of national belonging and pride is a strong common characteristic.[20] Iranians want to be identified with Persian culture and history, which they view positively, even though they might not be satisfied with the West's current perception of their country.[21] Taking pride in your roots does not contradict having respect for the culture of the host country. For the Iranian diaspora, it is important to position themselves in a transnational community in which they can bring their political, economic, social, and cultural experiences and challenges and present them in an alternative way that fits into a new context.[22]

Most Iranians in Canada initially left their home country based on personal choices and life priorities. To some extent, this distinguishes them from people who have left their home country because they no longer feel safe as a result of war, and other crises or violence. Consequently, for Iranians, the freedom of choice and being able to travel back and forth to their home country provides a different viewpoint on their living experience in Canada.

18 Sima Sahar Zerehi 2010.
19 Paniz Moayeri 2019.
20 Nina Evason 2016.
21 Samad Zare 2018.
22 Resa Mohabbat-Kar 2015.

Considering their memories and present experiences together, these new immigrants see their past as an available resource for the here and now.[23] As a result of this freedom of choice, they live in a third space with a blended identity in which they do not completely merge with the culture of the host society, but no longer fully adhere to their traditional and cultural values.[24] In this research, this experience is called the sense of living "in between."

The idea of representing Persian cultural elements in the built environment does not mean drawing a line between nationalities or segregating different ethnic groups. "In between" is a third space, which might be experienced by any person who has freely or under duress decided to live far from their homeland. Recalling some features of Persian cultural memory in the form of artifacts and the built environment can bridge the gaps between the cultural divisions and, more importantly for Iranians, provide a familiar context for community engagement. These built forms can act as platforms for sharing their thoughts and cultural values in a "homelike" space.

The challenge here is selecting appropriate national urban forms that can be considered manifestations of Persian culture and social values. In this study, the paradigm of Persian gardens is proposed as the strongest element of the built environment that relates to Iranian national identity. These gardens demonstrate the interchange of human values that have been a source of inspiration for garden design development in many countries around the world.[25] The juxtaposition of the natural and built environment in Persian gardens creates a familiar composition and harmony in the cultural memory of the Persian people. It is the most repeated pattern in different cities of Iran, from designing a courtyard in a small house to programming a city development plan. They represent a pattern for any human settlement and form of life in Iran.[26]

The results of a 2008 study on Toronto's Iranian community by Shahrzad Faryadi shows that there are two criteria, urban functions and urban forms, that need to be revised in Persian neighbourhoods in Toronto. This study also discusses the lack of urban public spaces and a specific centre where the community can meet within the Persian neighbourhoods, which limits public gatherings to small private spaces.[27] Should we design a building with a target of fulfilling the needs of the Persian diaspora with various subcultures and religious backgrounds? If yes, what is the closest example of these types of buildings in the original context of Iran? If no, how can we help in creating public spaces for the Persian community to gather while respecting those varieties?

23 GHORASHI * 2004.
24 Smad Zare 2011.
25 ICOMOS 2011.
26 Khosravi 2014.
27 Pete.

The approach of this thesis in answering these questions is to adopt a neutral point of view towards diverse subcultures, politics, and religions, but a strong view of national identity. In terms of urban forms and urban function, this study aims to position itself in an acceptable manner for all Iranians, not only the specific group with specific values and beliefs. Apart from ethnic gatherings and religious events, Persian people celebrate their history, culture, and art continuously through many public festivals and public art performances.

Historically, the most popular performing arts were Rowzeh Khani(mourning performance), Pardeh Sariee(a dramatic form of storytelling in Iran), Naqqali(story-telling about Shahnameh), Shabih or Ta'ziyeh(Shi'i martyr plays), Kheimeh Shab Bazi(puppet theatre), Ru Howzi and Siah Bazi(comical outdoor performances), which had their roots in the storytelling culture of the Persian people.[28] Even nowadays in some major Iranian cities, one might find a storyteller who performs daily on the streets for a crowd of 100 to 200 people.[29]

Public festivals offer a close-up view of the everyday life of the Persian people.[30] The location of these celebrations in Iran is flexible and can be a public square, street, or stadium.[31] Nowrouz (Celebration of the New Year, Festival of Spring), Chaharshanbe Souri (Festival of Fire), Sizdeh Bedar, Mehregan (Fall Festival), Sadeh (Mid-Winter Festival), Tirgan (Rain Festival), and Yalda festival (The Night of the Fortieth) are the most important and nationally celebrated festivals in Iran.Some of these festivals, such as Nowrouz, have some small festivals, such as egg painting festivals, associated with them, which counts as a preparation for the main festival.

28 Seyed Habiballah Lazgee 1994.
29 Page 1979.
30 Pontia Fallahi 2017.
31 Intini 2015.

Figure 2. Norouz 2017 Egg Painting Festival, Tehran

Figure 3. Norouz 2017 Egg Painting Festival, Tehran

For the Persian community in Canada, the world's largest celebration of Iranian art and culture, Tirgan, takes place in Toronto. As Ammy Malek writes "The sense of belonging and duty to the diaspora and to Iran are integral to notions of diasporic citizenship, and are at the forefront of Tirgan organizers' minds."[32] This festival is celebrated in mid-July every two years at Harbourfront Centre and at the Distillery District in Toronto. More recently, the organization of the Tirgan festival celebrates Nowrouz in March at Toronto Centre for the Arts in North York. This festival consists of various artistic events, which include music, dance, theatre, visual arts, market vendors and different activities for kids.[33]

What if we use these cultural festivals as successful cultural platforms to embody a Persian cultural archetype in order to support the Persian national identity? Tirgan, Norouz, or any Persian festival is a dynamic cultural representation of Persian values. What about celebrating them in a more dynamic space? What if we provide a familiar temporary framework with the potential to be extended or duplicated for any Persian-related event? And what about recalling some of the lost cultural public events, such as storytelling, and recontextualizing them within the urban fabric of Toronto?

Figure 4. Norouz Festival, Tiragn 2019, Toronto Centre for the Arts

32 Amy Malek 2015.
33 Tirgan Organization 2019.

PART TWO: HOMELAND

Iran: *A Country of Enclosed Gardens*

سعدی اینک به قدم رفت و به سر باز آمد
مفتیِ ملتِ اصحاب نظر باز آمد
فتنه‌ی شاهد و سودازده‌ی باد بهار
عاشق نغمه‌ی مرغان سحر باز آمد
سال‌ها رفت مگر عقل و سکون آموزد
تا چه آموخت کز آن شیفته‌تر باز آمد
وه که چون تشنه‌ی دیدار عزیزان می‌بود
گویی آب حیاتش به جگر باز آمد
خاک شیراز همیشه گل خوشبوی دهد
لاجرم بلبل خوشگوی دگر باز آمد

سعدی شیرازی[۳۶]

Saadi's Farsi poem about his homeland; Shiraz

36 اصغر دادبه2009 .

2.1 Iran: A Country of Enclosed Gardens

Iran is recognized as being the country to have constructed some of the earliest recorded gardens of any ancient civilization.[37] The existence of these gardens may date back as far as 4000 BC.[38] In Persian literature, the word garden, Pardis, originates from the word Paridaiza, which means "walled garden." It is renowned as a bright and fragrant place, with stunning and attractive creatures.[39] As UNESCO defines it, "Natural elements combine with manmade components in the Persian Garden to create a unique artistic achievement that reflects the ideals of art, philosophical, symbolic and religious concepts. The Persian Garden materializes the concept of Eden or Paradise on Earth."[40]

The archetype of Chahar Bagh, or "four-fold," is an achievement of ancient Iran that has been the source of inspiration in the design of many gardens in the West, such as the Alhambra in Spain, and in the East, such as the Taj Mahal in Agra.[41] Chahar means four, and Bagh means garden. In Persian literature, Bagh is considered to be both a physical object and an imaginary natural element. In this poetic imagination, Bagh consists of order and beauty and the relationship between human and nature.[42] The Persian dictionary defines Bagh as "a vast land surrounded by a wall in which fruit trees, flowers, and vegetables are cultivated."[43]

There are around thirty-five nouns and adjectives in the Farsi language and fifty Arabic words that are synonyms for Bagh. The multiplicity of words to explain a specific case in one language illustrates the significance and deep roots of the phenomenon in that language. It also refers to its evolution during the history of civilization in a country.Bagh is a common term in Farsi and Arabic which refers to an elegantly planted, and pleasant place.[43] Baghe-Irani is the term used to specifically describe Persian gardens with their distinctive characteristics and principles. Bagh, Golestan, Bustan, Golzar, Golshan, and Chaharbagh are the most common words in Farsi for describing the gardens as a whole. Bagh is the word which is comparable to the meaning of "garden" in the English language without imposing any specific function or design principle.[44] Following the same terminology, Golestan, Bustan, Golzar, and Golshan are a set of expressions used to convey the unique meaning of "place" that is encompassed by the Persian language. They all mean "a place full of flowers and trees."[44]

باغ:

آبسال، بست، بستان، بهشت، بهشتزار، بوستان، تاکستان، پالیز، پردیس، چمن، چمنزار، خیابان، راغ، رزستان، رضوان، سبزه‌زار، علفزار، فالیز، گلزار، گلستان، گشت، گلشن، گلناک، لاله‌زار، مدونه، مرج، مرغ، مرغزار، مغستان، موستان، مینو، نارنجستان، نخلستان، وارکار

Bagh:

Absal, Bost, Bostan, Paradise, Beheshtzar, Boostan, Takestan, Paliz, Chamanzar, Khiyaban, Ragh, rozestan, Sabzezar, Rezvan, Faliz, Golzar, Golestan, Gasht, Golshan, Golnak, Lalezar, Marh, Marghzar, Narenjestan, Minoo, Nakhlestan, Varkar.

37 Jellicoe 2000.
38 Wilber 1979.
39 Mahmoudi Farahani et al. 2016.
40 UNESCO 2011.
41 Cochrane and Brown 1978.
42 Ali SEIFLOO 2013.
43 Sara Mahdizadeh 2014.
44 Gharipour 2013.

As Elizabeth B. Moynihan describes in Paradise as a Garden,

> "The Iranian plateau is not an auspicious place for a garden. There is very little rainfall-two to ten inches annually during the cold winter months. The annual change in temperature is severe: bitter winters are followed by dry summers and scorching sun. Throughout the year harsh winds buffet the plateau. These conditions make it particularly difficult to cultivate a garden. It is not hard to understand, therefore, why the Persians have always loved their gardens and flowers so passionately…"[45]

The combination of ancient technologies of inhabitation alongside the application of strategies to occupy desert territories creates the symbolic apparatus of these gardens.[46] The Persian garden is a pragmatic example of a built environment that is in absolute harmony with its surrounding environment. The orientation and alignment of the garden's elements in order to capture sunlight, their design principles in providing evaporative cooling in summer, the application of site potentials and its slope toward the water management system, and their geometry based on the city grids are examples of their consistency with their climatic conditions and geographical location.[46] Some characteristics of Persian gardens such as having a cross-axial layout, ordered geometry created by the application of straight lines, symmetry, presence of specific elements such as walls, pavilions, one main water channel, a central pool, and shade trees are common among other Mughal gardens. Unlike European gardens, which are generally intended for promenading, Persian gardens are considered places for contemplation and recreation.[45]

The Zoroastrian division of the universe into four seasons, four parts or the four elements; water, wind, soil, and fire was the source of inspiration in these gardens and the Chaharbagh pattern.[46] The earliest evidence of the Chaharbagh pattern in gardens was recorded in 600 BC in Pasargadae.[47]

45 Moynihan 1979.
46 Khosravi et al. 2017.
47 Mahmoudi Farahani et al. 2016.

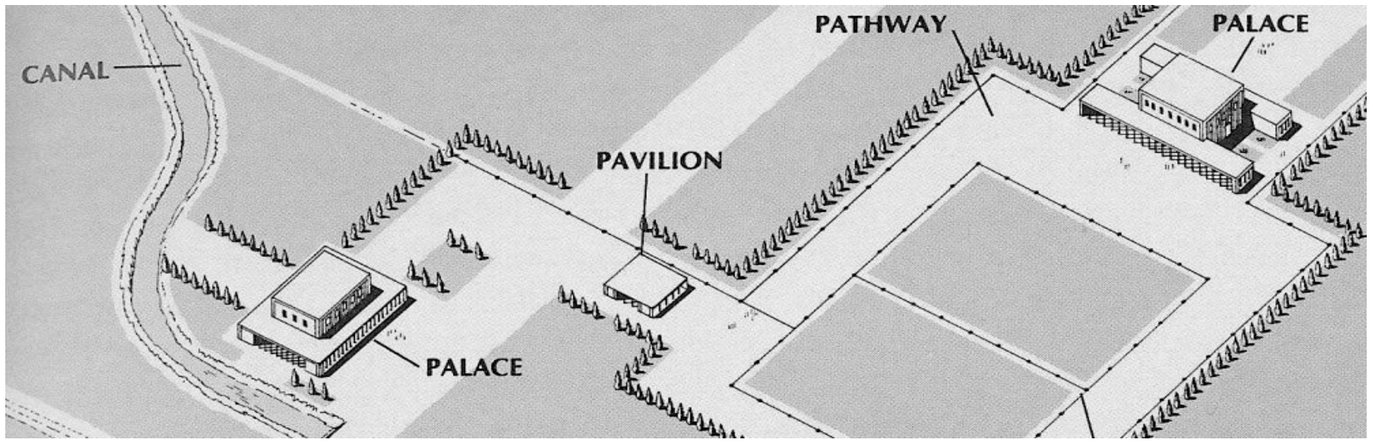


Figure 5. *An overall view of Pasargad gardens during the time of King Cyrus, founder of the Achaemenid Empire*

As Tom Turner describes in his book, Asian Gardens, Pasargadae in city of Fars near Shiraz is an important historical moment in garden history.[48] The report on the excavation by David Stronach in the palace garden of Pasargadae is evidence for the presence of the earliest Chaharbagh in Iran:

> "Recent excavations at both Pasargadae and Susa suggest that the history of the Chaharbagh begins in the Achaemenid period. The clearest evidence comes from the Palace area at Pasargadae. There the surviving elements of several stone water channels help to define the plan of a major garden, which was founded in the later years of the reign of Cyrus the Great (559-30 b.c.)".[48]

Based on Stronach's description, Chaharbagh is a garden design pattern consisting of right-angle intersections of water canals in square basins. Turner suggests that the idea behind this pattern comes from Mesopotamia. He believes the only ancient example of garden design based on irrigation channels is Pasargadae.[48]

48 Turner 2011.

Turner describes the two possible functions of the Chahar Bagh pattern in Pasargadae as follows:

1.The Channel is blocked and floating material is caught, when four channels meet at 90 degrees. Then, the meeting point at the open square clears the blockage and creates a beautiful design feature by providing the opportunity to see the water.

2. A square basin can be used for washing and for drawing water in an encampment garden.49

The Oxford Companion to the Garden has the following definition for "Chahar Bagh":

> "Literally 'fourfold garden' (Chahar, 'four'; Bagh, 'garden'). The earliest Persian gardens, dating back to 2000 bc, were square enclosures divided into four equal parts by intersecting water channels. Throughout the centuries this pattern has been the basis for all gardens designed in the Persian tradition, wherever they may be".[49]

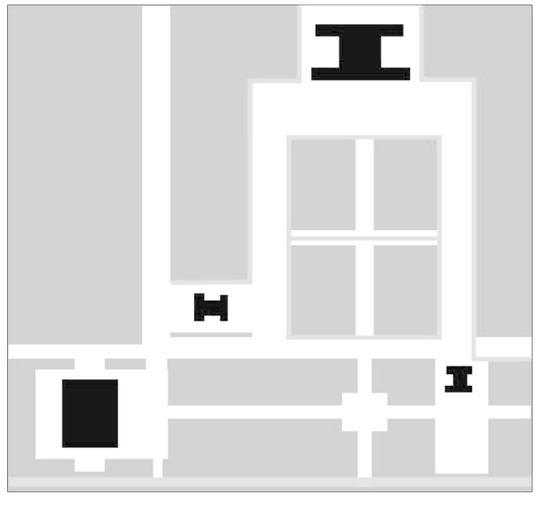


Figure 6. *A reconstruction of Cyrus (or Cambyses) the Great's palace garden at Pasargadae c550 BC.*

The paths are conjectural. Water channels define the space between the two palaces. There are two small pavilions. This is the earliest known remnant of what became the classical Persian garden. It is likely to have been planted with cypress, pomegranate, and cherry. The plan is based on David Stronach's Pasargadae: a report on the excavations, (Oxford, 1978). © Tom Turner

49 Taylor 2006.

The Chahar Bagh archetype remained unchanged for centuries as the main design pattern of Persian gardens and has been employed in other geographical locations ranging from Iran to India.[50] The Chahar Bagh pattern was also used in city planning in Iran.[51]

Some of the design features and patterns in Persian gardens are based on religious beliefs and symbolic expressions.[52] For some, the meaning of the Chahar Bagh archetype is not limited to the geometry of the four-fold layout. Rather, the significant element here is the main axis, which defines the entrance and the pattern of movement through these gardens. The idea of moving forward from darkness to light has deep roots in Persian culture:

> "Reading the Iranian understanding of the world and interpreting their reflections in the Persian garden with single axial pattern reveals that movement in a Persian garden is directed from the entrance to the pavilion according to the world-view of moving from darkness to light and the division of the world into three parts of origin (darkness), destination, and the path to the destination (light)."[53]

(خوانش فهم ایرانی از جهان و تفسیر بازتابهای آن در باغ ایرانی با الگوی تک محوری نشان داد که مطابق با الگوی جهان بینی حرکت از ظلمات به نور و تقسیم جهان به سه بخش مبداء (تاریکی)، مقصد و مسیر رسیدن به مقصد) نور)، در باغ ایرانی حرکت از ورودی به سمت کوشک که مقصد و شاهنشین است بازتاب میابد..)[53]

Persian gardens are enclosed gardens surrounded by masonry walls. These walls are considered the boundary between the hot and dry conditions outside and the cool and shaded area inside.53 Hossam Mahdy, in his article "The Meaning and Significance of the Garden and Courtyard in Arab-Muslim Traditions," compares the wall around gardens in the Middle East with the roof above one's head in the Northern Hemisphere. As he argues, being enclosed and protected by masonry walls is a fundamental element of survival in the hot and arid climate of the Middle East.[54]

Apart from climatic requirements for survival, being enclosed and introverted are the main characteristics of Persian architecture. Through this internal pattern, Persians create a sense of place and a family's definition of home.[54]

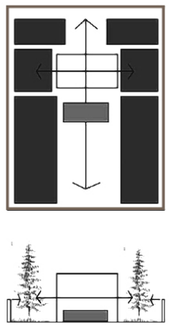


Figure7. *Introverted Persian Garden Layout*

50 Barati, Nasser & Alehashmi, Ayda & Minator Sajjadi, Arman. 2018.
51 Kalantari 2011.
52 Nafisi et al. 2015.
53 Abdul Latif et al. 2017.
54 Hossam Mahdy.

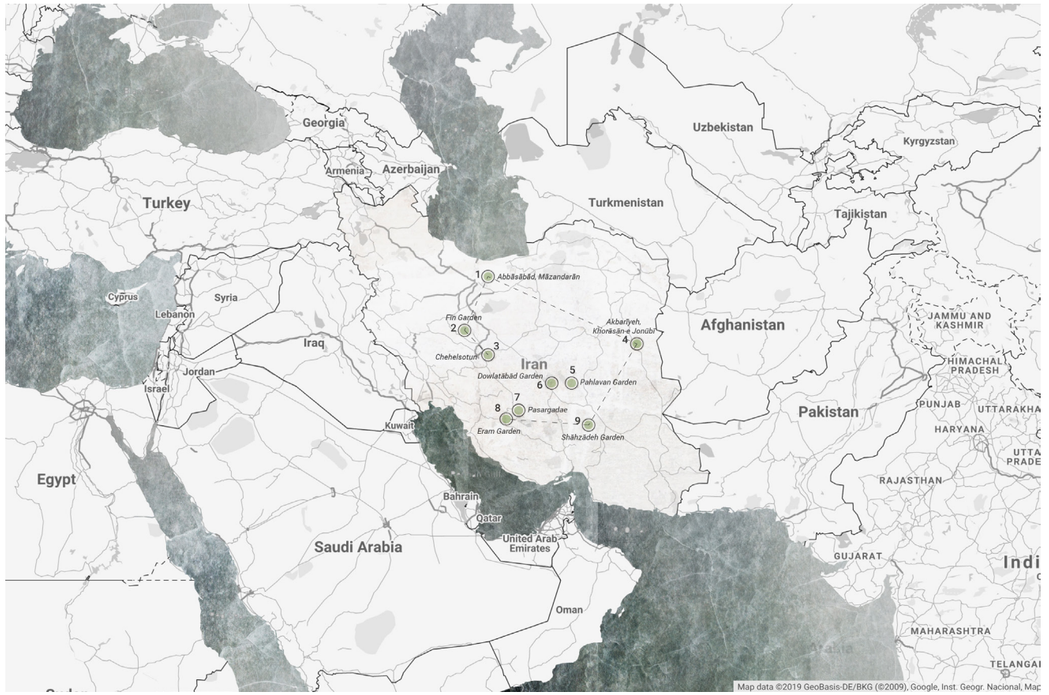


Figure8. *Nine registered Persian gardens with the World Heritage Centre*

Nine Persian gardens are nominated for registration with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. These gardens are located in different parts of Iran, ranging from hot and arid regions to the most humid area in the country. These nine gardens are 1.Pasargadae Garden in Fars, 2. Eram Garden in Shiraz,3. Fin Garden in Kashan, 4.Chehelsotun Garden in Isfahan,5. Abasabad Garden in Mazandaran, 6. Dolat Abad Garden in Yazd, 7. Shahzadeh Garden in Mahan, 8. Pahlavipour Garden in Mehriz, 9. Akbariye Garden in Birjand.[27]

UNESCO identifies three main characteristics of Persian gardens that differentiate them from other garden typologies: the presence of a strong water axis, an enclosure of masonry walls, and the existence of a central pavilion.[55]

۱.باغ پاسارگاد، فارس
۲.باغ ارم، شیراز
۳.باغ فین، کاشان
۴.باغ چهلستون، اصفهان
۵.باغ عباس آباد، مازندران
۶.باغ دولت آباد، یزد
۷.باغ شاهزاده ماهان، کرمان
۸.باغ پهلوی پور، مهریز
۹.باغ اکبریه، بیرجند

55 Karnaval.

Figure9. *Ancient garden of Pasargadae*
From “ICOMOS”2011 , accessed May 21st, 2019, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1372/documents/

Figure10. *Eram Garden , Shiraz*
From “The flowers of Persia” 2015, accessed May 21st, 2019, http://avina.jalbum.net/The-flowers-of-Persia/#20150521-DSC_1159.jpg

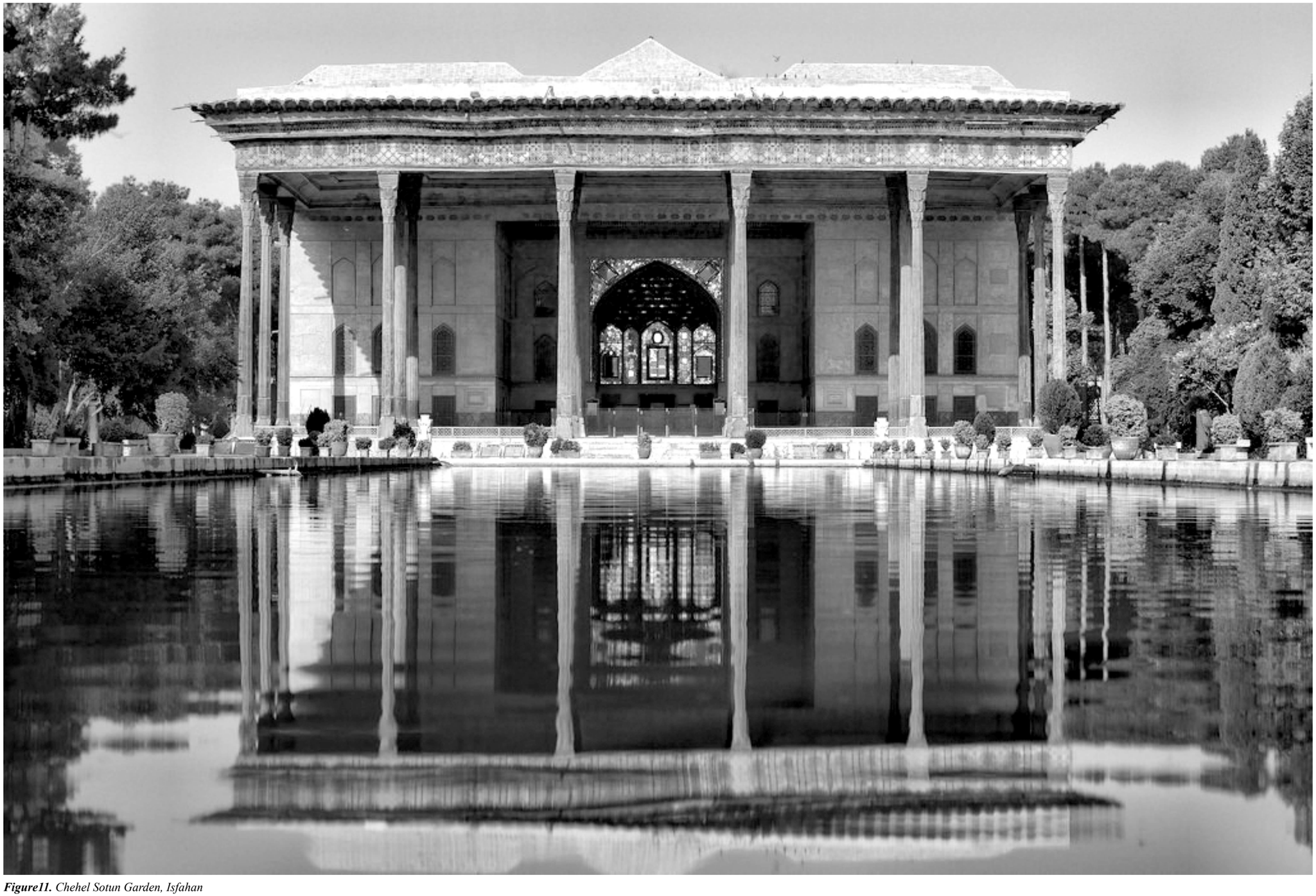


Figure11. *Chehel Sotun Garden, Isfahan*
From “Iran Travelling Centre” 2017, accessed May 21st, 2019, https://www.irantravelingcenter.com/top-things-to_do_in_isfahan/chehel-sotoun/

Figure12. *Fin Garden, Kashan*
From “Persische Paradiesgärten” 2017, accessed May 21st, 2019, http://www.atc.ir/de/products/persische-paradiesgarten/

Figure13. *Abas Abad Garden, Mazandaran*
From “The flowers of Persia” 2015, accessed May 21st, 2019, http://avina.jalbum.net/The-flowers-of-Persia/#20150521-DSC_1159.jpg

Figure14. *Shahzade Mahan Garden, Kerman*
From “Wikidata” was last updated on 2019, accessed May 21st, 2019, https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q619742 From “Wikidata” was last updated on 2019, accessed May 21st, 2019, https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q619742

Figure15. *Dolatabad Garden, Yazd*
From "Beneath Yazd tallest wind catcher in beautiful Dolat Abad Garden" 2014, accessed May 21st, 2019, https://www.chasingtheunexpected.com/beneath-yazd-tallest-wind-catcher-beautiful-dolat-abad-garden/

Figure16. *Pahlevanpour Garden, Mehriz*
From “Pahlavanpour Garden”, accessed May 21st, 2019, https://yazd.today/pahlavanpour-garden/

Figure17. *Akbariye Garden, Birjand*
From “Akbariyeh Garden, Mansion: A Hiśtorical Monument in Iran’s Birjand”, accessed May 21śt, 2019, https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/09/19/1521631/akbariyeh-garden-mansion-a-hiśtorical-monument-in-iran-s-birjand

2.2 The Persian Garden Paradigm

Thomas S. Kuhn defines a “paradigm” as the universally recognized scientific achievements with the potential to frame problems and provide solutions for practitioners and communities.[56] The word “paradigm” can include multidisciplinary criteria, consisting of models, solutions, and social or cultural beliefs.[2] This word is translated in the Persian language as pattern, frame, point of view, percept, approach, mental pattern, and dominant scientific thinking*.[2]

Given an initial placement to Persian gardens to be identified as a paradigm of a cultural form, there is a unique characteristic in these gardens which positions them as a long-lasting “normal science” in Iran. These artistically designed gardens are cultural and historical landmarks, combining the application of natural elements with man-made artifacts to create a sustainable archetype. This dominant pattern has been a source of inspiration in the architecture of courtyard houses, and mosques, in Iran.[57] The reflection of this influence is also clear in Persian art, painting, carpet design, traditional music, and poetry.[58]

Understanding the meaning of the Persian garden paradigm as a social instance and sustainable alternative, not merely as a built environment, is the fundamental approach to studying this paradigm in the context of this project. However, as there is an interrelation between the built environment, meaning, and social sustainability, there is a need to investigate all of these aspects to understand this long-practiced pattern.[59]

What are the inherent characteristics of these gardens that accord them a high historical, cultural, and social status?

The paradigm of the Persian garden has been analyzed by many experts through various categorizations. In this thesis, Azadeh Shahcheraghi’s book, The Paradise Paradigm (2016), is the main reference for understanding the archetype of the Persian garden as it provides a comprehensive classification of these gardens.

* پـــــــارادایم:
الگـــــو، غالب، زاویه‌دیـــــد
برداشـــــت، رویکـــــرد، تفکر علـــــمی غالب
(پارادایم‌های پردیس، آزاده شاهچراغی)

56 Kuhn 1970.
57 Rahmani Miyandehi et al. 2016.
58 Yazdani 2015.
59 Rostami et al. 2015.

The study of the functional aspects, the design principles, and the meaning are the three main clusters of the investigation into the paradigm of the Persian gardens*.[60]

* پـــــــارادایم باغ ایرانـــــی:
نظام‌های کـــارکردی
نظام‌های کالبـــــدی
نظام‌های معنـــــایی

Here, understanding the functional aspects explores the purposes of designing these gardens at different scales and in different geographical locations. As an example, gardens could be private or public based on their specific function and the type of ownership. Meanwhile, the investigation into the design principles develops an understanding of rational needs to apply the fixed physical elements such as the wall, plantings, and water. In addition, evaluating the associated meaning of these gardens reveals the cultural and social bonds between them and the Persian communities during different cultural eras.

2.2.1 Functional Aspects

Providing a green space for inhabitants inside cities was not the main purpose of designing Persian gardens in Iran. These gardens were a response to the need for creating a place to enhance interactions between humans and the natural environment while supporting various functions.[60] Following the proposed classification of the functional aspects of Persian gardens in The Paradise Paradigm, there are three main scales to define the Persian garden typology: architectural scale, urban scale, and the scale of integration with the natural landscape. The following table illustrates different types of gardens based on their scale and their function within the city boundaries. [61]

نظام‌های کارکردی باغ ایـــــرانی:
باغ کوشک، باغ چادر، باغ قلعه، باغ آبـــــ، باغ کاخ، باغ تجیـــــر، باغ تخت، باغ مزار، باغ منـــــزل، باغ میوه، باغ بیشـــه، باغ شکـــــار، باغ ملـی، باغ وحش، باغ شهر

Functional Aspects:

Palace with pavilion, tent garden, palace garden,water garden with lattice walls, flat gardens, tomb gardens, residential gardens, fruit gardens, woodland, hunting gardens, national gardens, zoo-gardens,city as a garden

60 Shahcheraghi,2010
61 Shahcheraghi,2010

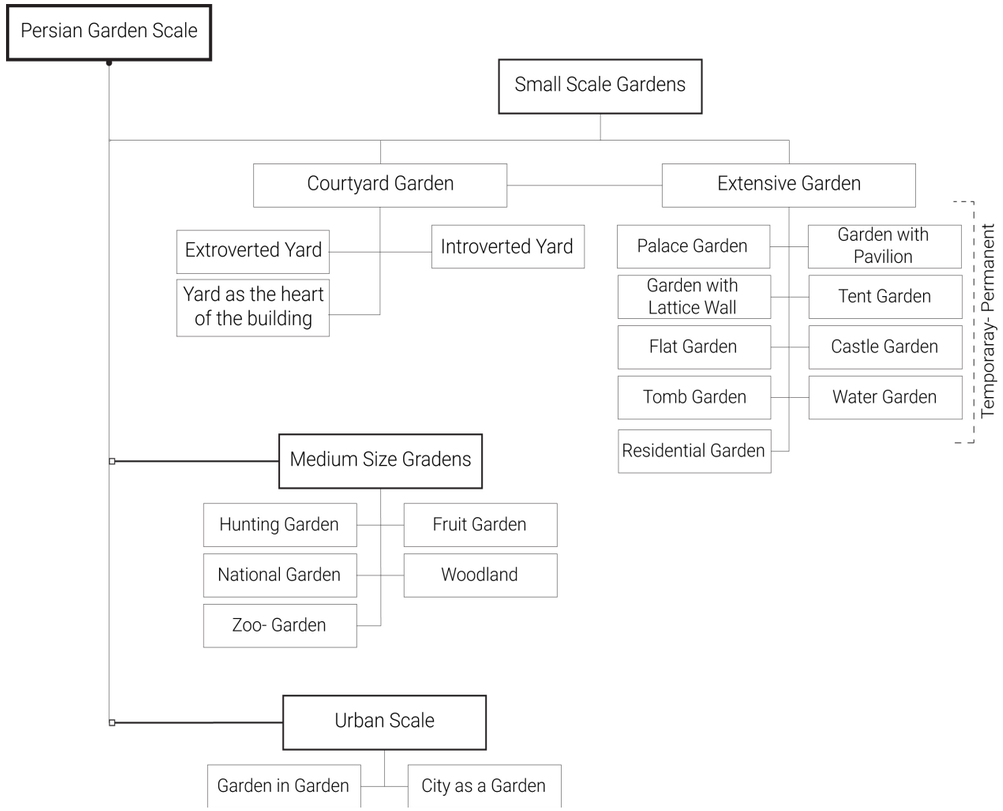


Figure18. *Functional Aspects of Persian Gardens*

2.2.2 Design Principles

Persian gardens have some predefined design principles that make them recognizable from other garden typologies. These repeated features consist of the application of natural, man-made, and intangible elements.[62] Natural elements consist of the water axis and the planting system. Masonry walls, the pavilion, and decorative elements fall under the man-made elements categorization*.[62] The combination of natural elements and man-made components generates some intangible characteristics such as virtual vastness, a sense of unity, hierarchy, and rhythm that emphasize some of the spiritual attributes of these gardens.

* نظام‌های کالبدی باغ ایرانی:
نظام آب، نظام کاشت گیاهان
دیوار و رباغ، کوشک، ساختمان
نظام آوا‌ها

62 Hanachi, P., Eshrati, P., Eshrati, D. 2011.

2.2.2.1 Natural Elements

Water

In the hot and desert climatic conditions of Iran, water is the creator of life. Water has always been a sign of cleanliness and brightness as well as a symbol of purity that was highly valued in ancient Persia.[63] Finding a water source, extracting water, directing it towards the garden, and finding methods of equal water division in a garden all require scientific methods and specific engineering approaches.

*"... The earth dry but green; the air salubrious, though sharp a little... and nothing more complained of by the inhabitants than **want of water."***

Thomas Herbert describes City of Shiraz in 1628 [54]

Water's presence in gardens refers to its functional and decorative roles. Irrigation is the main functional role of water.[64] The square division of the garden and its rectangular geometry with straight lines are the design factors that speed up the flow of water and reduce the amount of wasted water.[64]

The desire to show the constant flow of water through the entire garden generates a specific network of rectangular divisions. These straight networks enhance the irrigation system and planting arrangement.[64] There is a clear relationship between the layout of the garden, the rectangular geometry, and the water supply network. The water movement affects the axial geometry and the composition of the elements in the garden.[64]

The main sources of the water supply in Persian gardens are the water ducts (qanat) and natural springs. Qanats are the traditional water supply systems that use the gravity principle to extract groundwater to the surface through deep shafts and subterranean channels for domestic and agricultural purposes.[65]

قنات:

واژه قنات ریشه ایرانی ندارد. عموما از سوی علمای فرهنگ و زبان سامی و در بی آن از سوی همگان پذیرفته شده که ریشه کلمه قنات از کلمه (کانو) آکادی به معنای نی است که در عبری (کانا) است. واژه فارسی قنات، کاریز است که به اعتقاد برخی مرکب از کن (کندن) و ریز (ریختن و خالی کردن) می باشد.

Qanat

The word Qanat has no Iranian root. It is generally accepted by the scholars of the Sami language that the root of the Qanat word is derived from the Akkadian word "Kano" meaning "Ney" which in Hebrew has become "Kana" and Aramaic to "Kaina". In the course of its evolution, the word "channel" has been introduced in Latin, where it has been referred to as "conduit". (By Arash Nooragai ,Iran University of Applied Science & Technology, 2007)

63 Fekete and Haidari 2015.
64 Mahdi Nejad et al. 2017.
65 Ahmadi et al. 2009 ;

In terms of the decorative function of the water jets, fountains, pools, channels, and waterfalls are used to emphasize the ritual meaning of water in Persian culture.[64] The constant change of the water's flow (i.e. faster, slower, etc.) contrasts with the static and fixed behavior of the other elements such as the wall, pavilion, and the footpath. This circulation of water not only affects the air quality through evaporative cooling and adding moisture but also adds a light-splitting dimension and sound features to the garden.[64]

نظام آب در باغ ایرانی:

کانال های آب (حرکت خطی آب)، فواره ها (صدای حرکت آب و نمایش آب)، حوض آب (انعکاس و ایجاد تمرکز)، سینه کبکی ها (صدای حرکت آب)

Water in Persian Gardens:

Water channels (linear movement of water), fountains(water sound, showing the constant movement of water), pools (reflection and concentration), and waterfalls (sound feature).

Figure19. *Water movement in Fin garden, Kashan*

Figure20. *Still Water, Fin garden, Kashan*

Plants

The climatic conditions of the Iranian plateau and the water shortage issues of the country have always been a strong reason for the appreciation of the greenery in the country. Plants and flowers were sacred before the rise of Islam in Iran. After the spread of Islam, the tradition of respecting plants and flowers has continued to the present day Perhaps, one of the oldest pieces of evidence of the Persian esteem for nature and love of plants is the extant engraved stone of Persepolis in Shiraz.[66] Robert Ker Porter wrote about the role of water and gardening in Persia as follows:

"... in no country of the world does the rose grow in such perfection as in Persia; in no country is it so cultivated, and prized by the natives. Their gardens and courts are crowded with its plants, their rooms ornamented with vases, filled with its gathered bunches and every bath strewn with the full-blown flowers, plucked from their ever replenished stems…" (Sir Robert Ker Porter, 1818)[54]

Known as the symbol of love and mercy, the Damask rose (Mohammadi Rose in Persia) is the national flower of Iran.[67] Some believe that before it was taken to other countries, it was the most indigenous flower of Iran.[67] The tradition of valuing flowers and celebrating their growth has a long history. For instance, the occasion of extracting rosewater from a specific rose grown in Fars used to be a holiday and one of the ceremonies in ancient Persia. Today, this cultural event is called the rose picking festival and is celebrated annually in mid-May.

In a Persian garden, plants are cultivated for different purposes including shade, medicinal benefits, ornamentation, etc.[68] Following the geometrical pattern of the Chaharbagh archetype, the arrangement of trees is a repeated pattern for the cultivation of various plants. For instance, plane trees and coniferous trees like Pinus (elderica) and Cupressus (sempervirens) are fundamental trees in a Persian garden. They are planted along the main axis towards the north and south, providing a pleasant area for walking and escaping from severe sunlight in summer.[69] Different species of fruit trees such as apples, apricots, cherries, figs, mulberries, sweet and sour lemons and limes, oranges, peaches, pears, plums, prunes, and quince are planted in neat arrows parallel to the main axis and adjacent to the surrounding masonry wall.[54]

66 Shahcheraghi, 2010
67 Zamani-Farahani and Fox 2018.
68 Tajaddini 2008.
69 irani behbahani homa. 2006.

The diagram of the Persian garden paradigm at the page 64 provides a comprehensive illustration of the applied rules and the methodology of cultivation in these gardens.

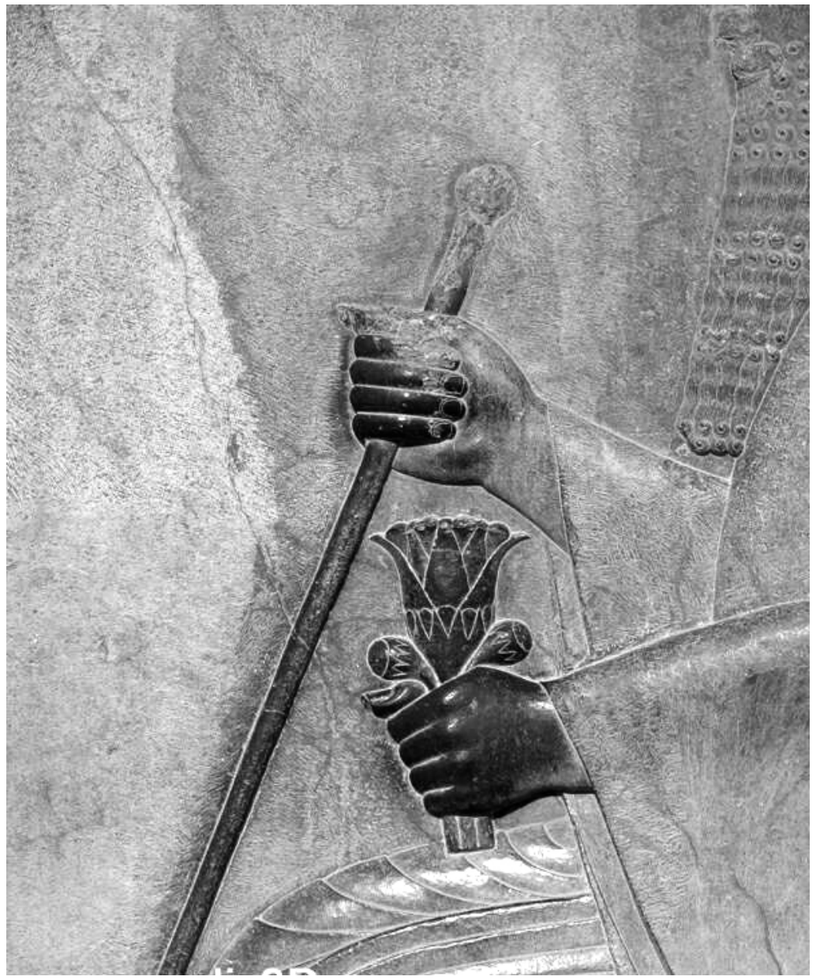


Figure21. *Persepolis, Fars, Iran*

Figure22. *Dolatabad Garden, Yazd*

باغ دولت آباد یـــــزد

2.2.2.2 Man-Made Elements

Masonry Wall

The most established design element of Persian gardens is the masonry wall. All other components of the garden are enclosed and surrounded by this wall*.[70] The Deevâr, which means “wall,” is a symbol of power and privacy in Persian culture. Notably reflected in most of the Persian miniature paintings, these provide a clear illustration of how the gardens are enclosed by a light fence or wall, which is sometimes emphasized to ensure the security of the garden.[71] In addition, these masonry walls are highly effective in protecting the plants from adverse climatic conditions such as storms and hot winds**.[72]

* «دیوار یکی از مهم‌ترین عناصر محرمیت در باغ ایرانی محسوب می‌شود، به طوری که تقریباً تمامی باغهای ایران با دیوار محصور شده‌اند.

** علاوه بر مسأله اقلیمی، ایجاد محرمیت و امنیت از مهم‌ترین عوامل ساخت دیوار و حصار اطراف باغهای ایرانی است.

The enclosed space has been always one of the most important characteristics of Persian architecture. After the acceptance of Islam in Iran, the spatial division between public and private became an established design requirement for any building function in Iran.[73] This pattern provides an introverted typology for designing various spaces based on a hierarchy of public, semi-public, private, and semi-private areas. This combination impacts the outward appearance of the space, which might be undecorated and simple while having a more detailed structure inside and an inward-focused design.[54]

Traditional Iranian houses are examples of this introverted, private architecture, which for centuries were divided into two parts of “inside” and “outside” for two separate users: family and their guests.[70] Privacy can be described as the level of freedom that is given to an individual to determine when, how, and what types of information, in relation to them, is communicated with others.[71] Despite the growing appeal of the ideas of sharing and community engagement, the close relationship between leisure and privacy remains unchanged in Persian culture.[74]

As Shahcheraghi describes in The Paradise Paradigm, the walls have the ability to create distance from everyday life by opening opportunities for people to connect spiritually. This distance necessitates a space for concentration and stress relief from the hectic lifestyle of densely populated urban areas, which can be achieved through the construction of these enclosed gardens. Centrality is one of the key attributes of this type of enclosed and introverted Persian architecture.

70 Shahcheraghi,2010
71 N and MY 2016b.
72 Seyed Amir Mansouri 2016.
73 Memarian 1996.
74 Nafisi et al. 2016.

Traditional houses, courtyards, mosques, schools, bazaars, and caravanserai are examples of spaces with a central area surrounded by other buildings or a wall.[75] In Persian gardens, this centrality is emphasized by the location of the pavilion, where the four main axes meet at one focal point.[47]

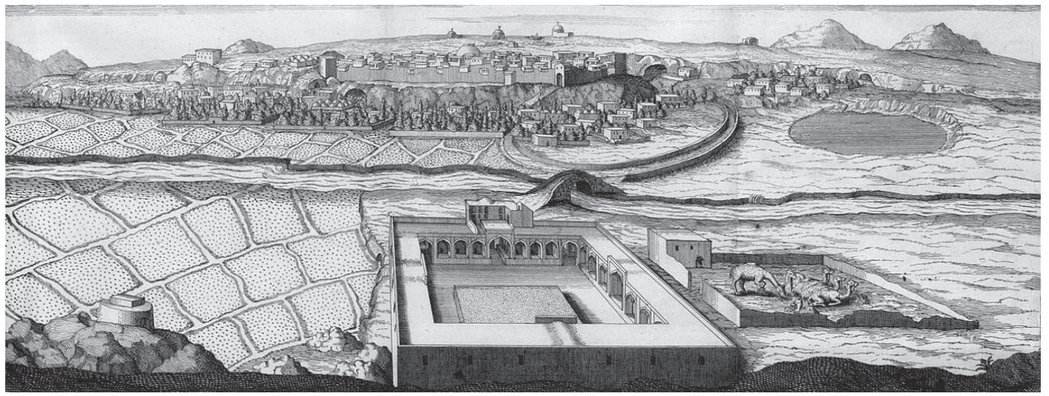


Figure23. *Yazd-Khast Caravanserai, by Jean Chardin*

اصل مرکزیت و درونگرایی
مدرسه خان شیراز

Centrality Feature
Khan Shiraz School

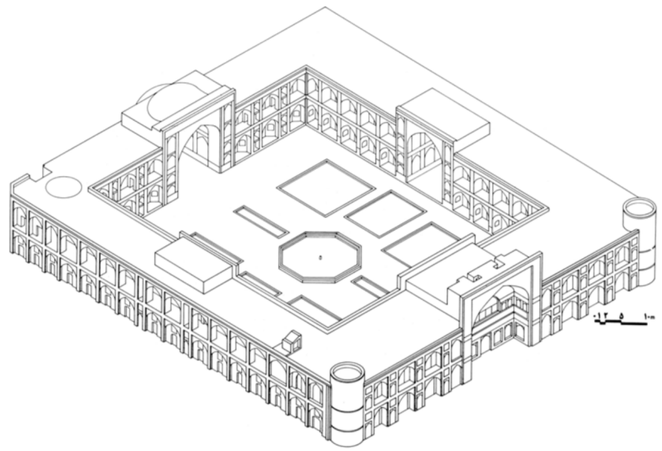


Figure24. *Khan Shiraz School*

75 Hamzenejad Mehdi 2017.

This shows how being enclosed by walls impacts the sense of concentration by creating a boundary for a space. The wall of a garden can be a symbol of various concepts, such as limitation, power, holiness, security, segregation, protection, boundary, property, mercifulness, and wisdom.

The Pavilion

Since its earliest appearance in Pasargadae, the pavilion (Kushk) has been an integral element of the layout of Persian gardens.[76] The pavilion is an extroverted building that is commonly located on the main axis between the centre and the back wall. Aside from creating visual symmetry, the location and geometry of the pavilion emphasize a linear viewpoint and the virtual vastness of the garden. In his book, Persian Gardens and Pavilions, Gharipour defines pavilions as follows:

> "Pavilions are any structures located in a garden that is designed for a restorative purpose, regardless of its function and form. Garden Pavilion can be used as an umbrella term for more than fifteen words in Persian literature and historical documents which have been used to refer to structures such as kiosks, palaces, houses, and places for relaxation in a natural setting."[76]

Here, the English word "pavilion" is applied to cover a wide range of vocabularies used to describe different pavilion typologies in the Farsi language. For instance, the Farsi words Kushk, Emarat, Khane, Ghasr, Talar, Kheymeh, Sardaq, and Khargah are used to describe a building located within the garden based on its function and structure.[76] While some of these words, such as Emarat, Khane, Qasr, Mushkuy, Sarai, Shabestan, Taq, Iwan, and Kakh describe the pavilion as a permanent structure, others, such as Kushk, Kheyme, Sardaq, and Khargah express a temporary function.[76]

Pavilions are typically places for social gatherings, official meetings, and parties. Whether temporary or permanent, these structures not only provide an opportunity for their inhabitants to be part of nature but also provide the context in which they interact with others. The relationship between nature and the built environment can determine the location of a pavilion in a garden. Pavilions are semi-closed spaces with various sizes and floor areas based on the overall proportion of mass and space in a garden.[76]

76 Gharipour 2013.

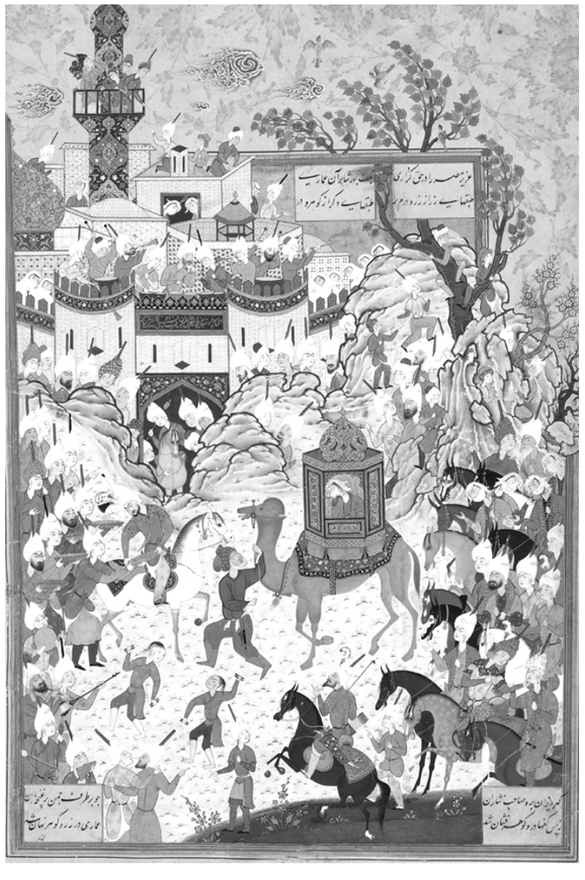
Throughout the history of garden design in Iran, temporary pavilions were transformed into permanent and fixed structures in which residents could live. In other cases, fixed structures were exchanged with temporary ones.[44] A study of Iranian miniature painting shows the portability of the pavilions in Persian gardens:

> "The mobile nature of the pavilion has been so dominant that its equivalent term in Persian, Palun, means packsaddle. The moving pavilion has been depicted in the story of Yousef and Zulaykha in the Haft Awrang, where Zulaykha's pavilion is being carried by a camel."[80]

* کوشک:

ساختمان کوشک به صورت برونگرا است که محل استقرار آن در محور اصلی باغ در فاصله مرکز تا انتهای باغ می باشد.

استقرار کوشک در محور اصلی باغ هم متاثر از ساختار هندسی باغ و فراهم کردن بهترین چشم انداز برای آن است و هم تاثیر گذار بر منظر محور اصلی است به طوری که در هنگام ورود به باغ و گذر از عمارت سردر، عمارت کوشک در محور دید قرار می گیرد.



* Kushk(Pavilion)

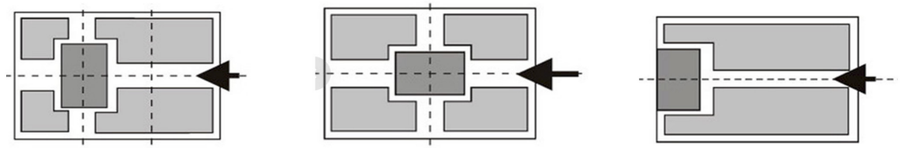
Pavilions are extroverted structures which generally are located on the main axis of the garden between the center to the back wall of the garden.

Pavilion's placement in the main axis of the garden is both influenced by the geometrical structure of the garden and providing the best outlook for it, and it also influences the view of the main axis so that when entering the garden and passing through the entrance, the pavilion is in sight.

Figure25. *Aziz and Zulaykha enter the capital of Egypt and the Egyptians come out to greet them, folio from a Haft Awrang (Seven Thrones) by Jami*

Most pavilions have symmetrical designs with identical elements in their façade.[77] The exact location of these structures in a garden can vary based on the geographical characteristics of the site. In some layouts, the pavilion is located in the middle of the garden. Salman Savoji writes, “in the middle of the garden of trees, there is a palace like a jewel in paradise.” Attar describes the relationship between the garden and the pavilion: “There is a garden in front of the palace which is even better than paradise. [78]

However, there are two other locations for the pavilion in a garden. Sometimes, the building is located on the long axis and attached to the edge of the garden. In other cases, it is located along a line dividing the garden into thirds, with an open view from each side to the whole garden.[79]



The pavilion is located at the middle-third of the garden

The pavilion is located at the center of the garden. It is exactly at the main axis which connects the entrance to the end of the garden.

The pavilion is located at the upper end of the garden.

Figure 26: *The location of the pavilion in Persian gardens*

As a result of these placements, the observer can experience the transition from one space to another. In other words, the pavilion and the garden are merged so that they create a sense of unity and continuity. In this space, there is no separation between the garden and the building. Having a continuous, linear view from the pavilion to the garden and from the entrance to the pavilion creates a limitless connection between the objects in the garden and intensifies the sense of continuity.[80]

Pavilions are tall, with a transparent and open area called iwan that looks into the garden.[44] The position of the pavilion in the highest part of the garden provides a platform for observation and creates a sense of virtual vastness.[84] As Ferdowsi writes, “the city was full of gardens and pavilions, which were high as the sky.” Similarly, Attar writes that “in front of the garden, there is an arch (palace) as tall as the sky.”[81]

77 Shahcheraghi,2010
78 Gharipour 2013.
79 S. Abbasalizadeh Rezakolai 2015.
80 Shahcheraghi,2010
81 Gharipour 2013.

Based on studies of the history and development of Persian gardens, pavilions are generally designed with the four-fold layout having a rectangular, octagonal, or, rarely, circular plans with an average floor area between twelve and twenty-five square metres.[84] These buildings have one, two, and, in a few cases, three storeys.[85]

- **Decorative Elements**

In Persian gardens, decorative elements have a significant role in the design of pavilions and their connection to the planted area. These physical elements are used to create a secondary level of cognition. Alongside providing a picturesque scene, they affect the five senses of the observer simultaneously.[82] For instance, in some cases, the continuity of the water fountains into the pavilion plays not only a distinctive ornamental role, but also adds sound features to the space.[83]

Likewise, the wavy, carved pattern of the water channels represents the motion of water in the garden. Known as Sine-Kabki, the carved marble channels control water movement by reducing its speed to create a visual and aural effect.*[64] The manipulation of the water’s flow by changing the volume, speed, and height can affect the appearance and physical features of the water. Water might move horizontally or vertically, silently or noisily, fall gently or splash messily.[84]

* سینه کبکی:

آبریز، آبگذر، آبشار، فواره های کوتاه و بلند، سطح شیب دار جوی ها با کف سازی قلوه سنگ ها و به خصوص حرکت آب از روی سینه کبکی ها، نواهای گوناگونی از آب را به گوش انسان می رساند.

Figure27. *“Sine Kabki” pattern in Persian garden, Tehran*

82 Shahcheraghi,2010
83 Gharipour 2013.
84 Fekete and Haidari 2015.

Elizabeth B. Moynihan describes the water movement in the Fin garden in Kashan as follows:

> "Beneath the rear wall and just inside the garden, water bubbles up forcefully like a spring, through a large opening in the center of a square pool. Nearby is a second pool which was originally lined with eight-by-eight-inch square blue tiles each of which had a foliated opening in the center… From these pools, the water pours into the stone watercourses which divided the garden"…[85]

Later, she describes her impressions of visiting the Taj-Abad garden:

> "In Taj-Abad garden, the narrow stone watercourses are carved in one of the most familiar scalloped patterns; in Persia, they call it pigeon breast, in India, where the water-chute is called a Chaddar, the pattern is called fish scales."[89]

Apart from the water-related decorative elements, many other components such as decorative tiles, paintings, and carpets have been used in Persian gardens to highlight ornamental features and represent the art and the culture of the country. In some cases, these elements are used to represent the wealth and power of the gardens' owners. Examples of these can be seen in the Hasht-Behesht pavilion, in which the status and the power of the king is highlighted through paintings that depict him entering the foreign ambassadors or battling with enemies.[86]

هشت بهشت اصفهان:

«... کاخ هشت بهشت با تالاری که از هر سو باز است و با چهار عمارت کلاه‌فرنگی در چهار گوشه خود هنوز هم ترکیب اصلی و مختصری از لطف و ملاحت روزگاران گذشته را حفظ کرده است.»

آندره گدار

"... Hasht Behesht with its open hall on all fours and with four mansions in its four corners still retains the original and concise combination of past times."

Andre Godard

Figure28.*Hasht Behesht, Interior Perspective by Pascal Coste*

85 Moynihan 1979.
86 Gharipour 2013.

2.2.2.3 Meaning

Persian gardens are the embodiment of profound and rooted meanings in Persian culture. The meanings associated with these cultural structures are evidence for their frequent regeneration throughout the history of the country.[87] The tradition of garden design has always been an important framework of design and construction at various scales in Persia.[88] Arthur Aphum Pope writes:

> "Indeed, in domestic architecture, change has been slight throughout the thousands of years. The old Iranian house with its grim outer walls and its garden and court within is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And has ever been so ensconced in the national habit that it has controlled the ground-plan of various kinds of public buildings, like the great Islamic madrasas and caravanserais."[92]

Commonly discussed in related studies, the concept of "paradise as a garden" emphasizes the influence of garden design culture in Persia: "With their symbolic trees reaching toward the heavens, the purling water, and fragrant flowers, these gardens are a celebration of life on earth."[92] Known as the most influential pre-Islamic religion in Iran, Zoroastrianism subscribes to praising trees, plants, flowers, and rivers as blessed elements. This religion used to strongly encourage people to plant and cultivate. Water, fire, and plants are sacred, and the land is praised for its power of fertility.[89] In Zoroastrianism, earth, atmosphere, and heaven are the three parts of the cosmos. But what is the nature of heaven? Dastur Manushchihr Goshnajaman writes:

> "Heaven is a lofty, exalted, and supreme, most brilliant, most fragrant, and most pure. It is filled with beautiful existences, the best and the most desirable sacred beings, and all comfort pleasure, joy, happiness, and welfare, more and better even than the greatest and most supreme welfare and pleasure in the world."[88]

The significance of nature continued even after the introduction of Islam. The Quran depicts an imaginary paradise which is a "reward" for the righteous. This Quranic garden has very specific design qualities and components, such as running water, shaded trees, and evergreen plants. Similar to the Persian gardens, the garden illustrated by the Quran is enclosed, with clear boundaries, and a main entrance. [89]These heavenly gardens are considered as conceptual models for the real gardens built in Persia.

87 Shahcheraghi,2010
88 Moynihan 1979.
89 Gharipour 2013.

The significance of the Persian gardens for Iranians has always influenced literature and poetry.[90] Gharipour believes that "poetry's capacity to describe actual gardens and their natural elements, the gardens' unique quality comparable with tangible beings such as beloved, and the significance of gardens in cultural affairs" are the three discrete reasons behind the extensive presence of the garden in Persian poems.[91] The Chahar Bagh or four-fold layout is also rooted in the belief of Iranians of four as a holy number.[94] This quadral concept can be seen in climatic divisions, history, social structure categorization, traditional medicine, literature, poetry, art, traditional music, calligraphy, carpet design, and architecture. [94]

باغ بهشت

دومین فرش مهم ایرانی در بریتانیا، بافت اردبیل

فرش با طرح باغی، در دوره صفوی رواج خاصی داشته است، جالب آنکه از این دوران به عنوان دوران باشکوه هنر باغ سازی ایران (چهارباغ های اصفهان) نیز یاد میشود.

در طرح فرشهای باغی علاوه بر قالب کلی باغ، جوی ها و باغچه ها به صورت منظم در متن اثر قرار گرفته اند و معمولا دو محور اصلی به صورت دو جوی آب زمینه قالی را به چهار بخش تقسیم کرده است.

Persian "Wagner" Garden Carpet, believed to be the second most important Iranian carpet in the UK. The carpet's unique and beautiful design is of a four quartered garden divided by water channels. The symmetrical layout and bordered water channels are not only reminiscent of Safavid royal gardens in Isphahan, but also resemble descriptions of Gardens of Paradise in the Qur'an.

Figure29.*Garden of Heaven, A unique Persian carpet in the Burrell Collection*

90 Shahcheraghi,2010
91 Gharipour 2013.

2.2.3 Analysis of the Persian Garden Paradigm

The archetypal spatial configuration of Persian gardens, their various functions, and their meaning in Persian culture are the main contributors to the formation of the Persian garden paradigm. In this study, the content analysis method is applied to provide a comprehensive understanding of this paradigm and its subdivisions. Subsequently, the same pattern of analysis is used to interpret the characteristics of three selected historical gardens in Iran. Each case in this study is from one of the main design layouts associated with the Persian garden paradigm. Typically, they are active gardens to which different methods of conservation have been applied throughout their history, remaining unchanged in terms of their original pattern.

Fin is one of the nine registered gardens with UNESCO as Iranian cultural heritage sites. Located in a small village of Fin, in Kashan, the garden is designed based on the Chaharbagh archetype with the pavilion at the intersection of the main pathways. The following theoretical analysis based on the initial studies illustrates how the paradigm of the Persian garden has been applied in different aspects of its design.

باغ فیـــــن کاشان
Fin Garden, Kashan

The Dolat-Abad Garden in Yazd is a prominent example of a composition with natural and man-made elements. Despite its location in the central, sandy deserts of Iran, it is extensively vegetated through innovative water management systems. To account for Yazd's occasionally severe climate, the garden is protected by the world's tallest masonry wind catching structure.[92]

باغ دولـــت آبادیـــــزد
Dolatabad Garden, Yazd

El-Goli (Shahgoli), located in Tabriz, is the only water garden in Iran. The garden resulted from the restoration of an existing pool and the construction of a two-story pavilion in the middle of the pool. The pool is 200 by 317 meters, with a depth of four meters.[93] In 1930, this garden was re-purposed into a public park by the municipality of Tabriz.[94] This functional change influenced the social character of this garden in the city such that it has become the most significant recreational public place of Tabriz.

باغ ایـــــل گـــــلی تبریـــــز
Elgoli Garden, Tabriz

92 UNESCO 2011.
93 N and MY 2016a.
94 Pouya et al. 2015.

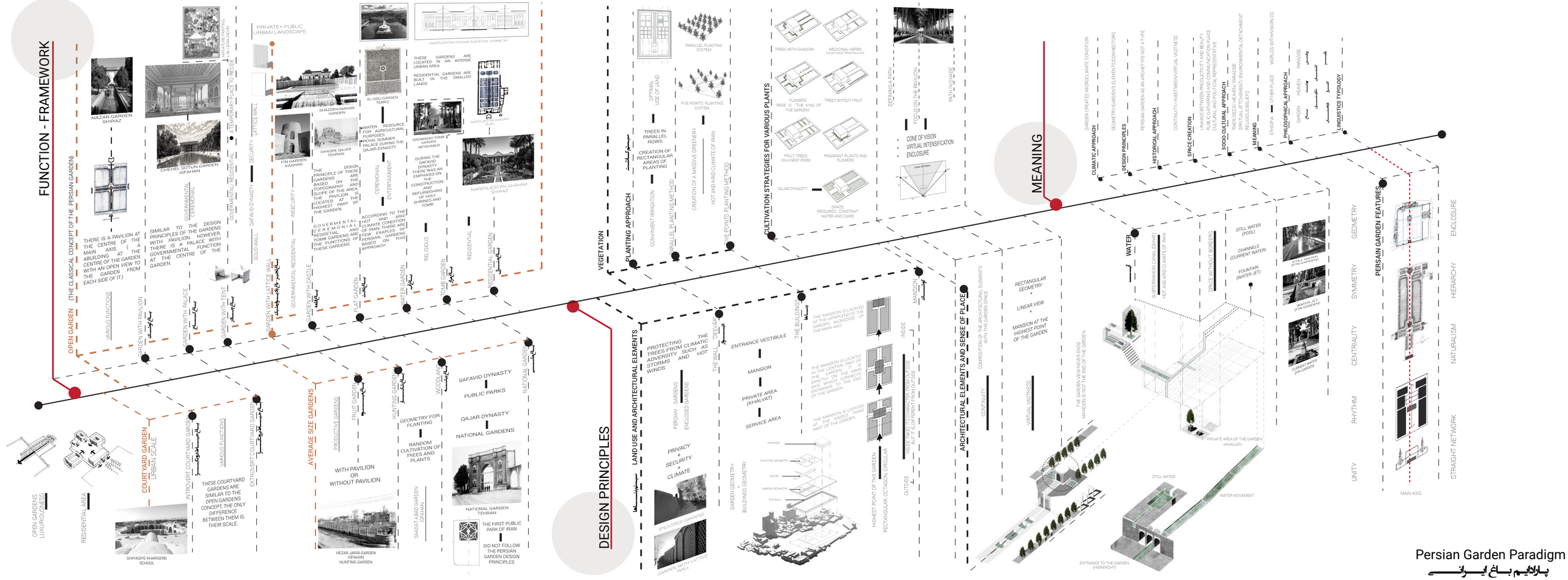


Diagram 1.*Persian Gardens Paradigm*

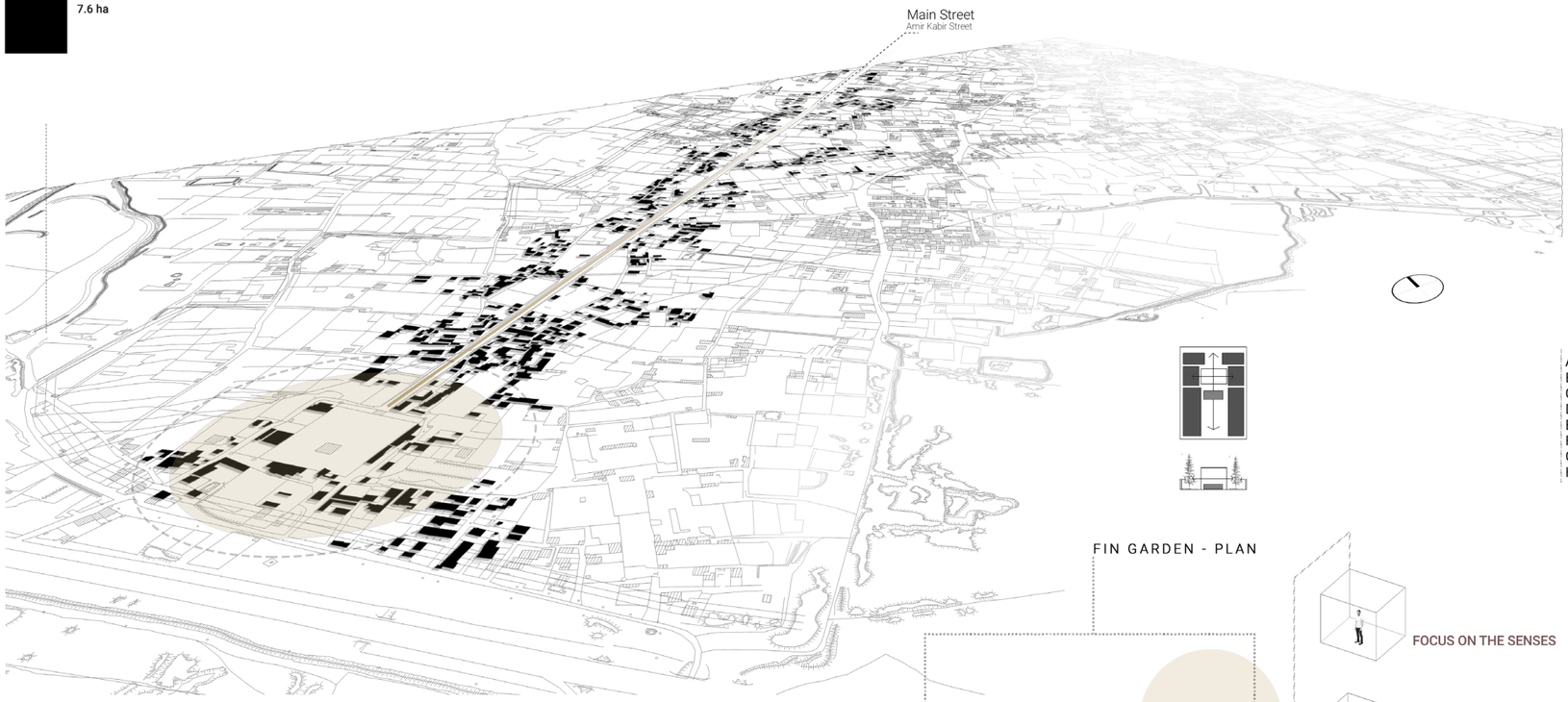
Persian Garden Paradigm
پارادایم باغ ایرانی

Fin Garden , Kashan, Iran

باغ فین کاشان

Fin Garden
Kashan- Iran
7.6 ha

باغ فین کاشان - ایران



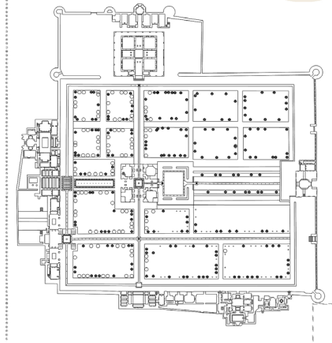
Residential Area

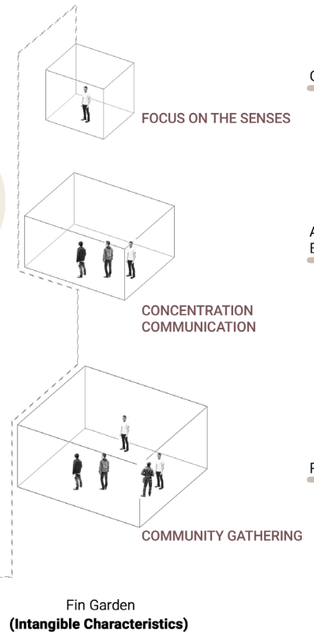
Persian Garden/ Fin Garden

Fin Garden in Kashan, is one of the nine registered Persian gardens in UNESCO. This garden is built around the first half of the 16th century, in the first period of the Safavid dynasty in Iran.

Section- Fin Traditional Spa

FIN GARDEN - PLAN

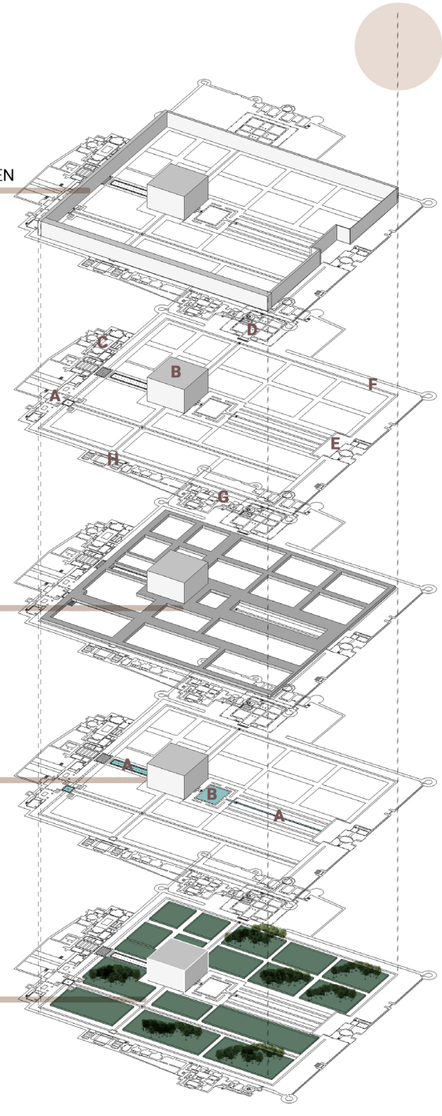




Fin Garden
(Intangible Characteristics)

MASONRY WALL
AROUND THE GARDEN
(Hierarchy)

A. Water Fountain
B. Pavilion
C. Karim Khan Mansion
D. Family House
E. Entrance Building
F. Wall
G. Traditionsl Spa
H. Kolah Farangi Mansion



Exploded Axo- Fin Garden
(Tangible Characteristics)

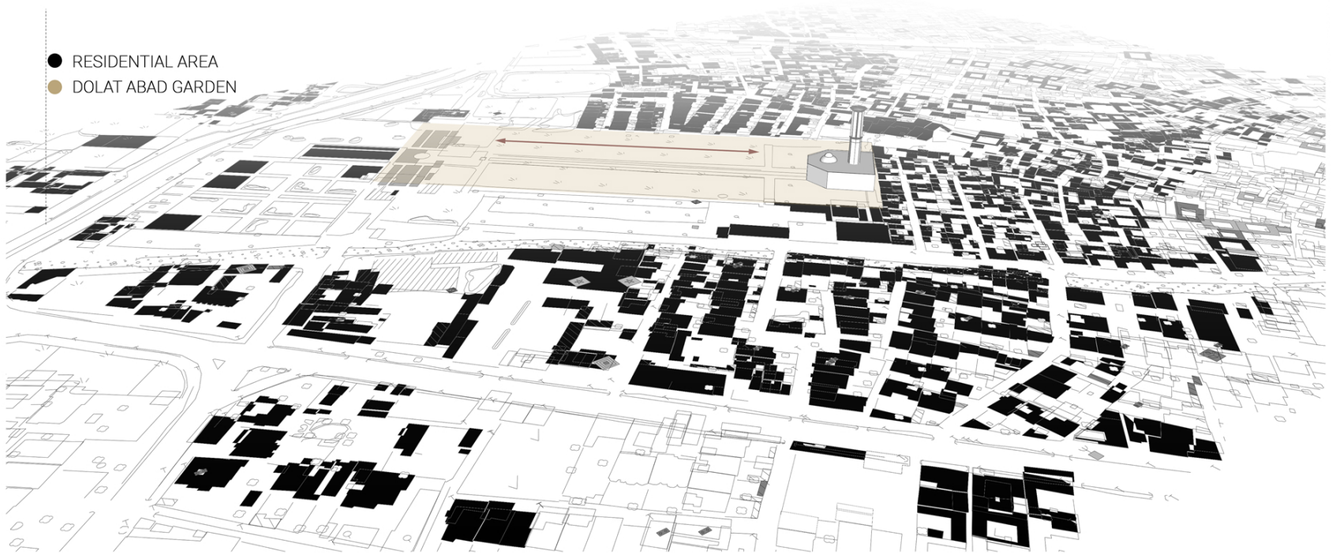
Dolatabad Garden , Yazd, Iran

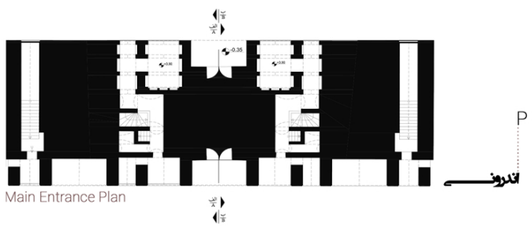
باغ دولت آباد یزد

Dolat Abad Garden
Yazd- Iran

باغ دولت آباد
یزد- ایران

Bagh-e Dolat Abad is one of the monuments remaining from Zands dynasty and with its area of about 40,000 square meters, is regarded one of the most famous gardens of Yazd city. Although the garden was initially constructed outside the wall of the historical city of Yazd, urban developments during recent decades have led to the integration of the Bagh-e Dolat Abad iwth the Yazd city fabric.



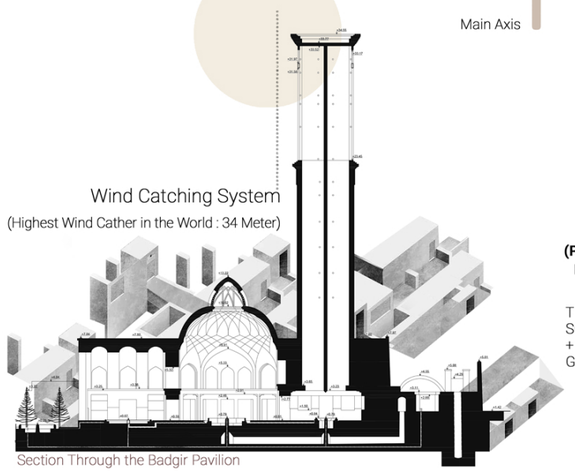

Main Entrance Plan

بیرونی
PRIVATE + PUBLIC SPACES
اندرونی

Badgir Pavilion

Yazd's Tallest Badgir/ Dolat Abad Garden

Internal Courtyard

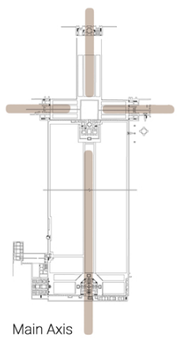


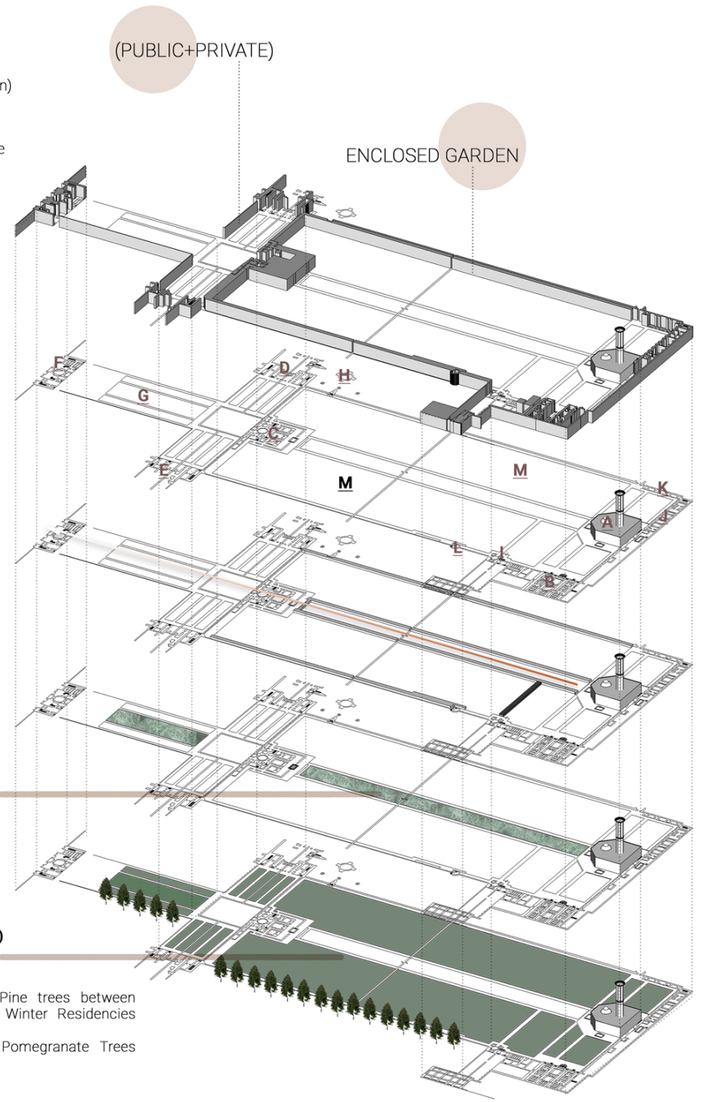
Section Through the Badgir Pavilion

Public:
Sabat (Archway)
Ayeneh Mansion

Private:
Summer and Winter
Mansions

A: Badgir Pavilion (Summer Pavilion)
B: Haram Sara (Ladies Pavilion)
C: Main Entrance
D: Building at the Western Entrance
E: Ayeneh Talar
F: Northern Entrance
G: Pool
H: Water Cistern
I : Entrance to the Private Garden
J: Kitchen
K: Servants Quarters
L: Defensive Tower
M: Planting Area


Main Axis



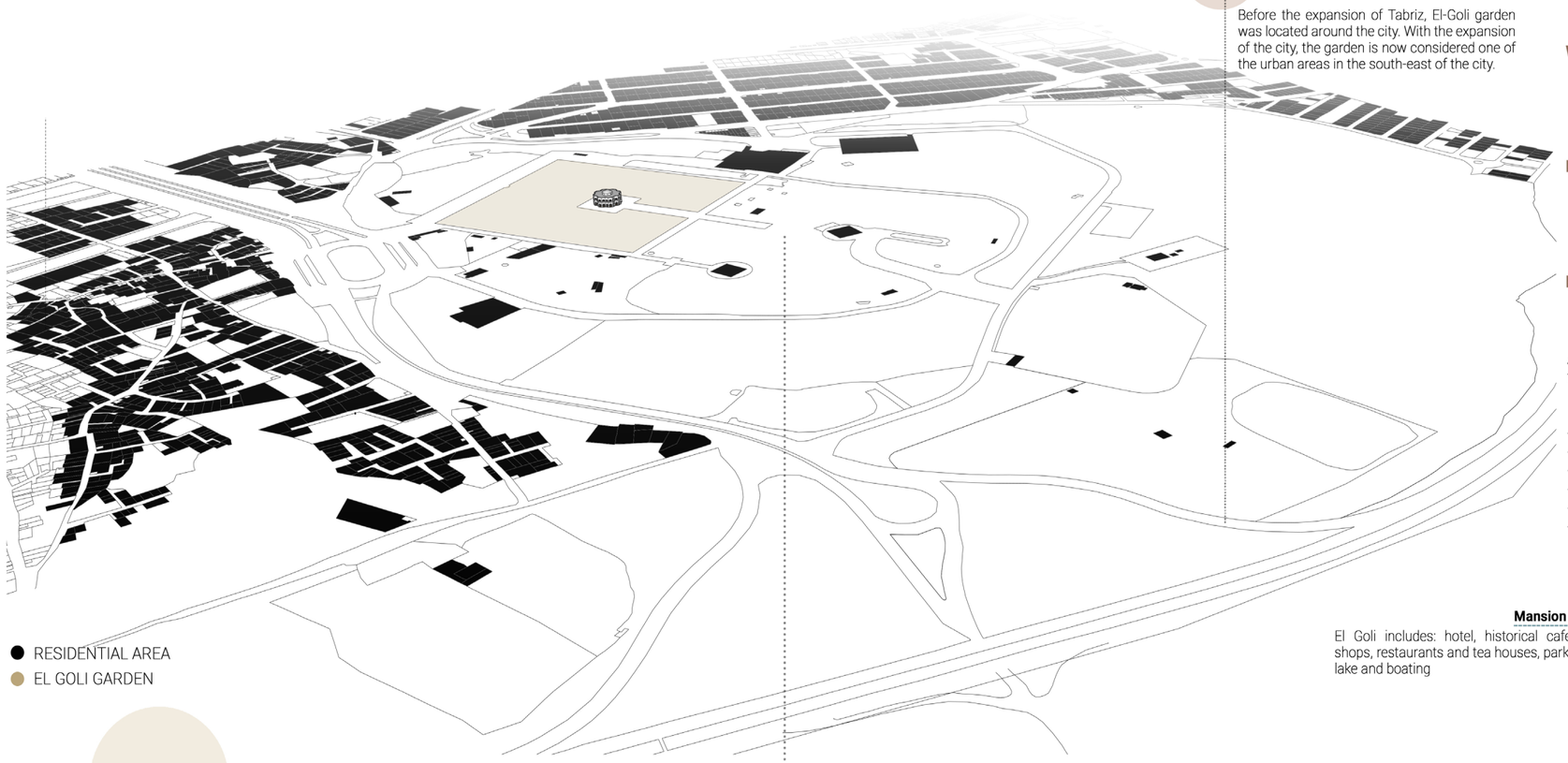
Exploded Axo-Dolat Abad Garden
(Tangible Characteristics)

El-Goli Garden , Tabriz, Iran

باغ ایل گلی، تبریز

El-Goli Garden
Tabriz-Iran

باغ ایل گلی
تبریز ایران



RESIDENTIAL AREA
EL GOLI GARDEN

Easy Access

Before the expansion of Tabriz, El-Goli garden was located around the city. With the expansion of the city, the garden is now considered one of the urban areas in the south-east of the city.

Water resource for agricultural proposes

Royal summer palace during the Qajar dynasty

Public park during the Pahlavi dynasty

According to a study by a group of researchers the reasons for visiting this garden are listed:

- Flora and fauna	10%
- Symbol od nature	31%
- Place of leisure and recreation	25%
- Heritage	14%
- Place for social activities	16%
- Place for public meeting	4%

CHARACTERISTICS:

Rectangular Geometry

Hierarchy

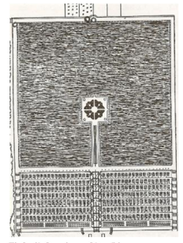
Four-Fold Layout

Straight Network

Planting Axis Alongside of the Mian Axis

El-Goli Garden | Credit: @hadiparlaq

Panoramic view of Tabriz, El Goli



El Goli Graden- Site Plan

The mansion of garden is built on an straight axis. It is surrounded by water and built in the middle of the artificial pool. The overall height of the mansion is 12 meters with the main entrance at the centre of the main axis of the garden

Mansion

El Goli includes: hotel, historical cafe shops, restaurants and tea houses, park, lake and boating

Pool (200×317, 4 m)

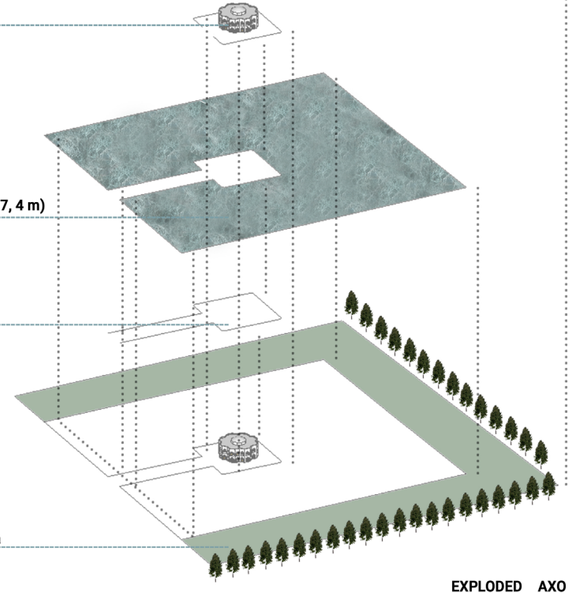
The pool is surrounded with l6 meters of pavements and tall trees in further side of pavements as a fence.

Main Axis

During Pahlavi dynasty the palace was reconstructed and a pass-way was built to connect the island to the sidewalks.

- sycamore trees
- Coniferous trees
- Flowers
- Elms
- silverberries

Planting Area



EXPLODED AXO
EL-GOLI GARDEN

2.2.4. Analysis of the Case studies

The results of this analysis highlight the implementation of the Persian garden paradigm in the selected cases. This is an important characteristic of the historical gardens, which have remained consistent in their design even after the application of different conservation methods. However, a number of studies reveal that in some cases, political shifts have dominated the conservation approach, resulting in changes to the gardens' material, symbolic, and social character.[95] This issue has been widely discussed as a common problem affecting the conservation of many historical sites in Iran.[95]

It is important to note that even with political interference regarding the conservation of historical gardens, the archetypal pattern and main design elements survived unaltered. However, the functional aspects and their meaning have evolved during Iran's history. For instance, the Fin garden served as a private garden for the king during the Safavid dynasty, but has since undergone different material and socio-cultural changes and been transformed into a public place that responds to new social needs. In this case, the main architectural elements and the design pattern were reinterpreted based on the original paradigm with some minor changes.[96]

In this research, it was of interest to investigate whether the persistence of the Persian garden paradigm, despite external sociopolitical changes, has remained consistent in other cases. The analysis of the Dolat-Abad garden in Yazd and Elgoli garden in Tabriz showed that different functional and socio-cultural layers applied to them. The Dolat-Abad garden was constructed according to Nader's orders (Iran's King) during the Afshariye dynasty for private use. It was both a fruit garden and a government garden. While it experienced many alterations to its cultural setting and surrounding environment, the garden and its main components have not changed from its original layout.[96] The only visible change is the public entrance gate located in the southern wall, which was added in response to the development of the city and its growing population.

95 Sara Mahdizadeh 2014.
96 ICOMOS 2011.

Similarly, in Elgoli, the functional changes in the original layout have affected the socio-cultural role of the garden in Tabriz, transforming it from governmental use to a public park.[97] One of the major reasons for analyzing this garden was the presence of some differences between its layout and the original Persian garden paradigm. The result of the analysis provides a clear understanding of how the standard features of the main paradigm, such as centrality, the pavilion, axial view, geometric order, and the combination of the natural and man-made elements have been applied in its design layout.

The results of these three case studies (Fin garden in Kashan, Dolatabad garden in Yazd, and Elgoli garden in Tabriz) tie in well with previous study on the consistency of the Persian garden paradigm throughout the history of garden design in Iran. This paradigm has survived for many decades and become an archetypal component of Persian art, culture, and architecture.

97 Naima 1392 [2013.

2.3 Persian Gardens as a Platform for Cultural Celebrations

A large number of existing studies in the broader literature have examined the cultural character of Persian gardens and their impact on the social life of Iranians from their first appearance in the Persian context. Some believe that gardens are one of the main settings for Iranians' daily life, social events, and administrative affairs due to their consistent presence in Persian culture.[98]

Gharipour writes of their socio-cultural role as follows: "Gardens are frequently used as the main setting for motion, movement, interaction, and exchange in the court, as well as religious meetings and gatherings among spiritual masters and their students." However, religious ceremonies were less commonly celebrated due to the lack of patronage.[98]The original concept of Persian gardens emerged from hunting parks and pleasure gardens in Mesopotamia and Achaemenid.[98]The layouts of these earlier spaces present proof of the later gardens' purpose as vibrant places to escape from the hot and severe climatic conditions of Iran.[99] A closer look at the tradition of the hunting gardens reveals their gradual decline after the spread of Islam. In this period, pleasure gardens were designed based on the Quranic paradise as places for recreation, leisure, and joy. [98]

Apart from their multifunctionality as a places for leisure or as a source of income, as in agricultural production fields, gardens may also encompass administrative functions. These gardens and their pavilions are consistently described by writers and travelers as places for official meetings and ceremonies. An example of these can be seen in the writings of Eskandar Beyk, Shah Abbas's biographer, in which he describes the Saadat Abad garden as a palace for royal parties, official meetings, and receptions of foreign ambassadors. Babur also wrote in his memoirs about his passion toward his gardens. He described his enjoyment from sitting near the water, drinking wine, and fishing while he was waiting for his administrative meetings.[98]

Persian poetry has always been a platform for poets to describe the social life inside Persian gardens. Over time, an large number of poems has referred to the music ceremonies and drinking parties that used to occur in the pavilions. Ferdowsi repeatedly highlights these functions of royal ceremonies and parties. He writes, "The king ordered them to prepare food and wine and decorate the building in the garden," and elsewhere: "From the iwan, they went to the garden; they played music there for three weeks."[98]

98 Gharipour 2013.
99 Khoshouie and Alborzi 2016.

Depending on seasonal weather conditions, various national ceremonies were and are celebrated in Persian gardens.100 For instance, Nowruz, the new-year celebration, which takes place in March, always provides a distinctively Iranian and national reason for festivities of different kinds.[101] Some believe that Islam coincidentally gave Nowrouz a polished appearance and made it firm and protected from any decadence.[102]

Known as the first builder of Persian gardens, the emperor of Achaemenid, Dariush, constructed a royal complex as a ceremonial capital.[103] It is generally believed that the reason behind this massive construction was the observation of the Nowruz festival. As Moynihan writes: "Preparations for the feast are depicted in relief on the ceremonial staircases of the audience chambers. On one parapet, the officers of the king's guard are seen chatting in line and carrying flowers in procession." [103]

*Nowruz means '**new day**' and takes place on the spring equinox, typically falling on March 20 or 21 in the Western calendar.*

Pre-Norouz events such as Chahar Shnabe Suri, or the Fire Jumping Festival, are celebrated annually in some of the gardens. A painting from decades ago shows how the Fire Jumping Festival was celebrated at the Chehel Sotun garden during the Safavid period.

*It is a **festival** that has been celebrated in Iran for over 2,500 years and marks the end of winter and beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere.*

***Figure30.**Chahar-Shanbe Suri Festival, Chehel-Sotun Garden, Isfahan*

100 Sara Mahdizadeh 2014.
101 Martin and Mason 2006.
102 Shariati and Abedi 1986.
103 Moynihan 1979.

The modern period in Iran began in 1796, when Tehran was designated the capital city by Aqa Mohammad Khan, founder of the Qajar dynasty.[104] While this dynasty lasted, Tehran grew in size and population, and new palaces, gardens, mosques, and administrative buildings were constructed to serve people and represent the power of the king. Between 1848 and 1896, approximately ten new gardens were constructed in Tehran. In this period, the nomadic lifestyle of the king included moving between summer and winter peri-urban gardens.[105]

In 1925, the political regime changed from Qajar to Pahlavi. Unlike in the previous period, the Pahlavi king was less ambitious in Persian garden construction. Instead, there was an extensive investment in urban development projects. In the second half of the 1940s, due to a dramatic increase in oil revenue, the government decided to highlight Iran's cultural heritage in order to change the West's perception towards it. Meanwhile, there was a shift from the preservation of pre-Islamic buildings to restoring the country's remarkable architectural heritages such as Persian gardens built in the Qajar era.[106]

With the help of Iran's queen, the Ministry of Culture and Art bought and reused some of these gardens in 1967, beginning reform towards the preservation of Qajar-era Persian gardens. The transformation of the Davoudieh garden into an orphanage and Qasr-e Yaghut into a hospital are examples of this new approach. Moreover, the garden of the Egyptian Embassy, which was previously the garden of Qavam al-Saltaneh, was bought back by the Queen's Foundation in 1972 and became a museum of glassware and ceramics (the Abgineh Museum). For the 2,500-year celebration of the Persian Empire during the Pahlavi dynasty, a great number of Persian gardens were renovated and prepared for hosting this important event. However, after the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the approach towards cultural heritage conservation changed, diminishing in importance due to the tendency of the Islamic regime to marginalize royal heritage. This extremist point of view neglected the conservation and rehabilitation of Persian gardens by representing them as anti-Islamic icons. In 1980, two years after the Revolution, the war between Iran and Iraq started. This was a period of political turmoil that caused many problems surrounding cultural heritage preservation. Many cultural heritage sites and Persian gardens were occupied by authorities for military purposes.[105] Nothing changed until 1997 to 2005, when there was a request for a survey about the history of Iran with the allocated fund.[106] In 2010, nine of the most outstanding Persian gardens were registered as UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHS).

104 Vahid Rashidvash 2012.
105 Sara Mahdizadeh 2014.
106 Mahdizadeh and Rajendran 2019.

In recent years, due to increasing awareness about sustainability issues, economic considerations, the socio-cultural impacts of the gardens, and the esteem enjoyed by any sort of historic built fabric, many unused gardens are being frequently examined to host a new suitable function.

As a result, conservation policies regarding the rehabilitation of the Persian gardens have been modified. An increasing number of studies have suggested that conservation methods should move beyond traditional museum-like approaches and material aspects in order to promote the vibrant character of these gardens as "living heritage" and to ensure the continuity of their social life.[107] This concept has been used in several studies to assess if national festivals such as Nowruz can offer an opportunity to reconnect these gardens with their dynamic life cycle.

Designed by fourteen groups of artists, Nowruz(2018) 2019 was celebrated through public events in Tehran's Persian gardens. These free events were planned with the aim of connecting families, and especially children, to their history, culture, and the surrounding environment. An example of these was the "Nowruzgah" event which aimed to raise children's cultural awareness and spark their curiosity about Persian gardens and their socio-cultural role during the history of Iran.

پروژه شهری بازل روبرو در پی یافتن ویژگی هایی از محیط است که آگاهی کودک را نسبت به پیرامون اطراف خود بالا می برد و در عین حال ترجمان فضای سه بعدی واقعی، به بازنمود دو بعدی از واقعیت، بر خلاقیت کودک اثر گذار خواهد بود.

Ruberu puzzle by Monir Zarnrgar seeks to identify characteristics of the environment that raise the children's awareness of their surroundings, while practicing real-life 3D interpretation.

Figure31.*Ruberu Puzzle by Monir Zarnegar, Ferdows Garden, Nowruz 1398(2019)*

107 Shahcheraghi,2010

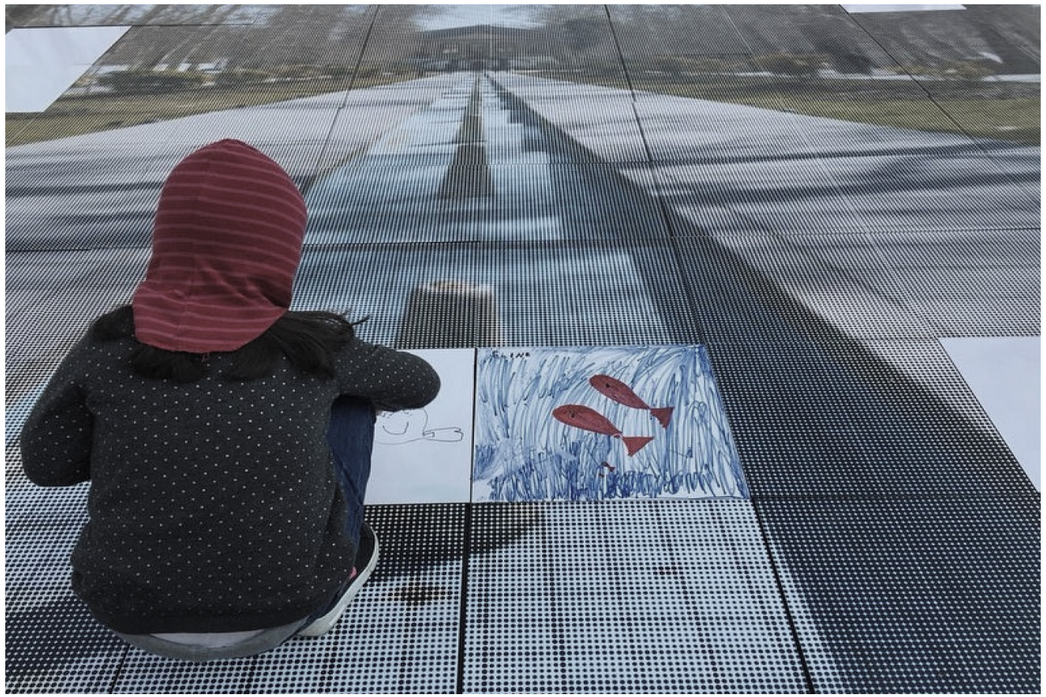


Figure32, 33.*Ruberu Puzzle by Monir Zarnegar, Ferdows Garden, Nowruz 1398(2019)*

کودکان ونوجوانان بامشارکت دراین رویدادها، توانستند یک روز کامل رادرکنارخانواده هایشان درفضای عمومی ودرتعامل باسایر شرکت کنندگان سپری کنند.

By participating in these events, children and adolescents were able to spend a full day together with their families in the public space while interacting with other participants.

دراین پازل ۱۴۲ قطعه ی ۴۰در۴۰ سانت برروی زمین چیده شده است. درابتدا کودک به کشف تصویرواقعی روبرویش (باغ فردوس) برروی پازل میپردازد، سپس بابرهم زدن پازل ازابتدا به صورت گروهی شروع به چیدن، یاتخیل خودرابرقسمتهایی ازآن نقاشی میکنند.

In this puzzle there is 142 pieces on the ground. At first, the child discovers the real picture in front of him (Ferdows garden) on the puzzle, then by disrupting the puzzle, they re-imagine the scene in a group.

Figure34.*Growth Movement, designed by Archi Kids, Pantea Eslami*

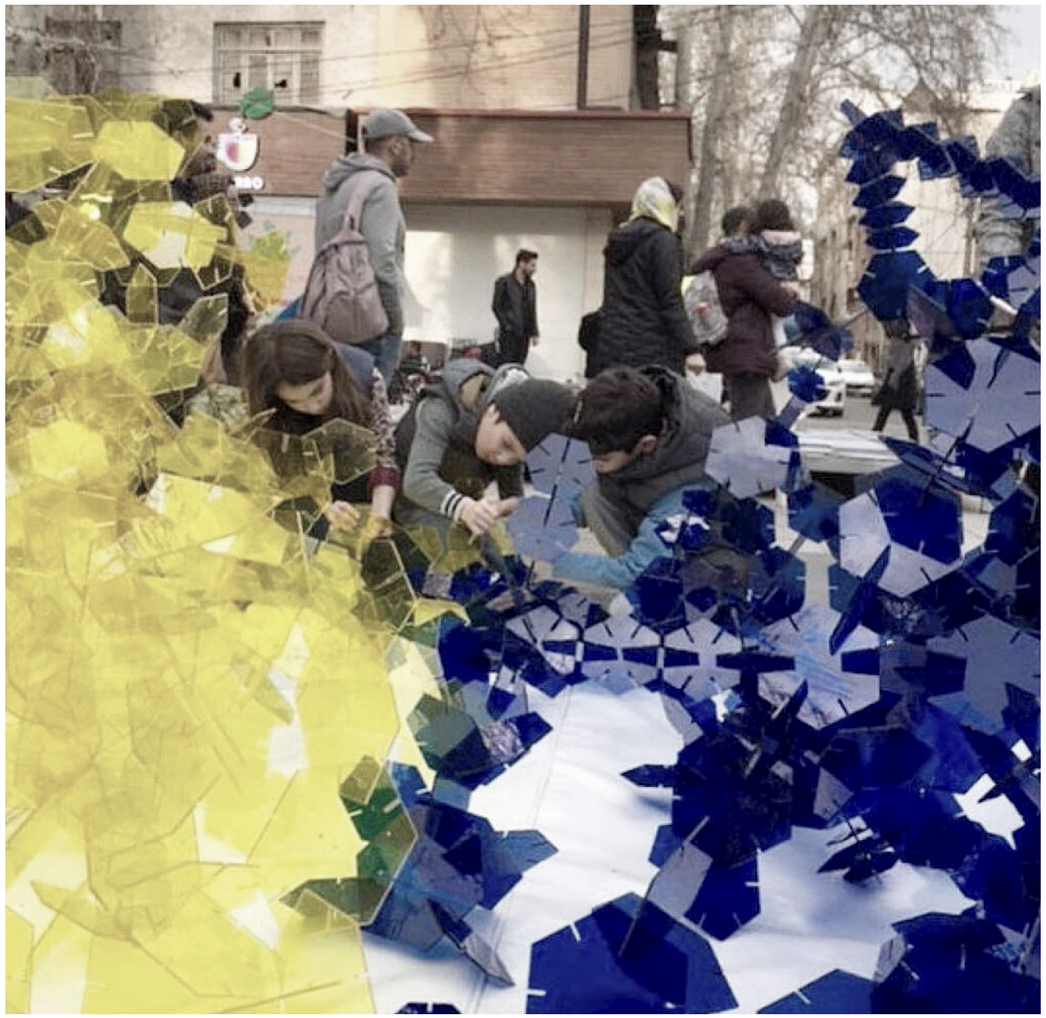


Figure35.*Construction Game, designed by Archi Kids, Pantea Eslami*

Figure36.*Amoo Zanjirbaf, Designed by Aboutalebi*

Although the functional aspects of Persian gardens experienced many transformations through political shifts, especially after the Islamic Revolution, the social character of these gardens has remained consistent. The alteration from a private garden to a public park, a royal garden to a museum, and many other adaptive reuse functions did not affect the overall perception and appreciation toward the significance of these spaces.

2.4 Learning from the Persian Garden Paradigm

Known as the most inherited design pattern, the Persian garden paradigm has been a source of inspiration for designing different building typologies in Iran. The continued application of this archetype is evidence for the comprehensive elaboration of this pattern in Persian culture, which enables the reproduction of identical experimental procedures. In his book, Landscape: Pattern, Perception, and Process, Simon Bell writes of the importance of patterns:

"Consciously or unconsciously we seek order out of chaos. We tend to look for patterns which seem to make sense in the knowledge that we have about our world, as well as being aesthetically satisfying in the relationship of each part to the whole. … Pattern recognition is important to help us understand and relate the world around us. We can develop a language of description and analysis to communicate relationships between different patterns."[108]

Bell believes that the presence of common arrangements and fundamental components illustrates some degree of significance about those repeated features. There might be some psychological factors highlighting the importance of these repeated patterns in Persian culture.

In this research, several cases were evaluated in terms of their functional aspects and design elements. The aim of this analysis was to investigate the adaptability of the Persian garden paradigm to accommodate other functions such as cultural, institutional, or political uses.

108 Bell 2012.

The key aim of this investigation was to understand how these cases were perceived and understood in relation to the Persian garden paradigm. The selected cases include:

Niyavaran cultural complex, Tehran, Iran	باغ موزه نیاوران
Iran center for the management studies, Tehran, Iran	کالج مدیریت انرژی دارالان
National library and documentation center, Tehran, Iran	کتابخانه و سازمان اسناد ملی ایران
Iranian garden of Tehran, Iran	باغ ایرانی تهران
Medicinal herbs garden museum, Tehran, Iran	باغ موزه گیاهان دارویی
Iran mall, Tehran, Iran	ایران مال
Safadasht Villa, Iran	ویلای صفادشت
Shahre Aftab, Tehran, Iran	شهر آفتاب
Mashahir garden, Shiraz, Iran	باغ موزه مشاهیر
The triangular garden of the villa Noailles in France	باغ با طرح مثلثی در ویلای فرانسه
The Iranian embassy in Thailand	سفارت ایران در تایلند
General Consulate of Iran in Frankfort	سرکنسولگری ایران در فرانکفورت
Iran's pavilion in Expo Milan 2015	پاویون ایران در اکسپوی میلان
The Persian garden exhibition in Bonn Germany	باغ ایرانی در بن آلمان
And the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto	موزه آقاخان در تورنتو کانادا

The study of these cases is aimed at analyzing whether the spatial arrangement and configuration of design components are a random collection of objects or if they are based on certain types of underlying design principles. The question here is how the Persian garden archetype is reinterpreted in response to different functional needs?

As Bell describes it, understanding objects and perceiving their interrelationships are important aspects in the process of pattern recognition.[109] He writes that "a particular memory is retrieved by a cue triggering a pattern within the entire range of connections that make up the memory potential. Thus, from a small part of a known pattern, the rest can be reconstructed; this is called content addressable and forms part of the connectionist model."

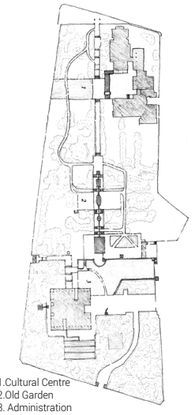
109 Bell 2012.

01 Cultural

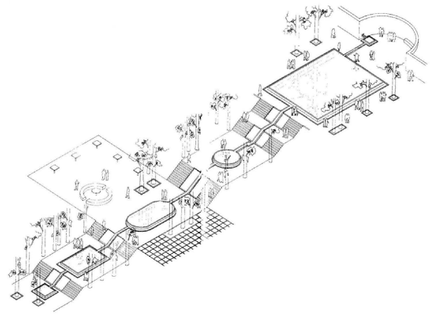
Name:
Niyavaran Cultural Complex
Tehran, Iran

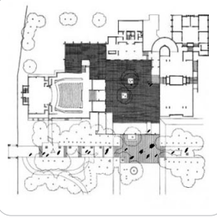
Date: 1978

Lead Architect:
Kamran Diba



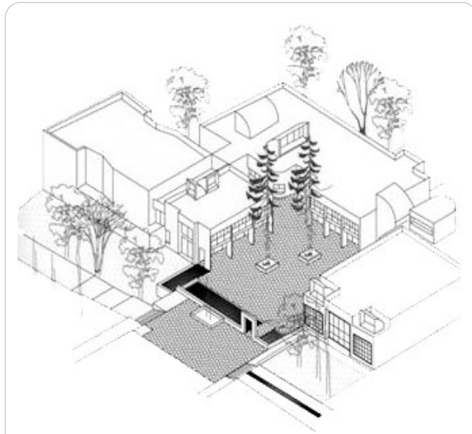
1.Cultural Centre
2.Old Garden
3. Administration

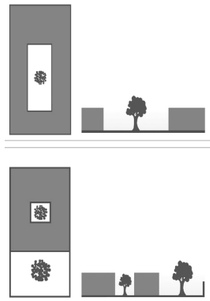




- Courtyard is located in the heart of cultural center and it is one of the most important elements of the project.

Courtyrad





Courtyard pattern could be considered as the oldest Iranian pattern.
It includes a **covered** or **uncovered** central place.

Hierarchy
Symmetry
Geometry
Courtyard

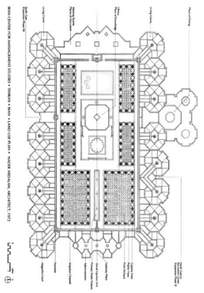
02 Institutional

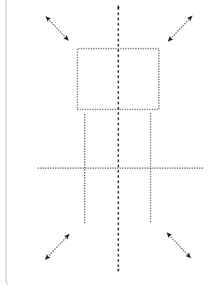
Name:
Iran Center for Management Studies
Tehran, Iran

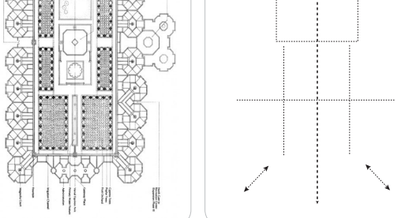
Lead Architect:
Nader Ardalan

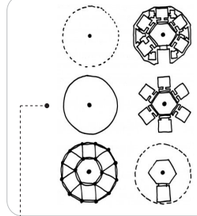
Date: 1970- 1972

Site Area: 22400 sqm

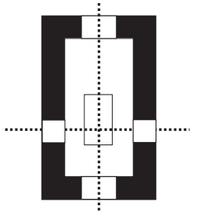






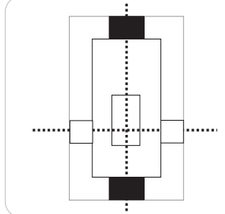


- 16- students units
- Library
- Administration
- Dining atrium and kitchen
- Sports and recreation centre



- **Four Fold Layout**

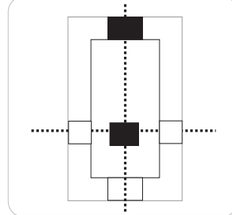
Four gateways placed at the end of each axis give access to the contained open space of the garden.



- **Two Porch Pattern**

Two entrances create the main axis

Rectangular garden space surrounded by the students units on all sides



- **Pavilion+ One Porch**

Library at the centre

(pavilion in Persian Garden)

Materials and building forms

- Local Brick and mud
- Vaults and domes
- Covered paths

Hierarchy
Symmetry
Introverted
Geometric order

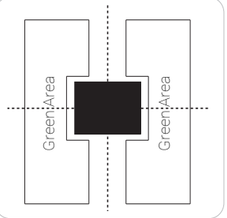
03 Library

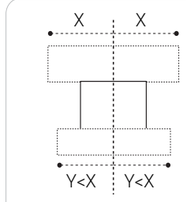
Name:
National Library and Documentation Centre
Shiraz, Iran

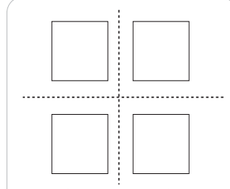
Architect:
Hadi Mir-Miran

Date: 2009

Aga Khan Award for Architecture Nominee

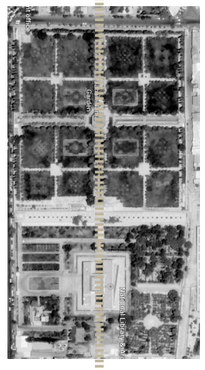






Jahan-Nama Garden

Jahan-Nama Garden



National Library

Glass
+
Concrete

Pavilion in Persian Gardens

Library

Reading Hall

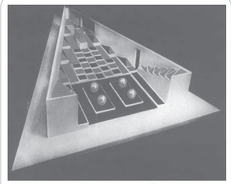
Transparency

Hierarchy
Symmetry
Geometric order
Pavilion

04 Modern Garden

Name:
Triangular garden of of the Villa Noailles, France

Date: 1927



Memories from Persia

The Persian garden theme

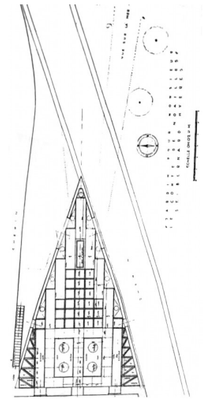
Forced one-point perspective

A space abstracted from the surroundings

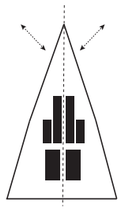
An innovative reading of architectural history

The garden was neither landscape nor architecture; it was a space taken out, whose remaining parts was an architectonic vestige.

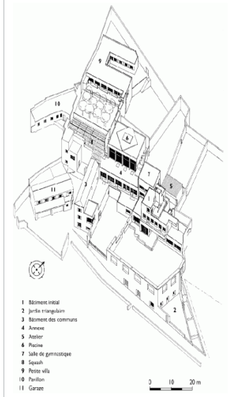
- Enclosed Area : Wall around Persian Gardens
- Organization Distribution Composition



Triangular garden /Plan



- A triangle corner of the premise/area has been left open to allow a view on the wide sea
- One Point Perspective



Persian Chahar Bagh

Four-fold layout

"Persian" and "cubist" and yet indeed neither "Persian" nor "cubist."

Symmetrical
Triangular
Focal point
Reflection

05 Political- Cultural

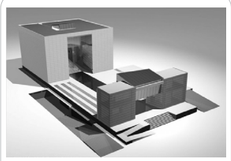
Name:
Iranian Embassy in Thailand

Architect:
Hadi Mir-Miran

Date: 1998 - 2005

Site area: 3696 sqm

Built area: 2870 sqm

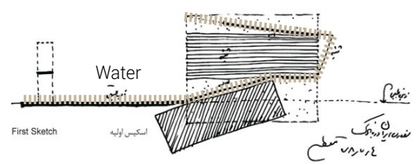


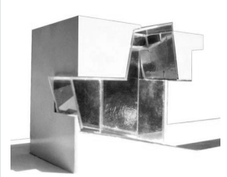
Main Axis

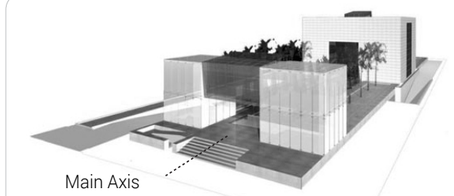
Persian Garden

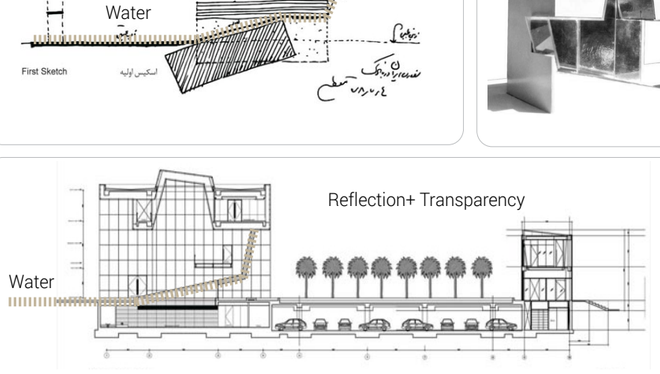
A Pavilion in a Garden

Water Axis



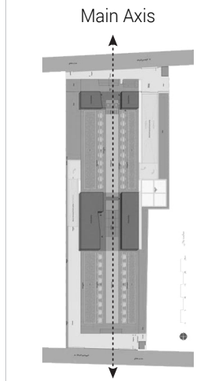






- The embassy is conceived as a **private pavilion** amidst an **inner garden** - a Koushk - connected via a body of water to a public entrance building, which is the consulate.

Water Axis ..... Connector



Symmetrical
Pavilion
Transparency
Reflection

06 Political- Cultural

Name:
General Consulate of Iran in Frankfort

Architect:
Hadi Mir-Miran

Date: 2001-2004

Site area: 4100 sqm

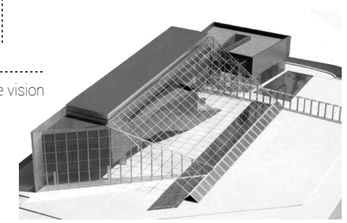
Built area: 5400 sqm

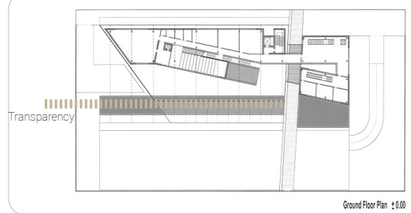
- A transparent glazed roof connects the surface of the park to the upper part of the glazed wall and smoothly unifies the space of the consulate area with that of the park.

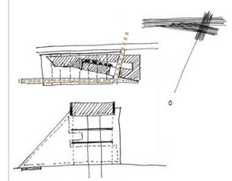
Continuity of the garden

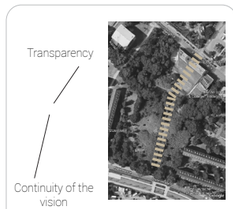
Transparency

Continuity of the vision









Glazed Roof/ Connection

The site is a rectangle of 94 *48 meters that a street lies along one of its longer sides while its two other sides border a park.

The situation of the land, the street and the park implied the notion of envisaging the street and the park as two urban public spaces that could be connected via the consulate site.

They have named the resulting space **"Gallery of Iran"** in which people can move about freely and get in contact with different aspects of Iranian culture via posters, books, art works and etc.

Gallery of Iran divides the consulate building into two main parts, one part is allocated to daily activities (such as the visa section) and the other section is allocated to formal diplomatic activities of the consulate office.

Continuity
Pavilion
Transparency

07 Garden

Name:
Iranian Garden,Tehran

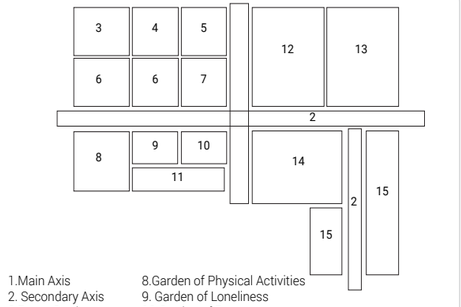
Architect:
Nazar Consulting Group

Date: 2013

Area: 3400 sqm

Water Axis

Persian Garden



1.Main Axis
2. Secondary Axis
3.Poem Garden
4.Garden of Infinity
5. Garden of Nature
6. Garden of Heaven
7. Spiritual Garden
8.Garden of Physical Activities
9. Garden of Loneliness
10.Garden of Peace
11.Virtual Garden
12. Garden of Myth
13. Two Color Garden
14. Garden of Senses
15. Garden of Memories

Vernacular Materials

Public Space

Geometry
Virtual Vastness
Reflection
Continuity
Vernacular Materials

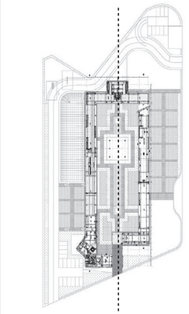
08 Cultural

Name:
Medicinal Herbs Garden Museum, Tehran

Architect:
Sanaz Ghaemmaghami, Mojtaba M.Zaheri

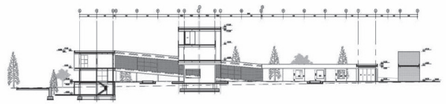
Date: 2016

Area: 2500 sqm



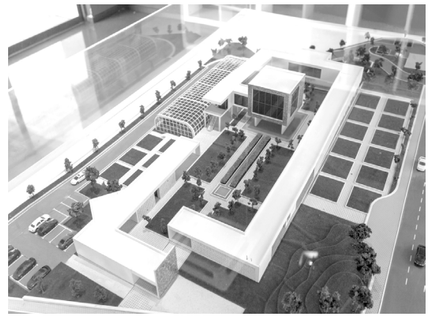
Main Axis

Persian Garden



Everything in the museum, even the design itself, is in service of presenting the heritage of Iranian history.

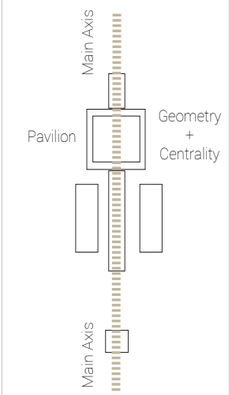
Persian Garden Paradigm



Pavilion + Main Axis + Water Axis + Transparency

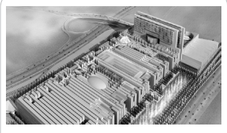
Persian Garden Paradigm

Abstract natural expressions



Symmetrical
Geometry
Reflection
Virtual Vastness

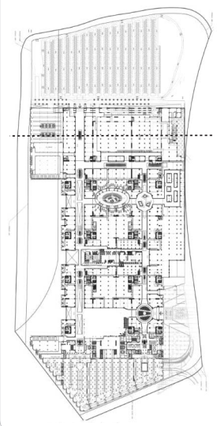
09 Commercial

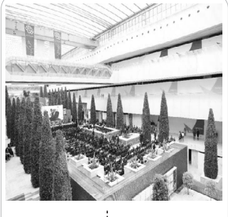


Name:
Iran Mall, Tehran

Iran-Mall is one of the world's top 5 malls and the biggest one in the Middle-East.

Date: Under Construction





Indoor Garden

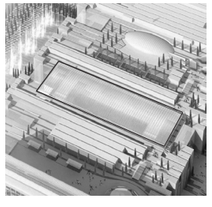
Persian Garden Paradigm

Traditions+ Culture

Trees + Water Movement

Main Axis

Persian Garden



Bagh-Didar or Didar Garden (**Meeting Garden**) is a garden in the mall that its concept originates from Mahan-Garden of Iran.

Mahan Garden (Kerman) in the heart of the desert.

1

Bagh-Didar is a green space inside the rigid architectural environment of Iran-Mall.

2

Another garden named Book Garden or Bagh-Ketab is a garden designed to create a place that people can use to read books.

Virtual Vastness

Reflcetion

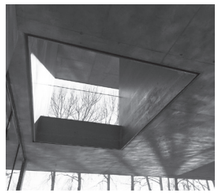
Material
(Mirror)

Inner Garden

Centrality

Symmetrical
Geometry
Reflection
Virtual Vastness

10 House

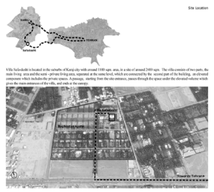


Name:
Safadasht Villa

Architect:
Kamran Heirati Architects

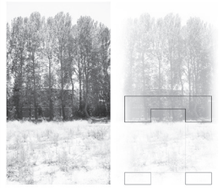
Date: 2016

Area: 1100 sqm

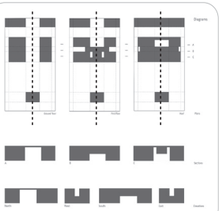


Private Building in a suburban area

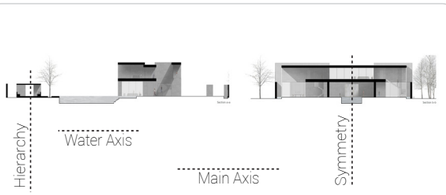
Limited number of users

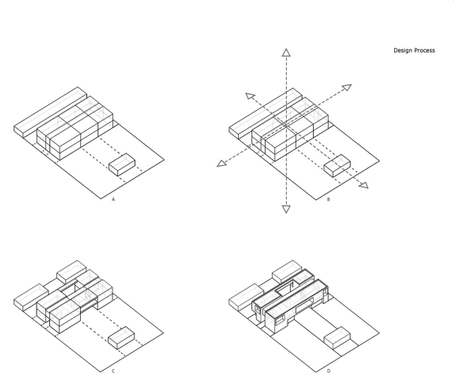


The project intends to identify itself as a passage or a frame to emphasize on the presence of the site not only as the exterior but also as a stream which flows around and inside the building.



In a **Persian Garden**, architecture seeks to see the building and the site as a whole and unique entity.





Hierarchy
Symmetry
Geometric order
Pavilion

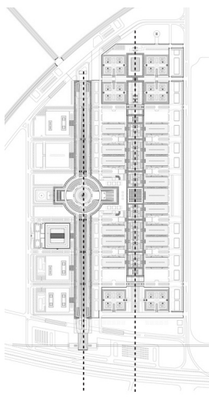
11 Cultural

Name:
Share Aftab
Tehran, Iran

Architect:
gmp Architekten

Date: 2016

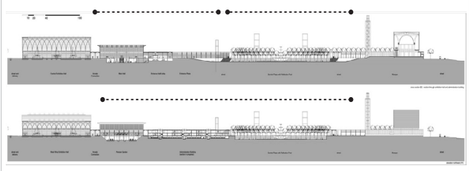
Area: 25700 sqm

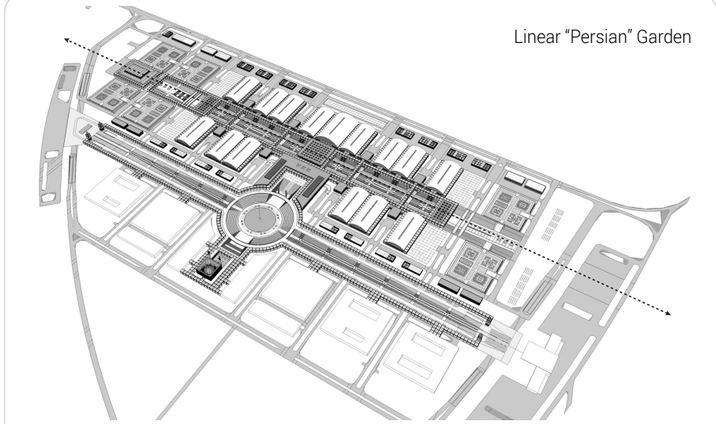


Persian garden culture

Exhibition hall

Main Axis





Linear "Persian" Garden

Transparency
Symmetry
Geometric order
Pavilion

12 Museum

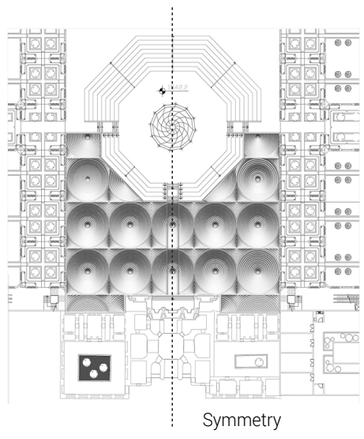
Name:
Mashahir Garden
Shiraz, Iran

Date: 2018
Under construction for 10years

Area: 25000 sqm

Alongside of the Hafeziye Garden

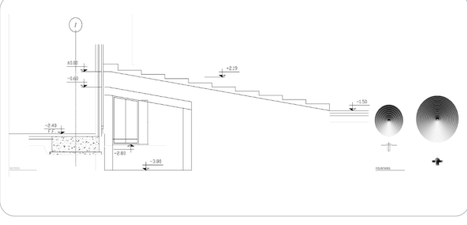
Water Garden pattern



Symmetry

Centrality of Water

Creation of a constant movement of water in the heart of the complex



Virtual Vastness

Water as a connector

Hierarchy

Indication of the practical and spiritual role of water in a Persian garden.

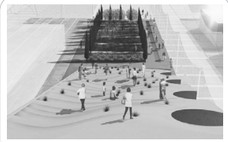
Reflection

Climate

Precious

Reflection
Symmetry
Geometric order
Water Axis

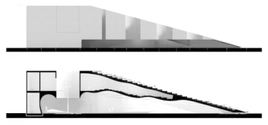
13 Exhibition



Name:
Iranian Pavilion
Milan Expo 2015
Competition

Design team:
Laboratorio di Architettura e Design (LAD),
Naqsh-E-Jahan-Pars (NJP)

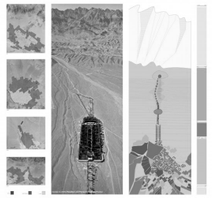
Date: 2014



Section of the Qanat
Water management system

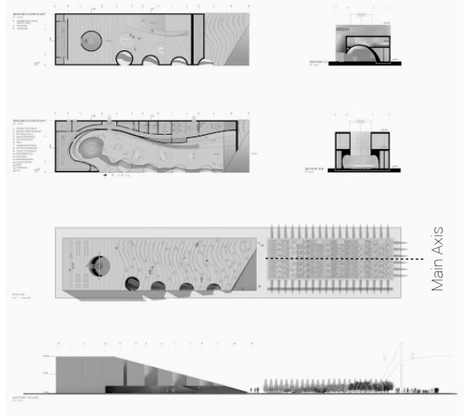
Virtual Vastness

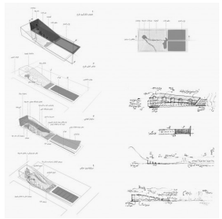
Traditional Qanat
in Persian Gardens



A **living process** narrative in the central plateau of Iran

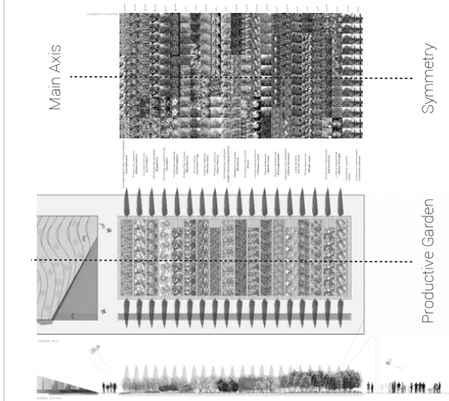
Shazdeh Mahan Garden
A Persian garden in the heart of a desert





Qanat
+
Persian Garden

Qanat:
Underground water channels that use gravity to transfer water.



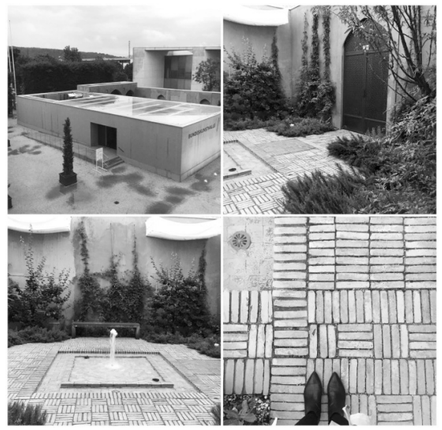
Symmetrical
Pavilion
Virtual Vastness
Reflection

14 Exhibition

Name:
Iranian Exhibition in Bonn, Germany

Design team:
Iran's National Museum and Cultural Heritage Organization

Date: 2017

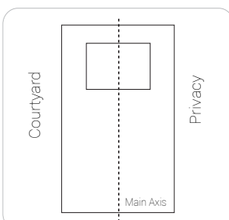


Centrality
+
Privacy
+
Water Axis
+
Persian Culture

Courtyard Pattern

+

Persian Garden Pattern



Courtyard Pattern

Tabatabaee House

Traditional Style of Architecture in Iran

Symmetrical
Courtyard
Water Axis
Vernacular Materials

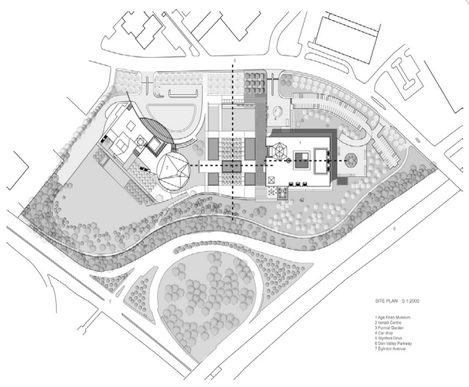
15 Cultural

Name:
The Aga Khan Museum
Toronto, Canada

Architects:
Maki and Associates

Team:
Fumihiko Maki, Principal / Gary Kamemoto, Director / Kota Kawasaki, Associate / Isao Ikeda, Associate / Masayuki Midorikawa, Associate / Jun Takahashi / Yukiko Kuwahara / Yoichi Honjo / Masaru Sasaki / Alvaro Bonfiglio / Ellen Kristina Krause

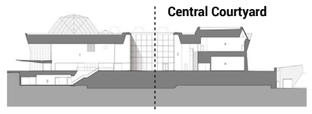
Date: 2014



A place for inspiration ..... Garden
Islamic Tradition

Inspired by the classic Persian design of the chaharbagh — a four-part garden — the most famous example of which is at the Taj Mahal in India

The gardens house two architectural gems: the Aga Khan Museum and Ismaili Centre, Toronto



Central Courtyard — Persian Chaharbagh Layout

Planting Axis

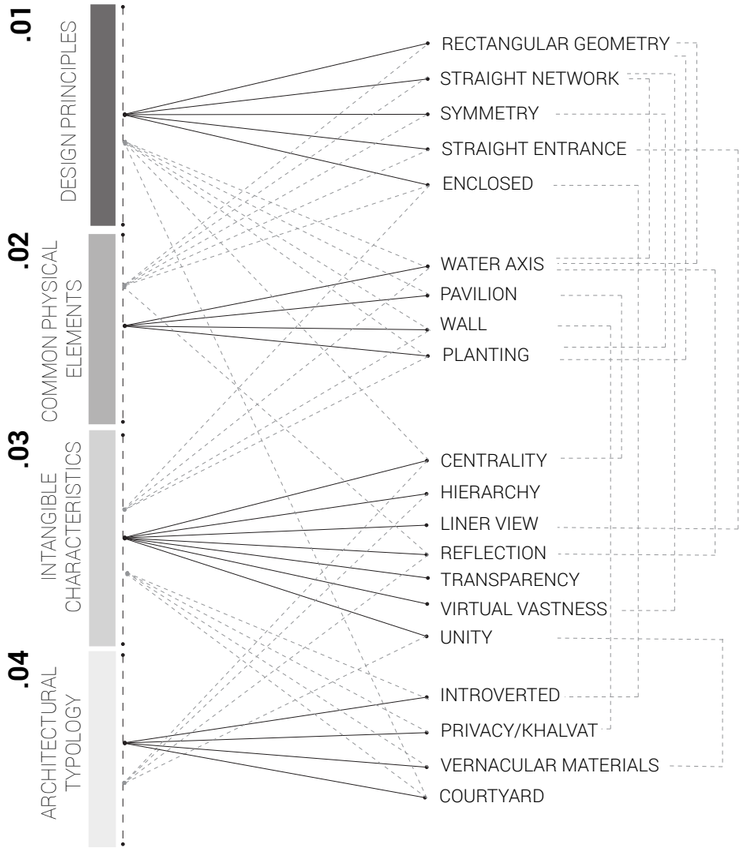
Main Axis in Persian Gardens

Chaharbagh Layout
or
Four-fold Layout

Event Space ..... In contact with the Garden

Symmetrical
Pavilion
Transparency
Reflection

CONTEMPORARY CASE STUDY ANALYSIS



	PROJECT	DESIGN PRINCIPLES					COMMON PHYSICAL ELEMENTS				INTANGIBLE CHARACTERISTICS							ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGY				FUNCTION
		Rectangular Geometry	Straight Network	Symmetry	Straight Entrance	Enclosed	Water Axis	Pavilion	Wall	Planting	Centrality	Hierarchy	Linear View	Reflection	Transparency	Virtual Vastness	Unity	Introverted	Privacy (Khalvat)	Vernacular Materials	Courtyard	
01	Niyavaran Cultural Complex	■	■	■		■	■		■	■		■	■			■	■	■	■	■	■	Cultural
02	Iran Center for Management Studies	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■			■	■	■		■		Institutional
03	National Library and Documentation Centre	■	■	■	■		■	■			■		■	■	■		■					Library
04	Triangular garden of of the Villa Noailles, France		■	■		■								■								Modern Garden
05	Iranian Embassy in Thailand	■	■	■	■			■	■			■	■	■	■		■					Political /Cultural
06	General Consulate of Iran in Frankfort	■							■					■	■		■					Political /Cultural
07	Iranian Garden,Tehran	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■		Garden
08	Medicinal Herbs Garden Museum, Tehran	■	■	■	■		■	■	■			■	■	■	■	■	■	■				Cultural
09	Iran Mall, Tehran	■	■	■	■	■							■			■	■					Commercial
10	Safadasht Villa, Tehran	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			■	■	■	■		■	■	■			House
11	Share Aftab Tehran, Iran	■	■	■	■					■			■		■		■				■	Cultural
12	Mashahir Garden Shiraz, Iran	■	■	■	■		■		■		■		■	■		■	■	■	■		■	Museum
13	Iran Pavilion in Expo Milan 2015	■	■	■				■		■		■	■	■		■	■		■	■		Exhibition
14	Exhibition At Bonn Germany	■	■	■		■	■		■		■		■	■			■	■	■	■	■	Exhibition
15	The Aga Khan Museum Toronto, Canada	■	■	■	■		■	■			■			■			■	■			■	Cultural

2.4.1. Analysis of the contemporary case studies

This analysis is in accordance with the preceding study of the Persian garden paradigm. While the cases include both public and private buildings, by comparing the selected cases in terms of their design principles, common physical elements, intangible characteristics, and architectural typology, a similar conclusion was reached in line with the previous findings.

As it has been depicted in the final diagram, the most common design principles in these projects are their rectangular geometry, straight network, symmetry, and introspective enclosure, which are derived from the Persian garden paradigm or the Chaharbagh archetype. This finding illustrates that the application of a single element of a familiar pattern can help the process of reconstructing the rest of it unconsciously.

Despite the variation of the selected cases in terms of their functionality, the common physical elements of the Persian gardens such as the water axis, the pavilion, the wall, and the planting strategies can be observed in all of them to some degree. The significant point here is how the abstraction of familiar forms can affect the overall perception of space as a whole and unique entity. Even the implementation of one of the specific components of a Persian garden can help the observer perceive the overall meaning. The completion of the rest can happen unconsciously based on the observer's memories and a general understanding of the garden's archetype.

In these cases, the unique combination of the common design principles with the pre-defined physical elements creates secondary features and intangible characteristics such as centrality, privacy, hierarchy, linear view, reflection, transparency, virtual vastness, and unity, which are the consistent hidden attributes of these cases.

By analyzing different cases inspired by the Persian garden paradigm in Iran and other countries, this study has shown how a large number of alternative approaches have been developed from the original paradigm over the last few decades. This can be a reason why Persian gardens have created a paradigm of a cultural form and have remained consistent as the most practiced pattern in Iran. This clearly illustrates why recontextualization of this cultural, historical and social phenomenon in another context is important and valuable for the Persian community living abroad. This familiar socio-cultural form can foster the process of transition from homeland to the host land for the Persian diaspora.

PART THREE: HOST-LAND

Tehranto

Persian Communities in Toronto

زغربتم چه بگویم؟ که سایه‌ام حتی
گذشته از من و از پشت سر نمی‌آید

3.1 Persian Communities in Toronto

In the last forty years, the nature of migration for Iranians has undergone dramatic changes due to socio-political fluctuations in the country. Meanwhile, Canada has been a destination for a growing Iranian population that it is now the twenty-sixth largest group by ethnic origin in the country.[114]

The first Iranian immigrant arrived in Canada in 1901.[115] From this point, a very slow trickle began; between 1901 and 1910, the number of Iranians in Canada reached 109. Between 1911 and 1920, ninety-one people arrived; between 1921 and 1930, fifty-seven people arrived; between 1931 and 1940, only six Iranians arrived in Canada due to the impact of rigid immigration restrictions.[115] After World War II, there was an increase in the number of Iranian immigrants. In the period 1941-1950, twelve people arrived; between 1951 and 1960, [115] people arrived; in 1961-1970, 1041 arrived. After 1980 and coinciding with the Islamic Revolution in Iran, a great number of Iranians decided to move to Canada.1980 also marked the beginning of the Iranian press in Toronto, when the first Persian newspaper was published under the title Soldiers of Iran (Sarbazane).[116]

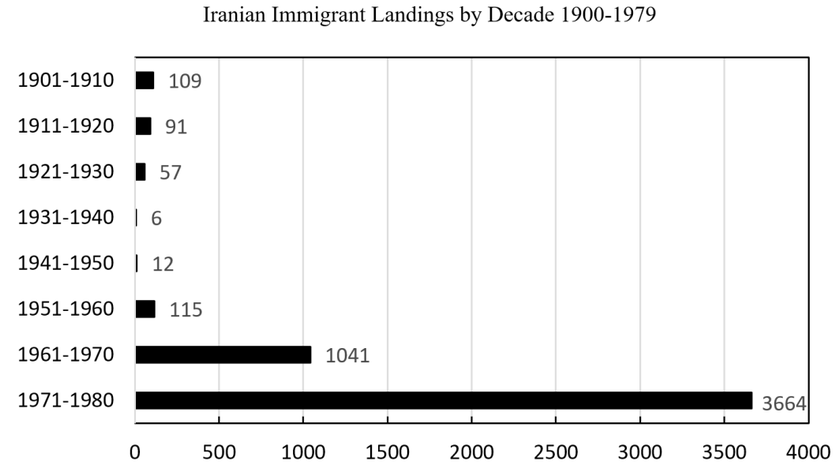


Figure37.*First Iranian immigrants in Canada*

114 Shahrzad Faryadi 2008.
115 M. S. Kazem.
116 Shahram Saremi 2004.

Sima Sahar Zerehi wrote: “Twenty years ago the Iranian community was a very different entity in Toronto. We only had one or two Iranian restaurants, few family doctors and dentists who catered to Farsi speaking clients, a single pastry shop that offered nostalgic sweets from home and a grocery store that stocked what passed for Iranian bread, cheese, rice and dry goods”[117]

The most recent wave of Iranian migration started after the 2009 presidential election in Iran. After being arrested and imprisoned for participation in post-election protests, a great number of journalists, students, activists, and other politically active professionals left the country. As reported by Statistics Canada in 2013, Iranian immigrants are among the top-ten Asian nationalities that have relocated to Canada. Based on this census, there was a sharp rise in the immigration of Iranians to Canada between 2006 and 2011, which raised the place of Iranians from eighth in 2008 to fourth in 2011. [118]

The suburban neighbourhoods of Richmond Hill, North York, and Thornhill (including Markham and Vaughan) are home to large numbers of Iranians and their stores, supermarkets, restaurants, and businesses.[118] In recent years, “Tehranto,” as North York is called by the Iranian diaspora, with a population of 13,530 Iranians in 2001, constituted the most important living area for them in the city.[119] Based on the 2016 census, 45,540 people in the city of Toronto reported being Iranian.[120]

The Iranian plaza along Yonge Street, known as the heart of Tehranto, with its signs and billboards in Farsi, has been one of the constant reminders of Iranians’ homeland and identity. The plaza is located between Finch and Steeles on Yonge Street, where Farsi signs advertising currency exchange, restaurants, pastry shops, grocery, and real-estate agencies distinguish it from the surrounding context.[120] This business centre plays an important role in connecting the Persian diaspora culturally, socially, and politically to their home country.[119]

117 Sima Sahar Zerehi 2010.
118 Amy Malek 2015.
119 Shahrzad Faryadi 2008.
120 Paniz Moayeri 2019.

FERNANDO MORALES/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Martin Jazti checks out the goods at Pars Video Canada in a strip mall on Yonge Street at Goulding Avenue that caters to the region's large Iranian population.

Eyes of Tehranto watching Iran

As Washington's showdown with Tehran over its nuclear program heats up, the Iranian community in Toronto anxiously follows the conflict, reports

ESTANISLAO OZIEWICZ

"Yes, this is Tehranto," laughed Irida Shahroki, an optometrist's assistant in a second-floor shop in a strip plaza — at the top end of Toronto's spine — that serves as a market beacon for one of the world's largest community of Iranian exiles.

As the Iranians shop and do business along Yonge Street north of Finch Avenue, the unmistakable signs in Persian are a constant reminder of their homeland, which, in recent months, has been at the centre of a thorny international controversy over the Islamic regime's nuclear ambitions.

The United States and its European allies are trying to get Iran to end its uranium-enrichment program, which Washington fears is leading to the building of nuclear weapons.

With Iran's Islamic leadership spitting defiance, members of the United Nations Security Council are trying to draw up a package of benefits and possible sanctions.

In Canada, among the more than 100,000 Iranian-Canadians (most of them in the Toronto area, Vancouver and Montreal), there is anguish that, short of a diplomatic solution, the United States could take military action to destroy Iran's nuclear sites.

Iranian community groups say their numbers are closer to 200,000, which is not surprising since the last census was in 2001.

"People here don't trust the regime at all, so you can't give them a knife [nuclear weapons]," said Hassan Zerehi, editor-in-chief of Shahrvand, the self-proclaimed largest Persian-language newspaper in North America. "But a military strike, a war, would be the worst scenario."

Canada's Iranians are remarkably successful, many of them well educated and prosperous. Among them are professionals, academics, entrepreneurs and business people. Most were part of the exodus after the 1979 Islamic revolution, although there was a smaller wave in the 1960s.

An implacable opponent of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and of the current regime in Tehran is Saeed Rahnema, a York University political scientist. He said a U.S.-led military strike against Iran would serve only to shore up the powerful mullahs leading a bankrupt regime that will collapse under its own weight.

"I personally think that a regime like Iran should not have the capability of producing a nuclear weapon because it is a brutal regime; it's uncontrollable, you don't know how it's going to use it. . . . [But] Iranians themselves will change this regime. The economic situation is in shambles now. There's no investment, money is leaving, the Iranian brain drain continues and [the government] will collapse," he said.

At the same time, Mr. Rahnema is suspicious of U.S. attempts to force its notions of democracy on countries such as Iran. He said the recently proposed $75-million (U.S.) congressional program to support democratic forces in Iran and undermine the mullahs' regime is a misguided strategy that will lead only to more suppression of internal opposition.

"I question the intent of the American administration to want real democracy. They want a type of government that is pro-American, and if it's authoritarian, anti-democratic but pro-American, they couldn't care less."

Within the Iranian community, there are differences of opinion on Iran's nuclear program. All those interviewed believe that Iran has a right to develop nuclear power for peaceful purposes. Some go further and say that since India, Pakistan, France and others have nuclear weapons, why shouldn't Iran?

"I don't know why the United States is concerned about nuclear weapons in Iran. I don't think they want to use these weapons against other countries. Maybe it's just for defence," said Shahrzad Mirzaei, an administrator for a real-estate office in the Tehranto plaza. The walls are covered with posters for the performance of Iranian pop icon Googoosh at the Air Canada Centre on June 3.

Lili Nabavi, who hosts two programs on the Persian radio station Radio Seda-Ye Iran, is an architect by training. She arrived in Canada in 1991.

She said Iran's oil reserves are limited and her homeland needs a nuclear program to produce electricity. She pointed out with pride that Iran has its own home-grown nuclear scientists.

"My heart is so happy for that," said Ms. Nabavi, adding that the United States has no proof that Iran is planning on building nuclear weapons.

Back at the Tehranto strip, which extends north through Thornhill and into southern Richmond Hill, Ms. Shahroki is preparing to move with her two young daughters back to Iran, where her husband, a biomedical engineer, landed a university teaching job 10 months ago.

Ms. Shahroki, who has been in Canada for a decade, said she talks regularly by phone with her friends and family in Iran. Some of them advocate international sanctions as a way of bringing the regime to heel.

"They say, 'I hope for sanctions because I think it will cause changes in the government.' "

Ms. Shahroki does not worry about a military attack once she returns.

"One hundred per cent there will be no war. Germany, France, many countries, are not behind the United States," she said, adding that the United States has its hands full in Iraq.

"Diaspora is an old concept whose uses and meanings have recently undergone dramatic change. Originally, the concept referred only to the historical experience of particular groups, specifically Jews and Armenians. Later, it was extended to religious minorities in Europe. Most definitions can be summed up by three characteristics. The first characteristic relates to the causes of migration or dispersal. Older notions refer to forced dispersal, and this is rooted in the experience of Jews, but also – more recently – of Palestinians. Newer notions of the diaspora often refer simply to any kind of dispersal."[121]

Persian ethnic groups:

Persian 60%, Azeri 20%, Kurdish 7%, Lur 3%, Arab 2%, Baloch 2%, Turkmen 2%, Turkish tribal groups 2%, and non-Persian, such as Armenians, Assyrians, and Georgians 2%. (refworld)

121 Bauböck and Faist 2010.

3.2 Persian Cultural Spaces in Toronto

In recent years, there have been growing debates about policies of multiculturalism and urban planning decisions in relation to the creation of a sense of belonging for groups of different ethnic origins in Toronto. This sense of belonging in a community is a mental and cognitive need which is not easily achieved outside one's homeland. Fryadi believes that the practical approach is to identify the common characteristics of ethnic groups and re-practice them in order to prevent their isolation even in their own community. [122]

The Iranian plaza on Yonge Street or Tehranto has become the heart of the community, actively responding to a wide variety of Iranians' needs in Toronto. As a newcomer to Toronto, Susan Niazi wrote, "When I came to Canada and saw the Iranian Plaza for the first time, I was surprised. It reminded me of home. I felt nostalgic and more comfortable even though I was lonesome for my homeland."[123] Zareie wrote:

"In Tehranto nothing is as it seems, to get at the truth, you have to scratch away the surface, peel away the facades, and even then there's no guarantee that you can get to the core. No one is simply a retailer or grocery clerk in Tehranto. There are no artless shop owners and one-dimensional stores. Tehranto is a place of double-entendres and fluid identities. Similarly, the businesses in Tehranto are never simply what meets the eye. A grocery store can be a meeting place, a bakery acts as a sanctuary, and a bookshop becomes a cultural hub."[124]

This plaza is one of many representative spaces that embody the culture of multilingualism in Canada. For Iranians, the feeling of connection to their own language and cultural background makes this place more attractive. While the majority of the clients are Iranians, customers speaking Arabic, Dari, Mandarin, Pashto, as well as English visit this plaza occasionally.[124]

122 Shahrzad Faryadi 2008.
123 Susan Niazi.
124 Sima Sahar Zerehi 2010.

There are other public places, such as Mel Lastman Square in North York, which act as cultural platforms for Iranian social gatherings, especially for celebrating unplanned social events. Imam Ali Centre in North York and some other charity-based foundations are active in Iranian neighbourhoods in order to respond to the religious needs of the community. Other Iranian NGOs, such as the Ontario Iranians Society and the Iranian-Canadian Senior Citizens Centre, provide an opportunity for social gatherings in private homes, which are usually announced in Iranian local newspapers.[123] While the existence of these community organizations might improve the sense of belonging and represent Persian cultural identity, they are unlikely to be able to integrate the broader community into their activities.[124] For instance, known as the only Persian community centre in Toronto, Parya Trillium Foundation is an isolated organization in Vaughan, much further east of the Iranian cluster along Yonge Street. The detachment of this community centre from the Iranian neighbourhood might be a reason for its invisibility as a cultural node between Iranians.[125]

Figure38. *Imam Ali Islamic Centre, Eglinton Ave*

123 Bauböck and Faist 2010.
124 Shahrzad Faryadi 2008.
125 Paniz Moayeri 2019.

Figure39. *Parya Foundation, Vaughn*

Figure40. *Mel Lastman Sq Movie – The Salesman – May 26, 2017*

Some believe that there is a connection between the spatial structure of the urban fabric and the creation of the sense of place for people. In The Image of the City, Kevin Lynch defines the sense of place as the potential of a place to be recognized or recalled distinctively for its unique or particular character.[126] Faryadi believes that Canada, with its distinct policies of multiculturalism, can incorporate specific urban forms sensitive to cultural practices of various ethnic groups. She argues that the absence of a specific cultural centre reduces the likelihood that the Persian community can sustain their identity and culture over the long term in Canada.[127]

This perspective does not necessarily reflect actual needs regarding the creation of a sense of belonging for the Persian community in Toronto. Tangible characteristics such as layout, form, and texture are part of people's collective memory, which might not convey the same meaning if applied in other contexts. Feeling, meaning, and memory are the intangible elements that can be transferred and recalled in other contexts. Imposing Persian cultural forms within Toronto's urban context is in contrast with preserving the cultural identity of Toronto. As Rossi writes, "decisions about interventions should be on the basis of local situations and characteristics of the city, that's why general urban planning intervention criterion cannot give a right decision for a singular place of the city."[128]

One significant area of investigation for this research is to understand the relationship between the application of tangible cultural forms and its impact on the creation of a sense of place and identity. Blackwell argues that as there is no permanent meaning assigned to a place, the contribution of a place to identity is never the same. Giving a dynamic character to the sense of place, he believes that social and personal definitions of identity can alter by moving to a different geographical location.

Although tangible elements are important in the creation of a sense of place, they have less impact on the creation of a sense of belonging to a place. The result of research by the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation about the sense of belonging for immigrants shows that people experienced a strong sense of belonging when they reported feeling happy, content, relaxed, included, valued, and excited while they were engaged in social activities with others in common environments. Parks, backyards, and other natural settings, comfortable places, large crowds and festivals, concerts and other celebrations are examples of common social environments.[129]

126 Mert Nezih Rifaioglu 2007.
127 Shahrzad Faryadi 2008.
128 Mert Nezih Rifaioglu 2007.
129 The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation 2004.

The question here is what are the cultural preferences of the Persian community in Toronto? And what is the best approach to incorporate Persian cultural forms in Toronto's urban context while protecting the city's identity?

A study by Kim and Short in 1999 illustrates various ways in which contemporary immigrants are different from their predecessors and how they are more tightly bound to their homelands than ever before. The advancement of technology in creating affordable methods of communication and the possibility of visiting home and family on a regular basis has changed the meaning of migration for contemporary immigrants.[130]

Defining migration as a dynamic act is a more accurate way of interpreting cultural identity and the sense of belonging. History and culture are the production of memories, which can be dynamically represented in another context. As Halbwachs wrote about the concept of collective memory: "Memory is strictly linked to the social environment in which it is produced. In this regard, the society represents a means through which people acquire, recall, recognize, and localize their memories."[131]

The term "diaspora" has a dynamic social structure which depicts the negotiation between the collective memory of home and responsive adaptation to the host country.[132] This research seeks to answer how we can present the collective memories of the Persian community as moments of differences for a specific period of time? Persian national celebrations have been one of the most efficient approaches in establishing new collective memories among all community members both before and after the Islamic Revolution.[132]

These specific moments are the only times when all people gather to strengthen and celebrate their national identity.[132] Some believe that "cultural work" for Iranians is one of the important elements that can bring them together, strengthening their teamwork while rehearsing democratic practices in order to create some form of group unity.[133]

In this thesis, those moments are the key points for people who experience a life "in between," enabling them to be connected virtually to their home and feel the same level of joy and happiness.

130 Shahrzad Faryadi 2008.
131 Intini 2015.
132 Hirsch and Gabrielian 2016.
133 Amy Malek 2015.

3.3 Persian National Celebrations in Toronto

The Persian calendar is an amalgamation of different calendars used over two millennia in Greater Persia. This official calendar has been modified many times to suit administrative, political, and religious purposes throughout the history of the country. The legal adoption of this calendar occurred on March 31, 1925 during the early Pahlavi dynasty.[134] Based on astronomical calculations, the beginning of the year on the vernal equinox was adjusted to Nowruz (Persian New Year). Although in ancient Persia, Nowruz did not necessarily coincide with the first day of the year, it was a festival rooted in the Zoroastrian tradition.[134]

*__Nowruz__ is the Persian name of the Iranian new year consisting of two words; Now or no meaning **new** and ruz or rooz meaning **day**, which when put together means __new day__. (tirgan.ca)*

When the season changes from winter to spring on the vernal equinox, which happens on the March 20, the exact beginning of the New Year occurs. Nowruz is a cultural festival officially registered by UNESCO, which shares many similarities with other spring festivals such as Sham Al-Naseen, celebrated by Egyptians, and Easter as celebrated by Christians.[134] Focusing on the philosophical aspects of light conquering darkness, and good conquering evil, Nowruz is the warmth of spring conquering the cold winter.[135] The official celebration of Nowruz in Iran consists of some pre-Nowruz events such as the fire jumping festival, or Chaharshanbe Suri, and the egg-painting festival, which is celebrated the week before New Year's Eve to welcome Nowruz: "In the evening of the last Wednesday before Nowruz, bonfires are lit and people jump over the flames. The flames burn away sickness and bad luck."[136]

134 Intini 2015.
135 Tirgan Media 2019.

Figure41. *Fire jumping Festival (4Shanbe Suri), Iran*

Figure42. *Fire jumping Festival (4Shanbe Suri), Iran*

As Eric Hobsbawm writes, people try "to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which implies continuity with the past."[136]

For the Iranian community in Toronto, the transition of their socio-cultural context affected the way in which they live and celebrate their cultural values. Most Iranian festivals take place outdoors and are celebrated in public places where people eat, dance, and socialize with each other. Although this social pattern was altered considerably after the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the culture of outdoor celebration remains a strong part of Iranian national celebrations. By contrast, most Persian celebrations and social gatherings in Toronto happen indoors in small family circles and private places.[137] One reason for these private gatherings can be the feeling of isolation in the host country. Iranians have few tools to renew and improve their culture in Toronto's urban spaces, where they do not have memories of the surrounding environment or a sense of nostalgia.[138]

National celebrations for Iranians have acted as social, cultural, and political platforms, even providing the opportunity for anti-government demonstrations in recent years. For example, during the Chaharshnabe Suri festival (fire jumping festival) in March 2010, the fire was a symbol of anger over the Islamic Republic and provided a chance to protest against the government as a "feast of light against darkness."[138]

Before the Islamic Revolution in Iran, there was some protest against the celebration of national events because they were considered anti-Islam festivals. In March 1963, Ayatollah Khomeini urged people to boycott the Iranian New Year's celebration as a form of protest against the Pahlavi dynasty. After 1977, Ali Shariati, one of the main ideologues of the Islamic Revolution, described the Nowruz festival as vital food for a nation. He depicted the history of this festival and its roots in Persian culture.[135] Although many Islamic ideologists were against the celebration of these national events in public places accompanied by public dancing and social gatherings, Nowruz remained powerful and important for Iranians all over the world.

136 Hobsbawm and Ranger 2010.
137 Shahrzad Faryadi 2008.
138 Intini 2015.

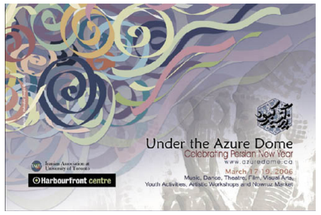
For the Persian community in Toronto, the first Nowruz festival, entitled "Under the Azure Dome," was celebrated for three days from March 17 to 19, 2006, at the Harbourfront Centre with the participation of more than 100 artists and performers.[139] Following this successful Nowruz event, the Iranian summer festival, Tirgan, was celebrated in July 2008 and 2011. The name of this event comes from the ancient Zoroastrian festival of rain celebrated in the first month of summer, Tir.[140]

The Tirgan festival presented itself as the only non-profit organization which hosts Iranian national events in Toronto. [141]

As Amy Malek described in her thesis, the Tirgan festival is run with the help of many volunteers who consider themselves as part of the "Tirgan family." In interviews, the volunteers mentioned meeting new people as their primary goal of joining this family, which resulted in the creation of strong social bonds and support structures in compensation for what they had left back in Iran.[142] As Tirgan's CEO described,

"With the size of the Iranian diaspora estimated at over 4 million people, I'm certain that our work will continue to be well received here and abroad. At Tirgan, we're focused on showing the colorful and hopeful face of Iranians to the world and no medium can do this better than art. I hope we continue to expand and reach more and more people."[142]

In 2012, the Tirgan family went one step further and organized an event on December 22 in recognition of the beautiful ancient Iranian festivity of Shab-e-Yalda. This event hosted approximately 500 guests at the Hilton Garden Inn in Vaughan, Ontario.[142] The event was an array of music and dance performances by Iranian artists.



Under the Azure Dome,2006

Tirgan,2011

Tirgan,2013

139 Harbourfront Centre Media 2006.
140 Amy Malek 2015.
141 Amy Malek 2015.
142 Tirgan Media

Similarly, the 2013 summer festival repeated the same feat and brought around 120,000 attendees to the Harbourfront Centre. With the exception of five of these performances, all the events of Tirgan 2013 were offered free to the public. The theme of Tirgan 2013 was "Hope," which influenced all of the performances and visual arts. The event was a family-friendly festival that offered a wide variety of activities aimed at engaging and informing children and youth about the inherent Iranian art, culture, music, and history.

In 2015, the theme for Tirgan was "Homeland." The concept of homeland was to act as an anchor connecting the Persian diaspora to their history and identity. According to the organization, "Tirgan is more than just a festival. Tirgan is about building communities. By entertaining and educating its audience, Tirgan aims to promote cross-cultural dialogue between the Iranian community and the global community at large."[143]

The Tirgan organization celebrated both Nowruz and the summer festival in 2017 in three different locations. These two events were the world's largest celebrations of Iranian art and culture, bringing more than 150,000 people to the heart of downtown Toronto.[143]

In 2019, Tirgan celebrated the Nowruz event with the theme of "diversity." At first glance, diversity refers to the city of Toronto as a mosaic of numerous cultures and a beacon of cultural diversity. Although the Iranian community comes from the same background, diversity still exists within this group. [143]People may come from different cities and speak different languages.

Tirgan,2015

Tirgan,2017

143 Tirgan Organization 2019.

The Tirgan organization explains diversity in the following way:

"We all immigrated to Canada at different ages and different stages of our lives, we have different tastes and outlooks on the world. We are in fact a group of distinct individuals, each with their own unique story, who came together in one common goal: to organize a festival, one that would be worthy of this great city, one that would put a smile on the faces of anyone who attended, regardless of any notion that divides us, but an embrace of all that unites us."[144]

The 2019 Nowruz event was celebrated at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, located in the heart of North York. The festival consisted of an impressive array of artistic programs such as music, dance, theatre, and visual arts. Meanwhile, the Iranian restaurants and the traditional market (bazaar) provided a taste of Iran a thousand miles away from home.

The summer festival of Tirgan took place July 25-28, 2019 in Toronto. This year, Tirgan had the theme of "unity," which refers to the celebration of diversity, talent, freedom, and equality.[144] The Harbourfront Centre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, Distillery District, and the Rebel Entertainment Complex hosted this cultural festival with the help of a group of volunteers.

Tirgan Summer ,2019

Tirgan Nowruz,2019

Figure43. *Haft Sin, Nowruz Festival (Tirgan 2019)*

Figure44. *Iranian Handicraft, Nowruz Festival (Tirgan 2019)*

Figure45. *Traditional Gilaki Dance, Nowruz Festival (Tirgan 2019)*

Figure46. *Traditional Iranian music, Nowruz Festival (Tirgan 2019)*

3.4 Cultural Festivals in Toronto

Although culture is inherently not easy to define, it can be understood as the many creative expressions in the form of social and visual arts.[144] More often, culture consists of more than one factor. Personal heritage, language, and cultural background accompanied by associated traditions and food can create a boundary for the meaning of culture.[145]

As discussed in Culture Talks, an online cultural consultation in Ontario, for Ontarians the culture of attending festivals is a valuable opportunity to be engaged with diverse cultures. While some believe that cultural festivals should be more accessible to everyone, at the same time many want these events to travel to them, providing access for people living in different parts of the country. Cultural support is one of the most important priorities for the government of Ontario. In 2014-15, approximately $800 million was invested by the Ministry of Tourism for supporting the cultural practices.[145]

For many Ontarians, shared cultural experiences are powerful means to bring communities together and create a sense of belonging. An example of these cultural experiences include the Riverfest music festival in the Township of Wellington, the Pow Wow on Manitoulin Island, a multicultural food festival in Victoria Park in Kitchener, Toronto's Festival of Beer, Caribana, Toronto Food Truck Festival, and many others. Meanwhile, the Tirgan festival is on the list of the top 50 summer festivals in Toronto.[145]

Figure47. *Premier Kathleen Wynne attended the Iranian Tirgan Festival at Harbourfront in Toronto, 2017*

144 Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport 2016.

The result of research by Hill Strategies for the Ontario Trillium Foundation in 2003 shows that alongside contributing to economic growth, cultural festivals promote quality of life across Ontario in different ways. These festivals strengthen communities by providing unique activities and events that raise awareness about diverse cultures and identities and act as a source of community pride.[145]

Dragan Klaic, a researcher on the role of festivals in Europe, discusses the reasons why cultural festivals are increasingly celebrated around the world. He believes that the popularity of festivals is not only about their artistic package with their appealing contents but also their role as valuable instruments that re-examine urban dynamics within city spaces. Considering the spatiotemporal characteristics of festivals, they are unique points of connection in the context of the public sphere.[146] These cultural events assist in sustaining cultural groups by providing a context for the acceptance of a particular culture.[147] Migration phenomena consist of two-way flows from both home and host countries. Festivals and cultural events are flows that provide a context for cultural engagement in host countries. They indicate the transition of the normal culture of the home country to cultural performances in the host country. Binding traditional cultures with the social identity of different ethnic groups, festivals are a strong means of communication and adaptation to a new context.[148]

Mehrdad Ariannejad, who is the CEO of the Tirgan festival, discusses how the Persian community in other countries around the world have been inspired by the approach of Tirgan in organizing an Iranian cultural event in a Canadian way. He believes that the impacts of this event have spread beyond North America, to Australia, and even back to Iran:

" I think people get ideas from each other from afar. For example, now that we have Tirgan here, in Australia they are organizing it, if small. … People get inspired. We do something and I'm sure that the Tirgan that we put on here has an impact on Iran. I'm sure about it. Because if you are a youth in Iran, you see all this violence, unhappiness, no hope for the future, and your economic situation is – you have nothing to be happy about. But then you suddenly see a huge festival at a global level, happening in Toronto. A festival that is promoting the art and culture of Iran. I think it lights a flame of hope in you. You think, 'there is something.' Everyone who sent in stories for our short story contest – because they don't appreciate it in Iran – [those writers] think that, well at least somewhere appreciates us."[148]

145 Hill Strategies 2003.
146 Anderson 2009.
147 Crespi-Vallbona and Richards 2007.
148 Amy Malek

Figure48. *Aerial view of Harbourfront Centre site*

The Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund (OCAF) describes Tirgan as the world's largest celebration of Iranian arts and culture outside of Iran. Taking place July 25 to 28, Tirgan 2019 was planned to host a four-day multidisciplinary art and cultural event at Harbourfront Centre, the Distillery District, the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, and the Rebel Entertainment Complex in Toronto. OCAF outlines the programs including 1) music (at all four locations), 2) dance (Harbourfront and Distillery), 3) theatre (St. Lawrence Centre), 4) film (Harbourfront), 5) visual arts (at all four locations), 6) History, Poetry & Literature (Harbourfront), 7) stand-up comedy (Harbourfront and Distillery 8) culinary arts (Harbourfront), 9) children's activities (Harbourfront), 10) craft market (Harbourfront and Distillery).[149]

At Tirgan 2019, around 60% of the events were presented by local artists, engaging Iran International TV for the first time. Snap Toronto participated in Tirgan by designing an augmented reality (AR) application to ease the accessibility of the festival for everyone in Toronto.

149 Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund 21019.

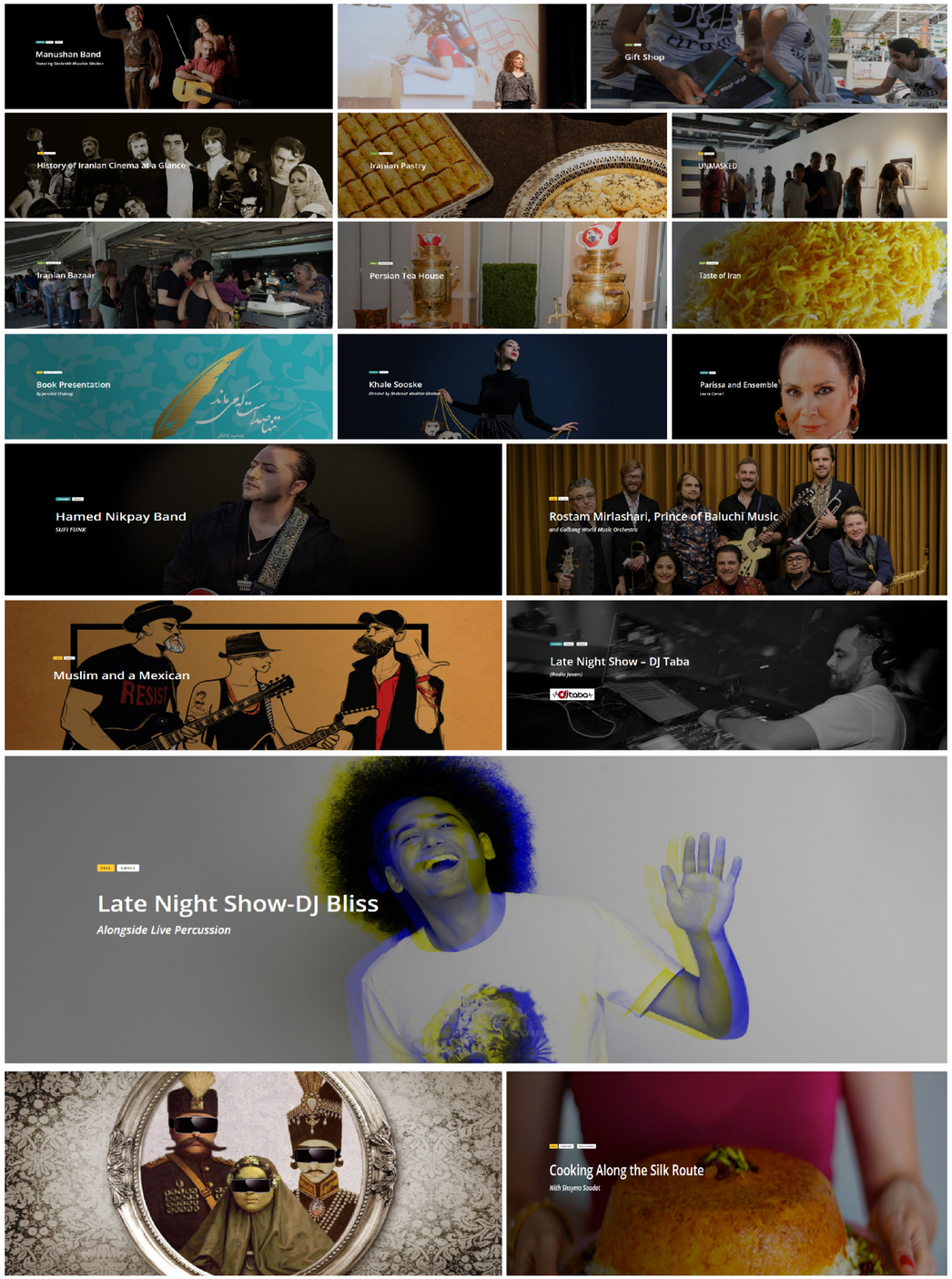


Figure49.*Tirgan 2019 Events and Programs*

3.5 Persian Festivals as a Platform for Bridging Cultural Gaps

This research initially aimed to provide a familiar context for the Persian community in Toronto in order to create a sense of identity and belonging in their new home. Here, focusing on one specific ethnic group is about designing dynamic cultural models that can be applied to other cultures while presenting different forms.

It can be anticipated that similar intangible characteristics will be achieved through the application of different tangible elements for various ethnic groups. For example, in this thesis, the tangible elements of the Persian garden paradigm define the scope of the design in order to recall some intangible characteristics and desired impressions such as memory and specific moments.

Cultural festivals are adaptable social structures and strong means of communication that educate not only the people of their own country but also provide an open learning platform for the whole world. They offer a new prospect towards the recognition of art, culture, and traditions of a specific ethnicity and act as a medium of cultural exchange. So, what if we design and manufacture culturally rich, prefabricated modules which can be put together to create temporary, economical, and portable, structures within the Canadian context that adapt to the provided spaces?

The idea is to provide a memorable cultural platform with two main aspirations: the first, to celebrate cultural diversity and the second, to provide a more efficient and flexible built environment that acts as an anchor to the memory of homeland. Given the rich cultural mosaic that exists in Toronto, the creation of temporary and portable spaces that can appear whenever needed seems valuable. These cultural platforms can communicate familiar meanings to specific ethnic groups and provide an efficient architectural setting that converges space, technology, and people. This simply means that people can be bound together through culturally changing spaces on a monthly, daily, or even hourly basis to achieve greater values and quality of life.

Although there are many factors contributing to the quality of life “in between,” the application of familiar cultural forms and social resources of the home country in the host country can act as a reminder for some missing feelings. What is called “in between” in this thesis is a space that needs to be framed and defined as a separate entity from “homeland” and “host land” for every specific culture.

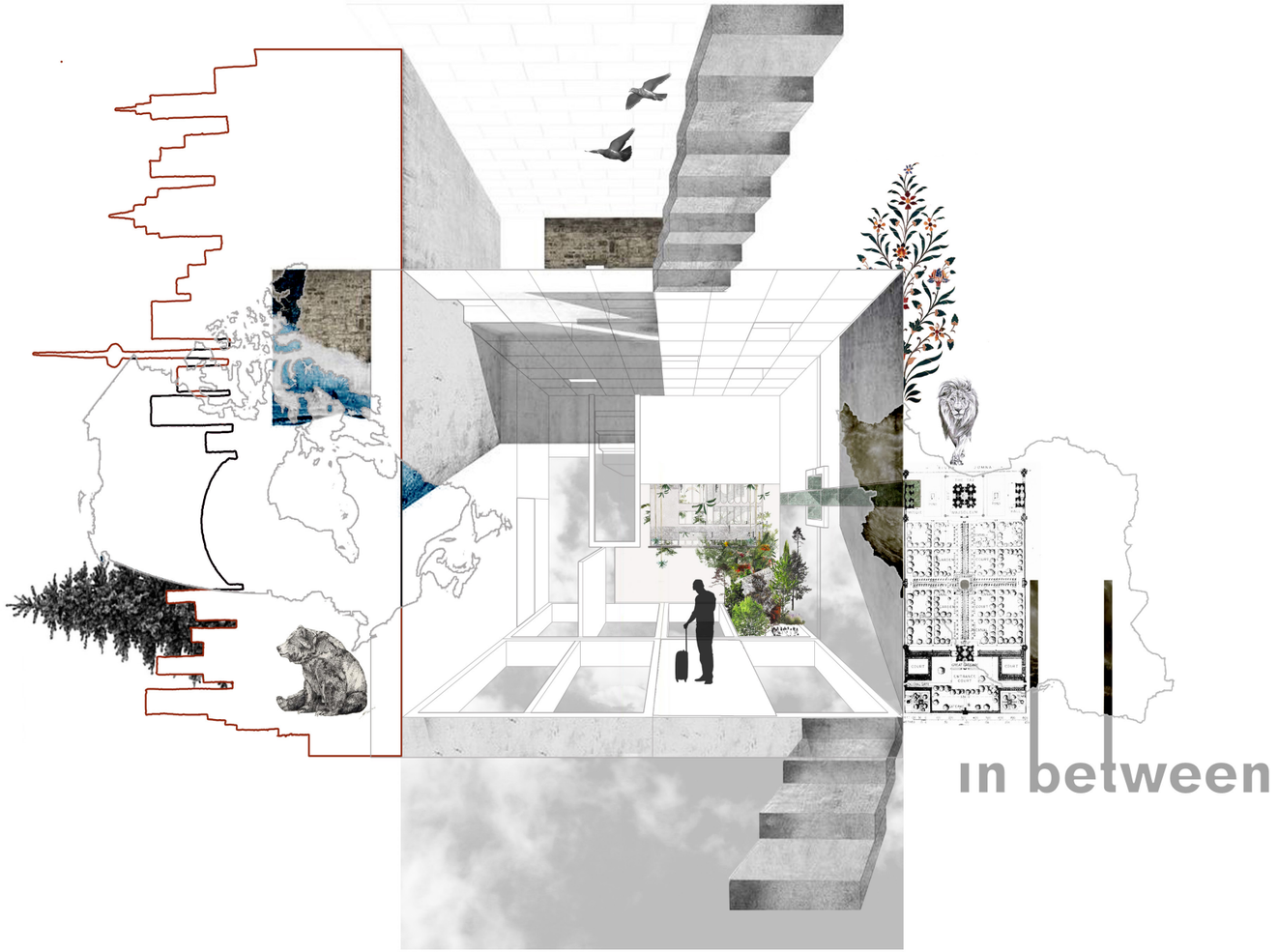


Figure50. *In Between; This diagram illustrates the experience of life in a space which is not defined clearly and doesn't have a boundary. At a given moment, people might feel attached more to their home country or to the host country. They have their memories and experiences from their back home while they are experiencing life in a new context.*

PART FOUR: IN BETWEEN

Home Can Be Anywhere

“I'm rooted here
I love this soil here if I'm dirty or dirty
I stay here for breath
I don't know what I want from here
The hope of enlightenment, though in this gentile gens
I'm driving here in this thirsty dry plain again
I am here one last day out of the dust of my hand
I plant flowers
I am here one last day on a mountain ridge like the sun
I sing the song of conquest
And I know
You will come back someday "

من اینجا ریشه در خاک

من اینجا عاشق این خاکِ از آلودگی پاکم

من اینجا تا نفس باقی ست می مانم

من از اینجا چه می خواهم، نمی دانم

امید روشنایی گرچه در این تیره گی ها نیست،

من اینجا باز در این دشتِ خشکِ تشنه می رانم

من اینجا روزی آخر از دل این خاک، با دستِ تهی

گُل بر می افشانم

من اینجا روزی آخر از ستیغ کوه، چون خورشید

سرود فتح می خوانم،

و می دانم

تو روزی باز خواهی گشت!

فریدون مشیری

4.1 Home Can Be Anywhere

A sense of belonging to a place is cultivated by people through their collective or social memories. Such belonging constitutes a rooted character in the socialization and customs among a distinctive society.[151] As Jan Assmann suggests,

> "Humans must find a means by which to maintain their nature consistently through generations. The solution to this problem is offered by cultural memory, a collective concept for all the knowledge that directs behavior and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation."[151]

Every individual memory positions itself in communication with others. These "others" are groups who define their unity through common memories of their past.[151] Here, the question is whether the metaphor of memory remains applicable after a fundamental transition to another context. As Maurice Halbwachs wrote about collective memory, "once living communication crystallized in the forms of objectivized culture, whether in texts, images, rites, buildings, monuments, cities, or even landscapes the group relationship and the contemporary reference are lost and therefore the character of this knowledge as a memoir collective disappears as well. "Memoire" is transformed into "histoire."

However, this thesis contradicts Halbwachs' assumption. As presented by Assmann, the "concretion of identity" refers to the possibility of identity being reproduced for a group of people through their consciousness of unity and cultural formation. He suggests that common cultural memories such as poems, epics, rites, festivals, etc. form "islands of time" that can be suddenly accessible again across millennia: "No memory can preserve the past. What remains is only that which society in each era can reconstruct within its contemporary frame of reference." [151]

151 Assmann and Czaplicka 1995.

Although the transition from the home country to the host country affects the physical context of cultural memories and leaves behind some immovable figures of memory, it can provide a contemporary context that relates to cultural memories in a different way. The contemporary context might fit cultural memories sometimes through appropriation, sometimes by criticism, sometimes by preservation, or it can transform them entirely.[151]

In this thesis, the cultural memory of the Persian diaspora is communicated through the presentation of a common cultural value that has been adapted into a new context in order to stabilize and convey the Persian society's self-image. As the host land of the Persian community, Toronto not only helps in the preservation of Persian cultural memories by providing the opportunity to host Iranian cultural celebrations, but also reappropriates them to be able to fit into a new context.

4.2 Site Context

Located in the heart of downtown Toronto, Harbourfront Centre on Toronto's waterfront and the Distillery Historic District are two locations in which the Tirgan festival is celebrated biannually. For Tirgan 2019, the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts and the Michener Institute of Education have been added to the locations hosting this cultural celebration.

There is an ongoing data-mining research project about the impact of the Tirgan festival on Toronto's economy and its potential in attracting tourists from all over the world. The Tirgan family invested around $400,000 in this research in order to illustrate the importance of creating a cross-cultural dialogue that brings mutual benefits for both contributors, the Iranian community in diaspora from their homeland, and the Canadian society as the host country.

As part of this thesis, two temporary installations for the Harbourfront Centre and the Distillery District have been proposed. These two locations have been part of the Tirgan festival in the past and there is a clear outline illustrating the position of different activities on their site, while the other two locations will be used specifically for the ticketed performing arts.

The Harbourfront Centre has been on the cutting edge of creativity for more than forty years by bringing together the best from the cultural mosaic of Toronto. Many internationally renowned performances in the arts, culture, education, and recreation have been programmed through distinctive venues by this innovative non-profit organization during recent years.

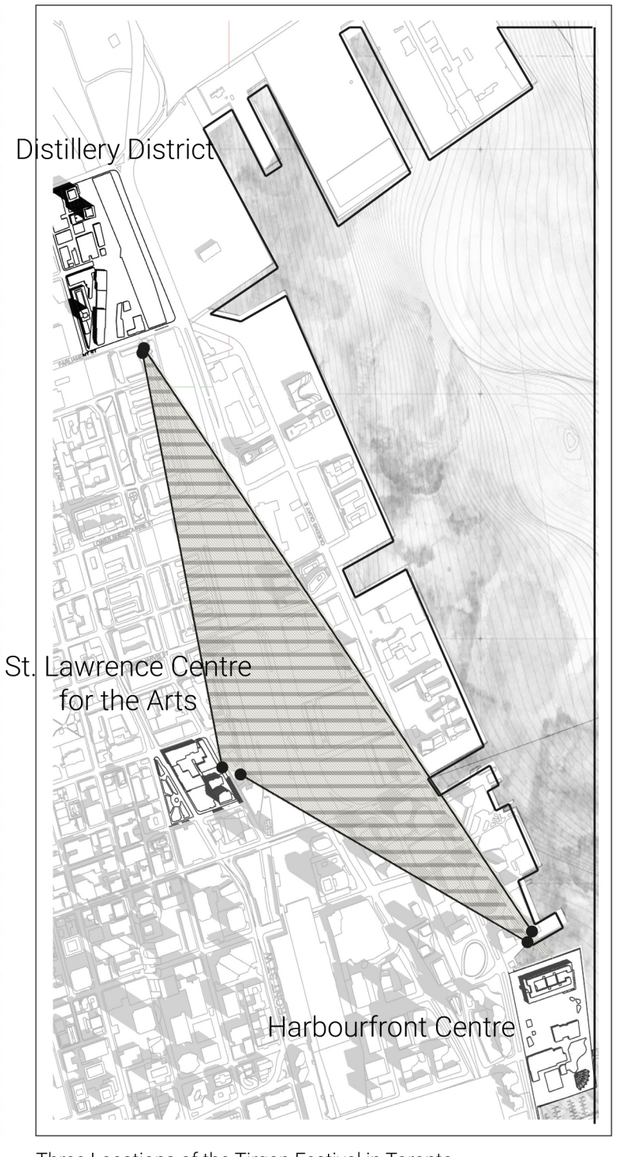
According to the Harbourfront organization,

> "Diversity has always been at the heart of the Harbourfront Centre. In the lakeside places and spaces, it encompasses. In the multitude of cultures and backgrounds, it celebrates. In the eclectic programming, engagement, and entertainment it provides. And in the broad range of people, it attracts."[152]

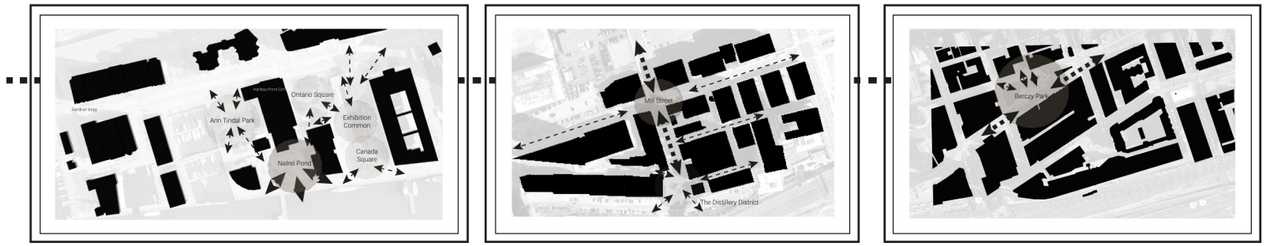
The Distillery District opened in 2003 with the aim of combing two different atmospheres of romantic style and dynamic urban environment.[153]

Here the dream was to provide a place where creativity would flourish and passion would be aroused – where artists, artisans, entrepreneurs, and businesspeople could rub shoulders and inspire each other. So they began plans to restore the 47 buildings known as the Gooderham & Worts Distillery.[153]

152 https://www.harbourfrontcentre.com/whoweare
153 https://www.thedistillerydistrict.com/about/



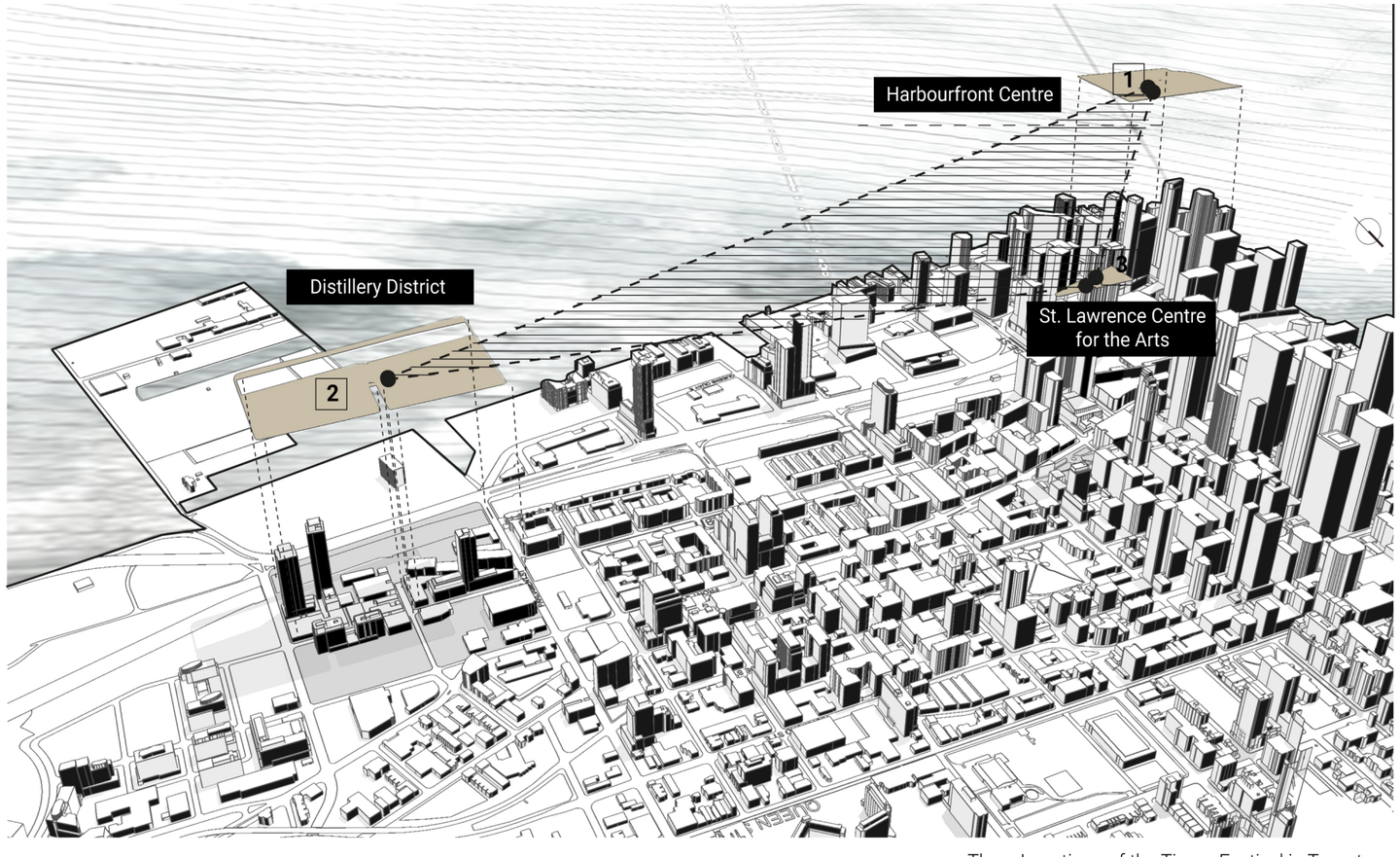
Three Locations of the Tirgan Festival in Toronto



1. Harbourfront Centre
235 Queens Quay W, Toronto

2. The Distillery District
55 Mill St, Toronto

3. The St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts
27 Front Street E, Toronto



Three Locations of the Tirgan Festival in Toronto

4.3 The Development of the Design Ideas

The approach of the first design attempts was to apply fewer resources possible to create an alternative design to the conventional design elements of the Persian garden paradigm. The essence was to pursue adapting to a new environment and reinterpretation of the original paradigm.

The main design strategy was to abstract the Persian garden elements in a way that the overall composition of the form such as the fourfold layout, symmetry, being enclosed, centrality, straight network, and being introverted creates a contemporary reading from the original paradigm. From wooden pavilion to a robotically woven structure, and a deployable layout.

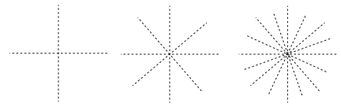
For these primary attempts, the main focus of the design was on creating a gathering space similar to the central pavilions at the Persian gardens. From the composition of the form to the material selection the idea was to reinterpret the characteristics of the pavilions in these gardens. The other design elements such as the water axis, the wall, and the planting axis were eliminated from these initial design ideas. The reason for this design decision was highlighting the significant role of the pavilions in Persian gardens. Most of the cultural celebrations and social gathering take place at the central pavilions and around them. So, regarding the re-contextualization of the Persian garden, it can be worthwhile to investigate if merely emphasizing on the role of the pavilion can reference the original paradigm that serves as a temporal element for the social and cultural encounters.

Design for the Persian Cultural Festivals

Idea No.1

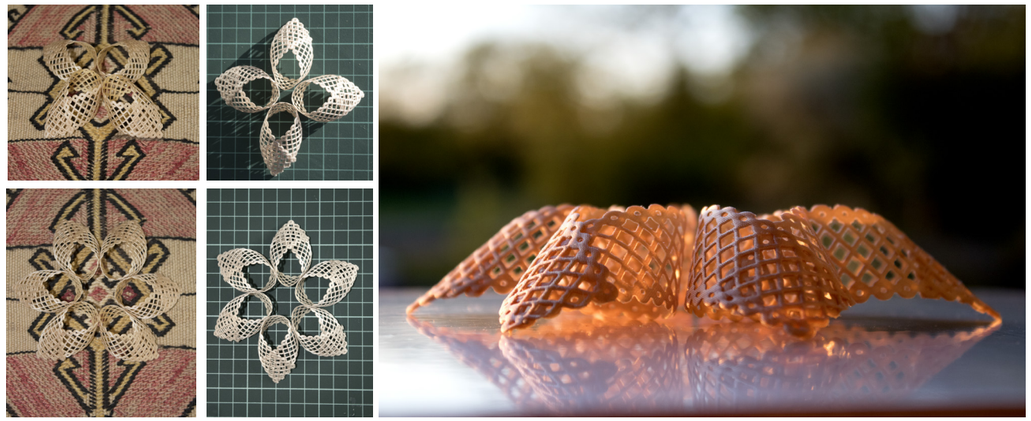
FOUR-FOLD LAYOUT
SYMMETRY
ENCLOSED
CENTRALITY
STRAIGHT NETWORK

REFLECTION
INTROVERTED
VERNACULAR MATERIALS



MATERIAL AND SYSTEM

WOODEN PAVILION ?
ROBOTICALLY WOVEN ?



EXPANDABLE SYSTEM

Design for the Persian Cultural Festivals

Idea No.2

FOUR-FOLD LAYOUT
SYMMETRY
SEMI-ENCLOSED
CENTRALITY

REFLECTION
INTROVERTED
VERNACULAR MATERIALS

MATERIAL AND SYSTEM

WOODEN PAVILION ?
ROBOTICALLY WOVEN ?

REVERSABLE SYSTEM

Design for the Persian Cultural Festivals

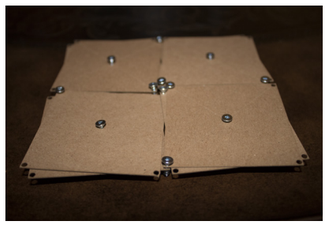
Idea No.4

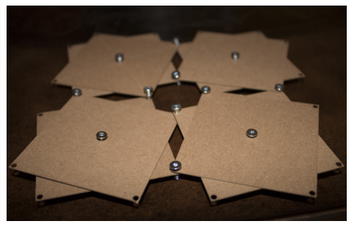
FOUR-FOLD LAYOUT
SYMMETRY
SEMI-ENCLOSED
CENTRALITY

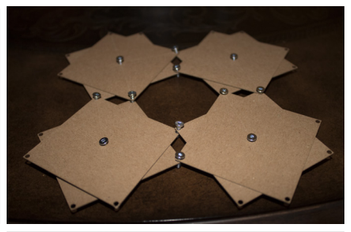
REFLECTION
INTROVERTED
VERNACULAR MATERIALS

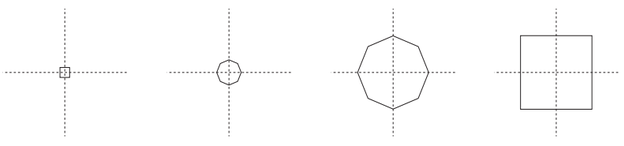
MATERIAL AND SYSTEM

WOOD?
CLAY?









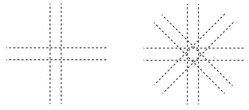
DEPLOYABLE STRUCTURE

Design for the Persian Cultural Festivals

Idea No.3

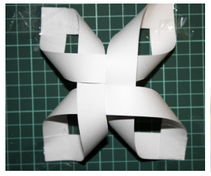
FOUR-FOLD LAYOUT
SYMMETRY
ENCLOSED
CENTRALITY

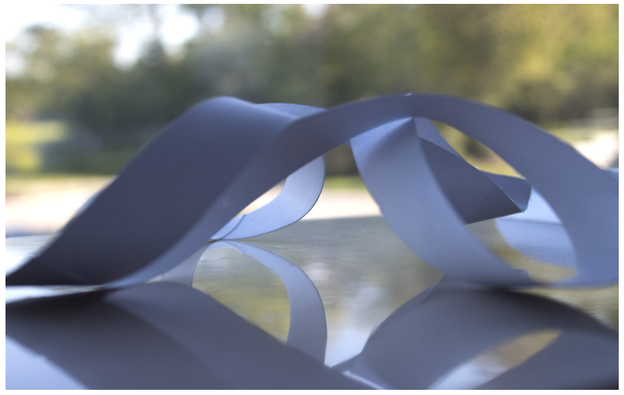
REFLECTION
INTROVERTED
VERNACULAR MATERIALS



MATERIAL AND SYSTEM

WOODEN PAVILION ?
ROBOTICALLY WOVEN ?





ADJUSTABLE HEIGHT

Although the main body of these proposals was based on the common principles of the Persian garden paradigm, the outcomes were generic forms which did not have a distinctive Persian character. These proposed ideas were relatively isolated from their surrounding environment, and there is no unique cultural and natural connection to the existing urban context. The result of the first design ideas proves that the abstraction of one part of the Persian garden paradigm with the application of generic forms is not an appropriate response regarding the re-contextualization practice.

Persian gardens are examples of the juxtaposition of new and old layers based on specific long -practiced principles. The reinterpretation of the original paradigm in a new context must include all of the main design principles and design elements in order to convey the same meaning.

4.4 Site Selection Strategy

Here the initial intention was to create was a temporary structure which combines the application of classical forms with contemporary materials to recontextualize a cultural paradigm. The initial design attempts highlighted the design requirements and the level of flexibility of the original paradigm into a new context. In this stage, it was important to analyze each site thoroughly and discuss the alternative elements which can play a role of functional elements of the original paradigm. For instance, each site has inherent characteristics which can be taken into consideration for selecting a proper location for the installation.

For the Harbourfront's installation, the site plan of the Tirgan festival's location was analyzed to show various activities assigned to each part. The Common Exhibition area and the Natrel pond are two potential areas of the site for this installation.

Figure51. *The Common Exhibition Area, Harbourfront*

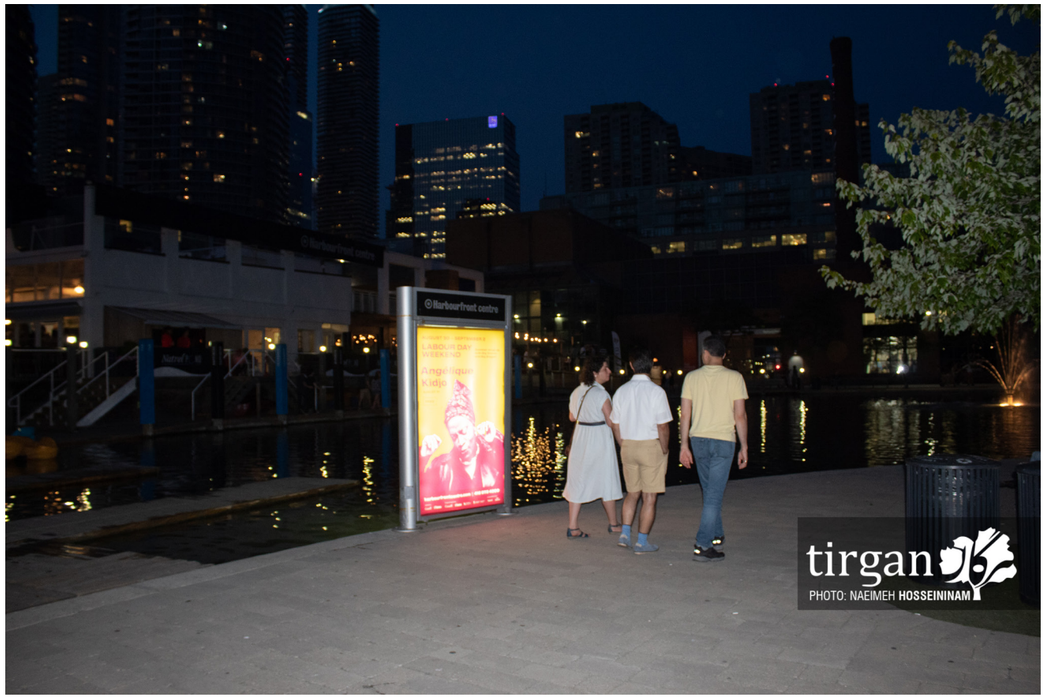
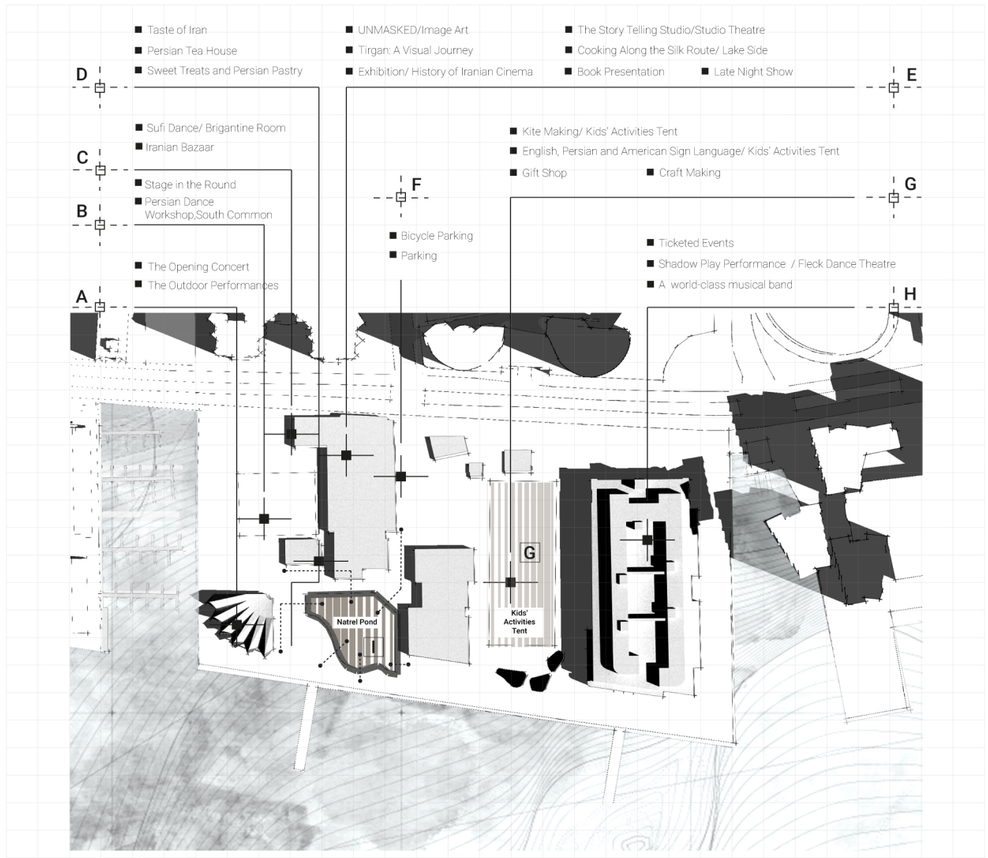


Figure52. *Natrel pond, Harbourfront*

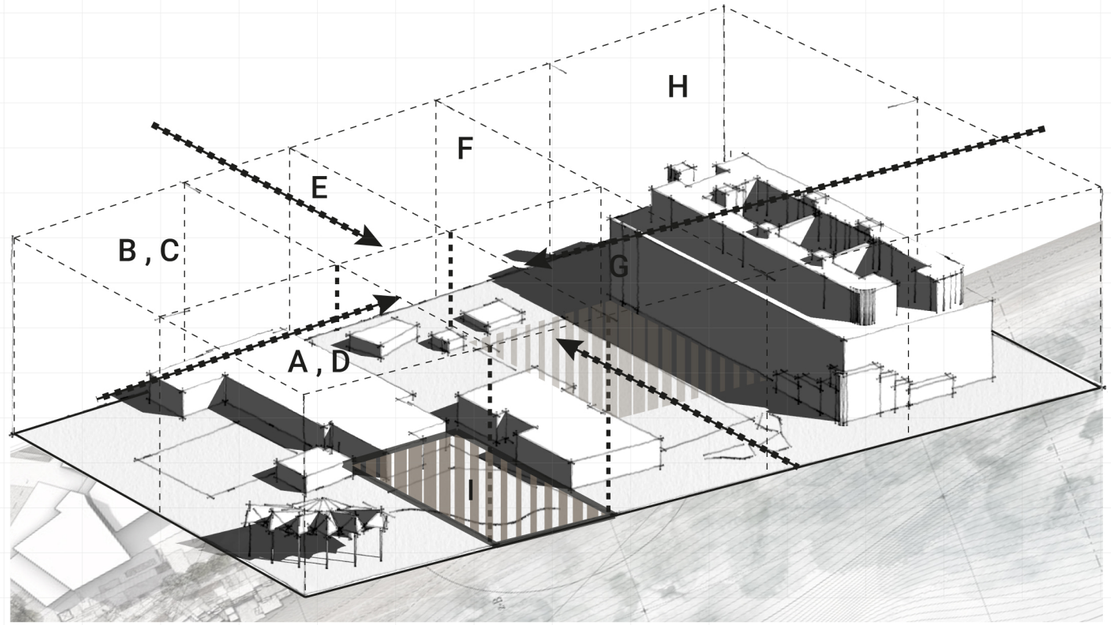
Based on the previous analysis of the Persian garden paradigm the water axis, and having a linear layout are the two important site features of these gardens. In a hot and dessert climatic condition of Iran, water is the creator of life. Water has always been a sign of cleanliness and brightness as well as the symbol of purity which was highly valued in ancient Persia. Between the two potential locations, the Natrel pond was therefore selected for the landing of this temporary installation. This water pond is a natural feature of the site and the desired element of the Persian gardens which can be merged with the design.

The analytical diagram in the next page illustrates the relationship between the selected area of the site for the temporary installation and the Persian garden paradigm.



Harbourfront , Toronto

- A The Outdoor Performances
- B Common Tent/Stage
- C Iranian Bazaar
- D Persian Food and Pastry
- E Indoor Performances
- F Parking Facilities
- G Kids' Activities Tent
- H Indoor Performances

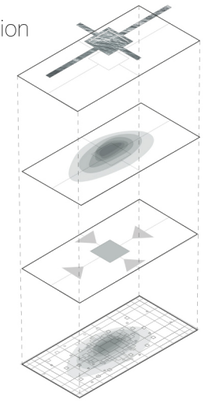


Natrel Pond
Persian Garden Pavilion

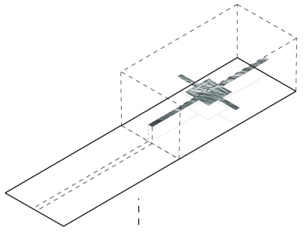
The Two Potential Areas of the Site for the Temporary Pavillion

Kids' Activities Tent

Natrel Pond/Persian Garden Pavilion



Centrality of Water in Persian Gardens



Water Axis

Main element of the Persian Garden Paradigm

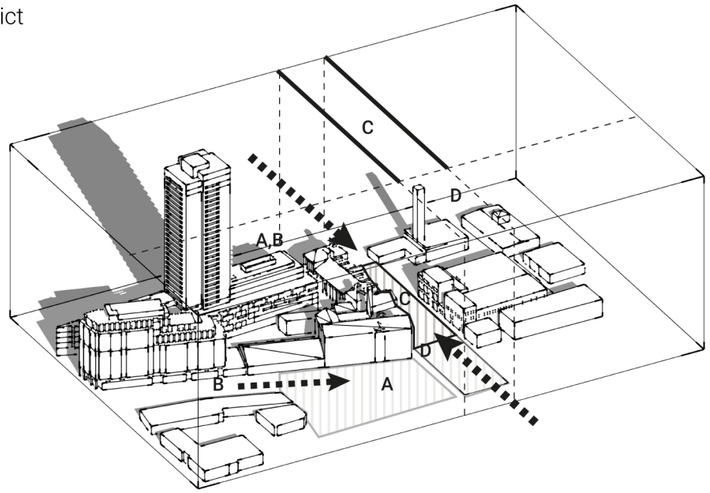
For the Distillery's installation, the location of the pavilion selected based on different performances on the site during the Tirgan Festival. The main entrance to the area from Trinity street is the location of Iranian bazaar and the kid's tent during the Tirgan Festival.

The entrance from the Trinity street provides linear access to the site similar to the main axis in Persian gardens. Also, the historical character of the distillery and it's closed boundary helped with assigning a proper location for the pavilion. Moreover, surrounding buildings alongside the main entrance can play the role of the masonry walls in Persian gardens recalling the privacy feature of these gardens.

Figure53. *The Distillery District, Toronto*

Tirgan Festival 2019

Distillery District

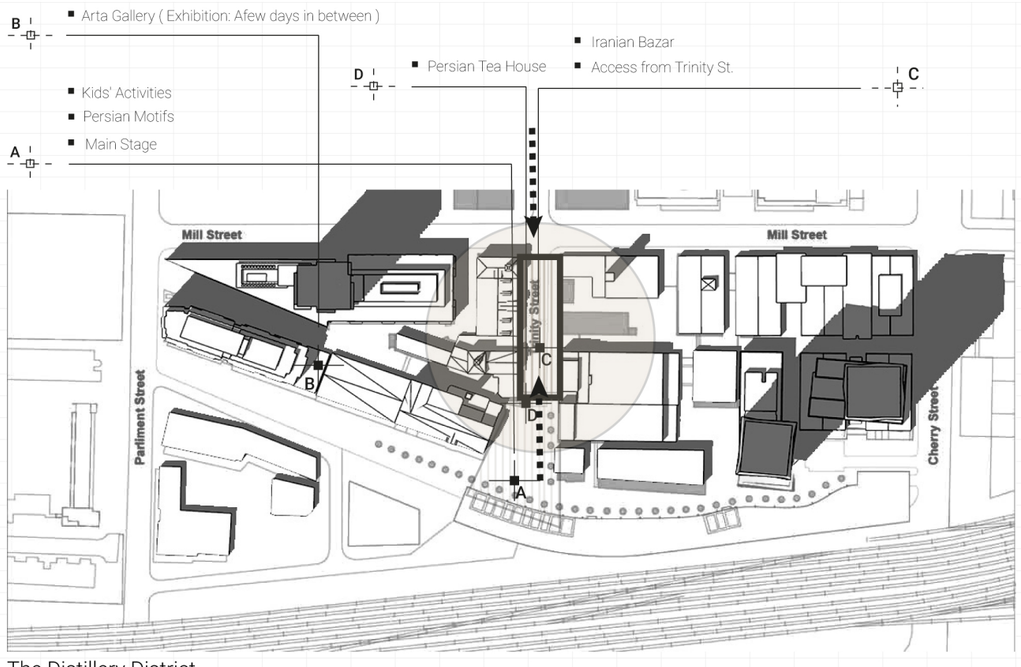


- A Main Stage
- B Arta Gallery
- C Iranian Bazaar
- D Tea House

Potential Area of the Site for the Temporary Pavillion

Main Stage/ Tea House

Kids' Activities Tent/ Bazar



The Distillery District
Toronto

Site Analysis
in Relation to
the Persian Garden Layout

View from the North

View from the South

View from the North- East

View from the South

4.5 Design Approach

As primarily discussed in this study, “In Between” space has a distinctive character which is being defined as a separate entity from “ homeland” and the “host-land”. The dual character of this specific context impacts the design process and material selection for the installation. The proposal should reflect the uncertainty feeling of life in “in-between” space and demonstrate the specific connection to the homeland limited to the subjectivities of the Iranian community.

Regarding the material selection For these two installations, I selected wire mesh for the entire body of the work. The inherent controversial characteristic of the wire mesh makes it a proper fit for creating a seen and unseen, temporary or permanent, and classical or contemporary space.

The closest example to this approach can be seen in some installation projects by an Italian artist “Edvardo Tresoldi”. In his famous project Basilica project, he tried to preserve and enhance the historical site using the wire mesh material. He believes that the geometric perfection of the wire mesh makes it a resistant material to different kinds of construction processes and provides a possibility to reconstruct neoclassical forms. His sculptural installations consolidate structures and forms which would otherwise continue to be unseen and absent.

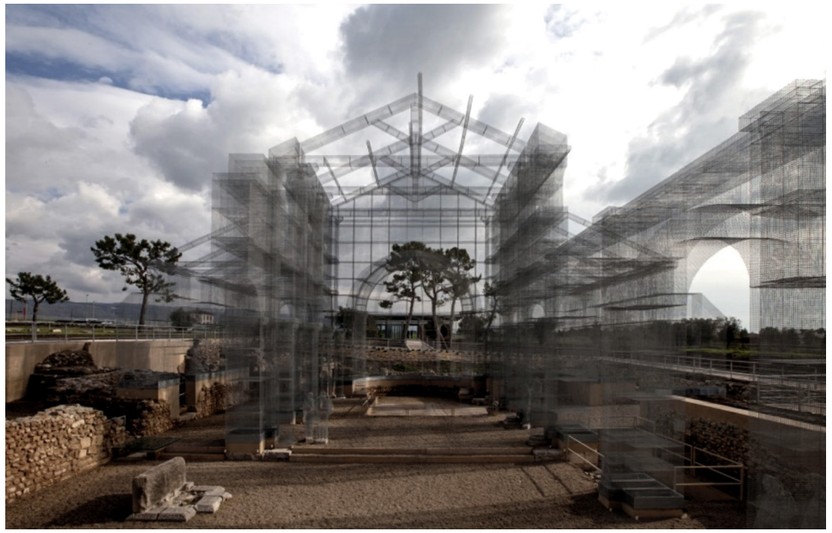


Figure54. *Basilica of siponto’, Edvardo Tresoldi*

Figure55. *Etherea, Temporary Installation for Art and Music Festival, By Edvardo Tresoldi*

4.6 Harbourfront Installation

The proposed design for the Harbourfront installation is a combination of classical forms with the application of contemporary materials. From the location of the pavilion in the site to the orientation of the entrance and it's visibility, the proposed design seeks to adjust itself in the site in a way that it makes an ideal connection to the surrounding context.

The proposed design follows the common fourfold layout of most the Persian gardens which is quartered by intersecting pathways and streams. Compared to the Persian garden paradigm in terms of the design principles, the proposal consists of the combination of rectangular forms in different scales which provides a straight network and linear access to the central space. The whole composition has a symmetrical layout which gives hierarchy to the spaces from entrance to the main central space similar to the original layout of the Persian gardens.

The initial content analysis of the Persian gardens shows that the common physical elements of the Persian gardens such as the water axis, the pavilion, the wall, and the planting axis are the four important elements of these gardens.

For this proposed design the water axis provided by the site (Similar to the Elgoli garden in Tabriz). The pavilion is located at the center of the pond, connecting the main entrance to the other side of the pavilion.

Persian gardens are enclosed gardens and surrounded by a masonry wall which provides privacy and protection for the garden. For this installation, there is a wire mesh wall which emphasizes on the entrance location and creates a sense of privacy for space.

Similar to the Persian gardens, the planting axis is located alongside the main axis in all directions. As soon as people cross the wire mesh gate and pass the entrance, they will feel the freshness of space by seeing the rose flowers which they can touch and enjoy beside the gentle presence of water.

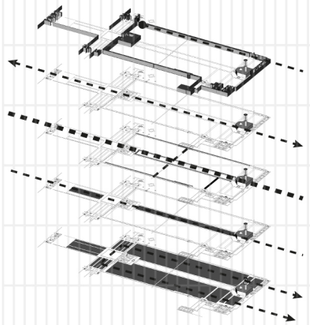
Regarding the intangible characteristics of the Persian gardens, the design is an introverted style of architecture with a central space in the middle of the pavilion. This central space can act as a meeting point with the potential of accommodating different activities during the festival. The wire mesh material helps with the creation of a virtual vastness feature and transparency for the entire project.

The following diagrams illustrate the relationship between the proposed design with the previous case studies and the analysis of the Persian garden paradigm.

SITE SELECTION APPROACH

Harbourfront Toronto

Persian Garden Case Studies

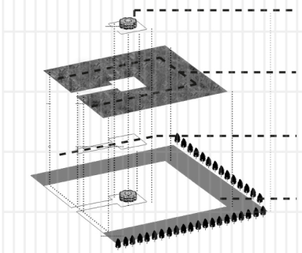


Enclosed

Main Axis

Planting Area

Dolat Abad Garden, Yazd



Linear Layout

Water Axis

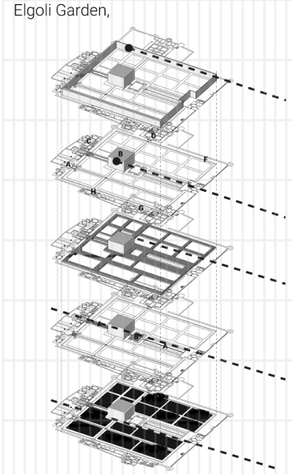
Pavilion in relation to the Water

Water Axis

Linear Layout

Planting Area

Elgoli Garden,



Enclosed

Linear Layout

Rectangular Geometry

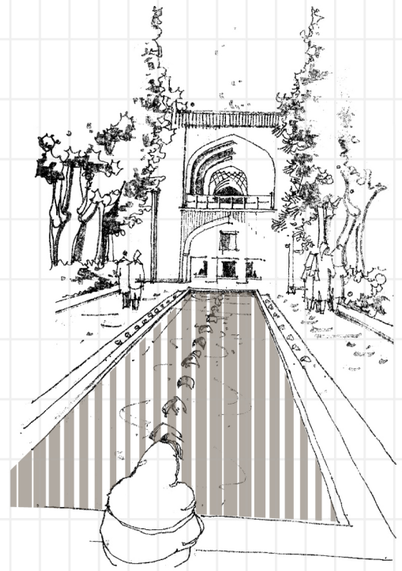
Pavilion in relation to the Water

Planting Area

Fin Garden, Kashan

Natrel Pond - Harbourfront

Linear Layout Water Axis



Linear Layout

Water Axis
Water Garden

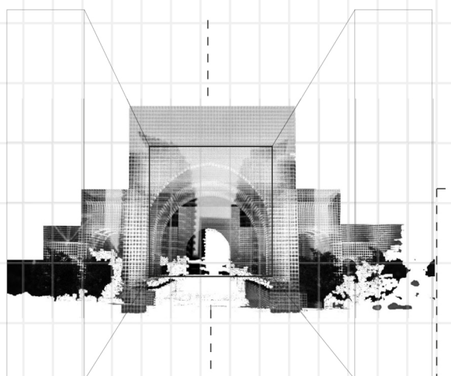
Pavilion in Relation to the Water

محور آب
باغ فیـــن کاشـــان

Water Axis
Fin Garden/ Kashan

Linear Layout Water Axis

Linear Approach



Water Garden Entrance

Access Point from the North

Access Point from the West

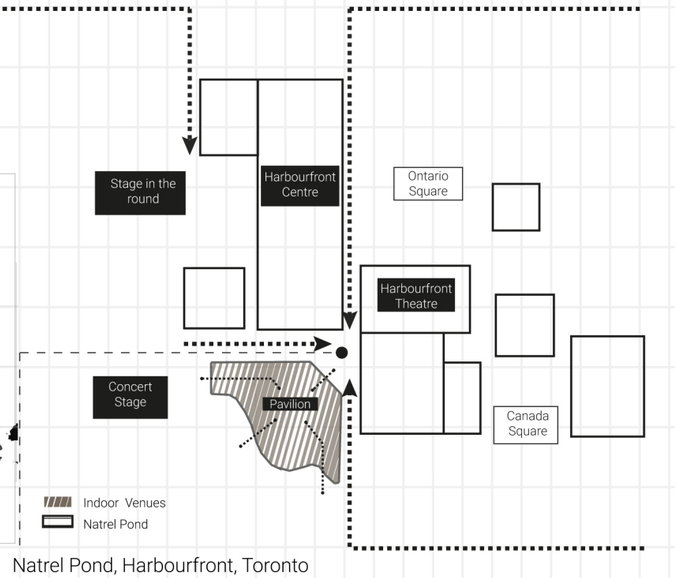
Access Point from the South

Potential Water Garden

Pavilion

Pavilion

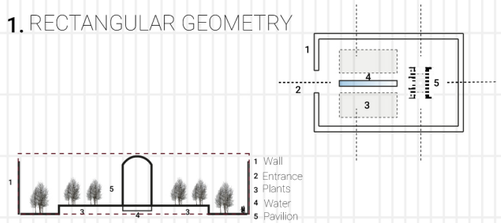
Circulation around the Site
(Access from Different Parts of the Festival)



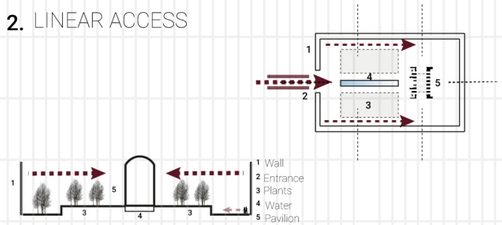
Natrel Pond, Harbourfront, Toronto

Persian Garden Paradigm: **Design Principles**

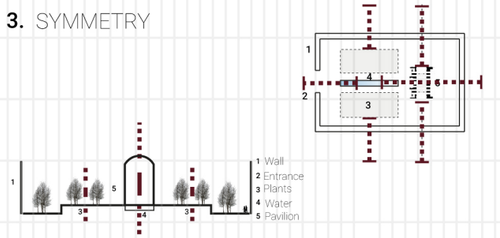
1. RECTANGULAR GEOMETRY



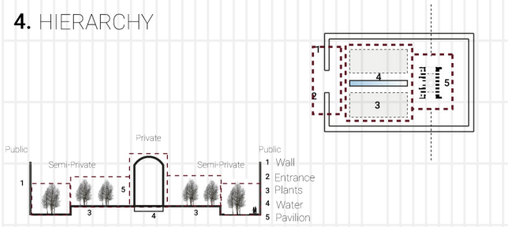
2. LINEAR ACCESS



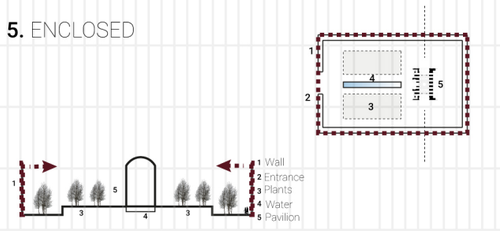
3. SYMMETRY



4. HIERARCHY



5. ENCLOSED

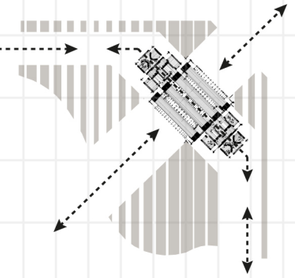


RECTANGULAR GEOMETRY

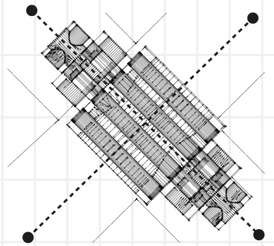
SYMMETRY

ENCLOSED

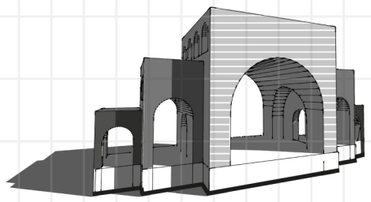
STRAIGHT ACCESS



Pavilion in relation to the Pond
Straight Network- Straight Entrance



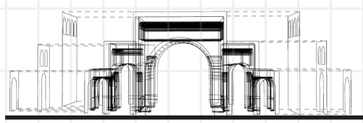
Rectangular Geometry- Symmetry



Water Garden Pavilion / Tirgan
Natrel Pond, Toronto

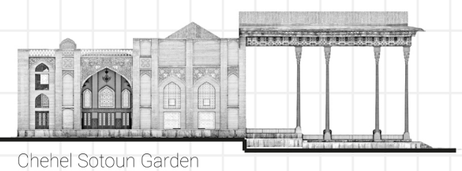
Fin Garden
Kashan, Iran

Chehel Sotoun Garden
Isfahan, Iran



Water Garden Pavilion / Tirgan

Fin Garden
Kashan, Iran

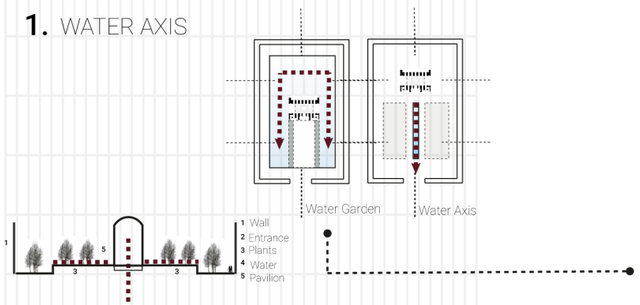


Chehel Sotoun Garden
Isfahan, Iran

Contemporary Case Studies

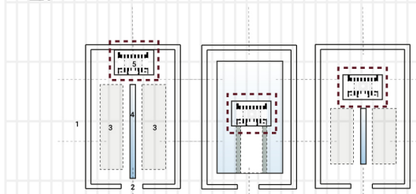
Persian Garden Paradigm: **Common Physical Elements**

1. WATER AXIS

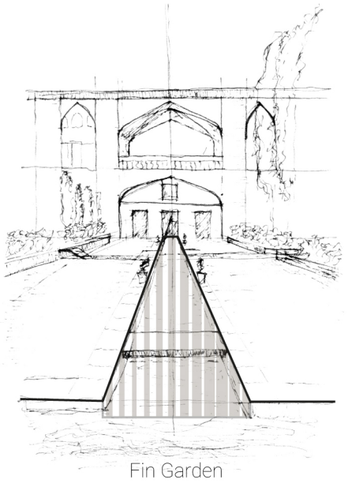


El-Goli Garden
Tabriz, Iran

2. PAVILION

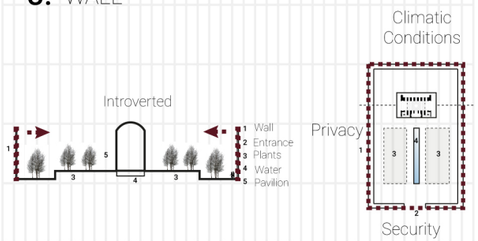


Pavilion at the middle of the garden



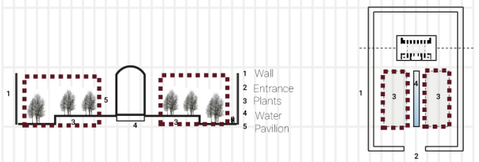
Fin Garden
Kashan, Iran

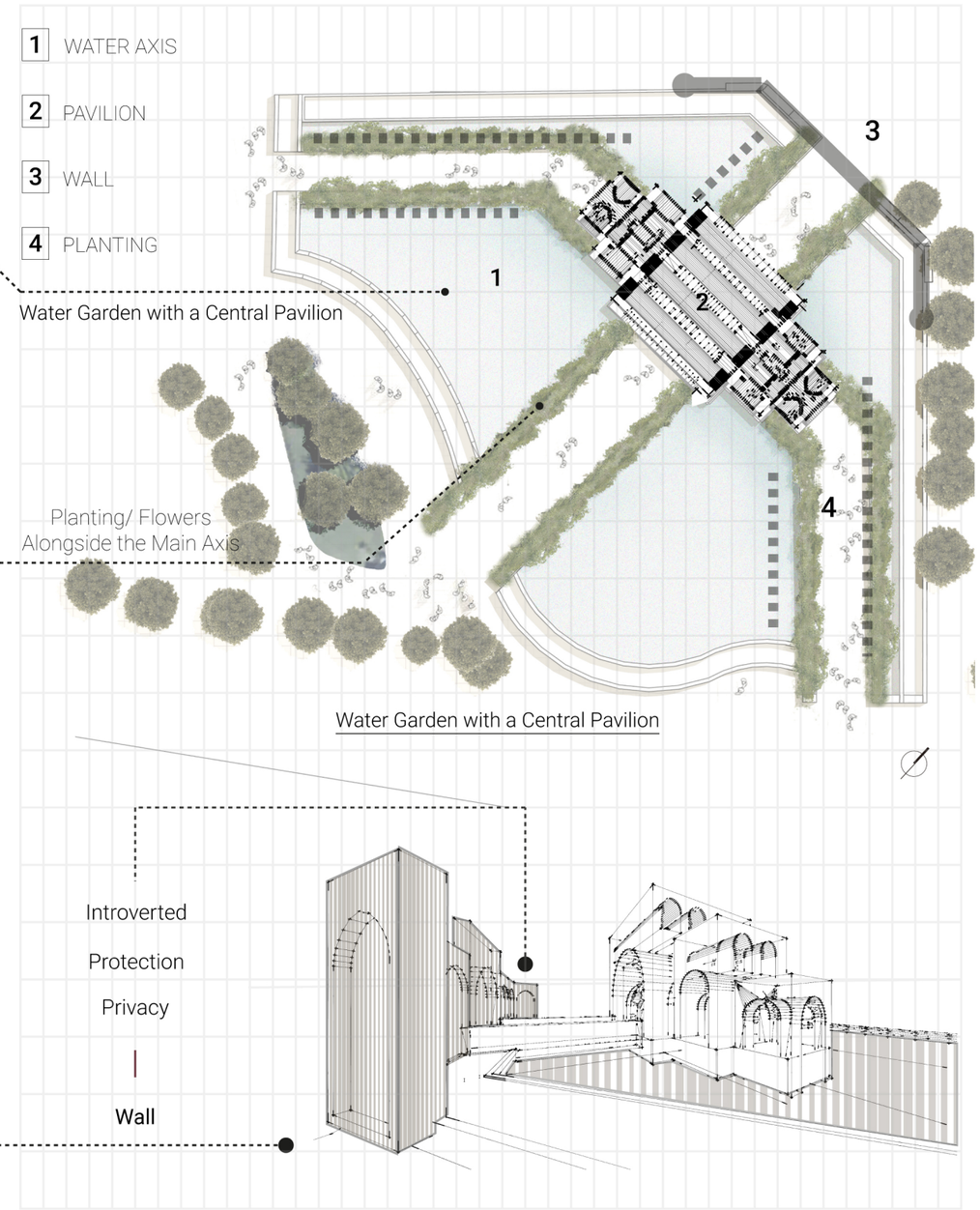
3. WALL



Fin Garden
Kashan, Iran

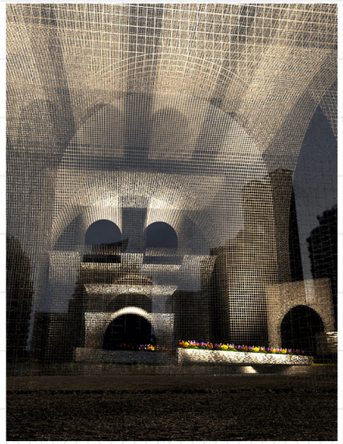
4. PLANTING



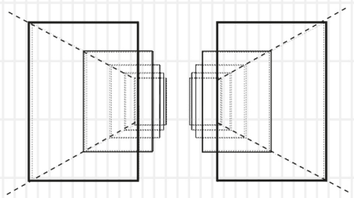


Contemporary Case Studies

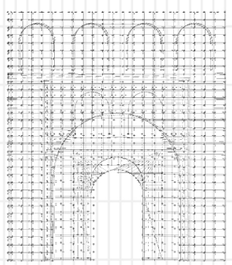
Persian Garden Paradigm: **Intangible Characteristics + Material**



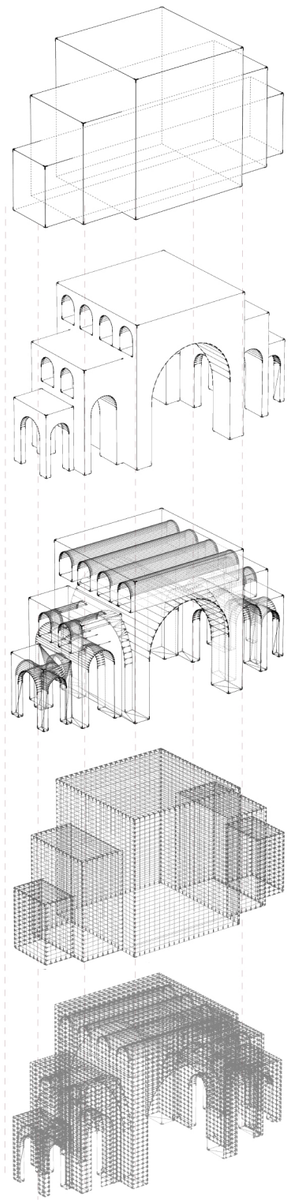
Linear Access
(Entrance, Pathway, Central Pavilion)



■ Virtual Vastness

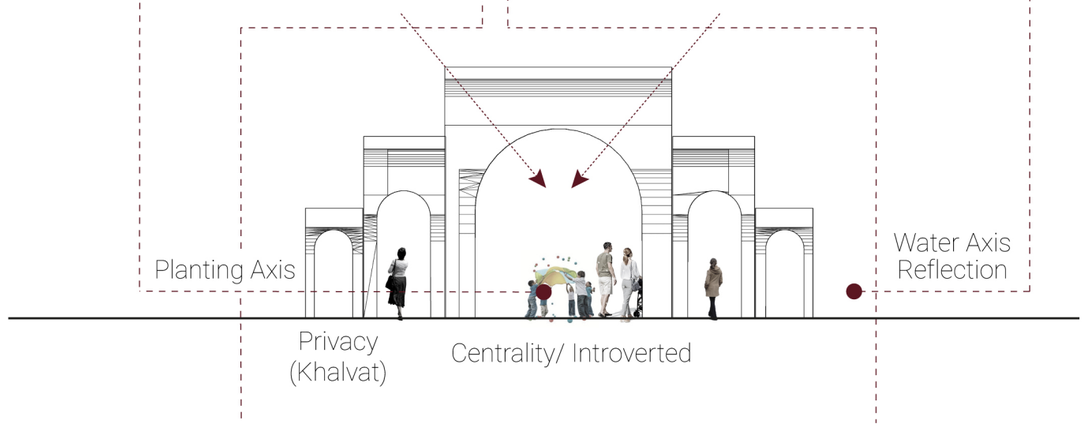


Virtual Vastness



■ Transparency (Wire Mesh)

View to the North



View from South to the North

View from West to the East

View from South to the North

Interior Space

4.6 The Distillery District Installation

For the Distillery installation, the location of the pavilion selected based on different performances on the site during the Tirgan Festival. The entrance from the Trinity street provides linear access to the site similar to the main axis in Persian gardens. The Persian bazaar and the kid's tent will be located alongside this main axis during the festival.

The historical character of the distillery and it's closed boundary had a direct impact on assigning a proper location for the pavilion. The surrounding buildings alongside of the main entrance can play the role of the masonry walls in Persian gardens recalling the privacy feature of these gardens.

The proposed design consists of two entrances and a central hanging dome which have been organized on the site based on symmetrical and linear layout. This composition is similar to the Persian garden's characteristics in which there is always an entrance alongside the main axis which connects two sides of the garden together.

Regarding the common physical elements of the Persian gardens, there is a central pool under the hanging dome which is a reminder of the private part of the Persian gardens. This central pool recalls the silent existence of water at the back end of the gardens where people get together around the pool to socialize with each other while enjoying the freshness of the environment.

Here, the proposed design has two entrances instead of one entrance with detailed muqarnas ornaments. These two entrances provide access to the installation from both sides of the site during the festival.

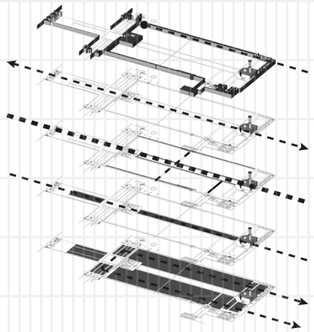
The existing plants, parallel to the main axis, act as the planting axis of the Persian gardens.

Regarding the intangible characteristics of the Persian gardens, the idea of the suspended dome comes from space in Persian gardens, "Nazargah", where there is a small pool with current and silent water with a small dome on top of that. The geometry of the dome and the Muqarnas details, are not only ornamental features but also are structural elements which help in creating the whole geometry. Muqarnas is a transitional element which helps in connecting the dome structure to the wall.

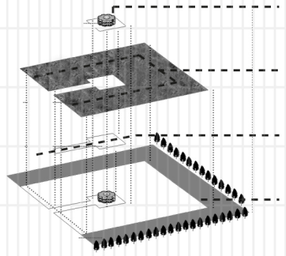
In this design, the Entrance meshes consist of a Muqarnas geometry which only can be seen after entering the space. This feature emphasizes the introverted character of the Persian gardens where nothing is visible from the outside.

SITE SELECTION APPROACH
The Distillery District,Toronto

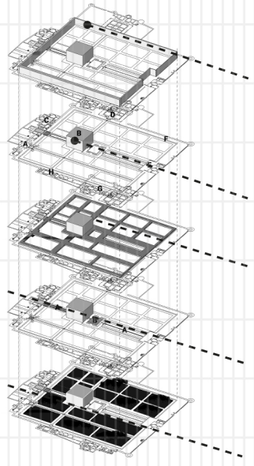
Persian Garden Case Studies



Dolat Abad Garden, Yazd



Elgoli Garden, Tabriz



Fin Garden, Kashan

Enclosed

Main Axis

Linear Layout

Water Axis

Planting Area

Pavilion in relation to the Water

Water Axis

Linear Layout

Planting Area

Enclosed

Linear Layout

Rectangular Geometry

Pavilion in relation to the Water

Planting Area

Linear Layout Enclosed

Linear Layout

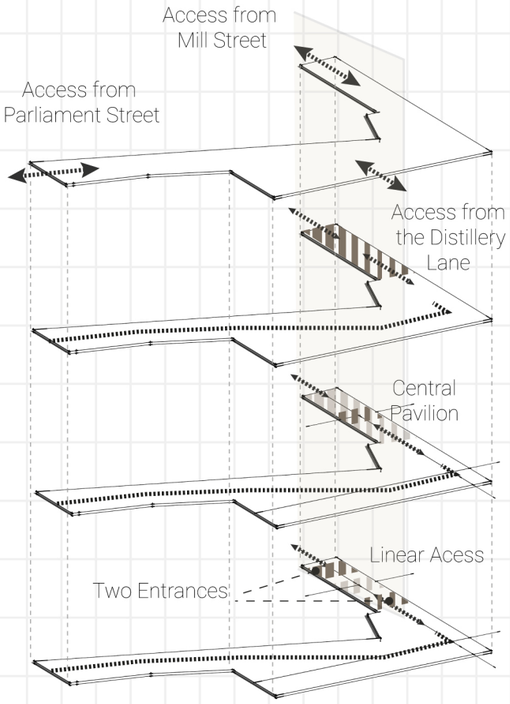
Linear Layout Rectangular Geometry

Fin Garden/ Kashan
باغ فین کاشان

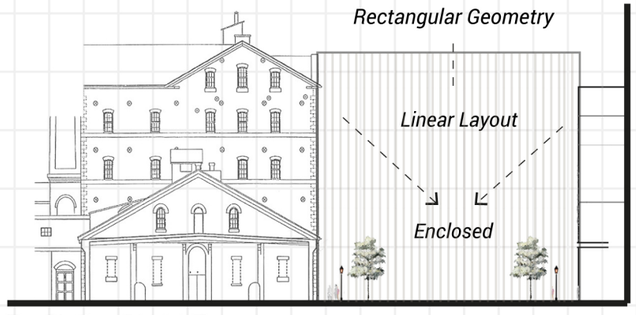
Linear Layout

Rectangular Geometry

Enclosed

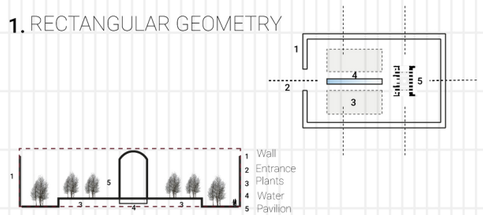


Potential Location for the Temporary Pavilion
The Distillery District, Toronto

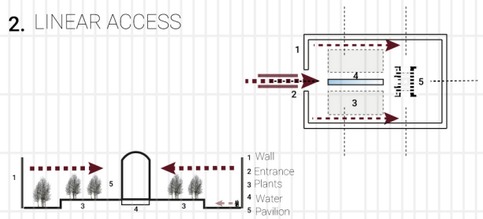


The Distillery District, Toronto

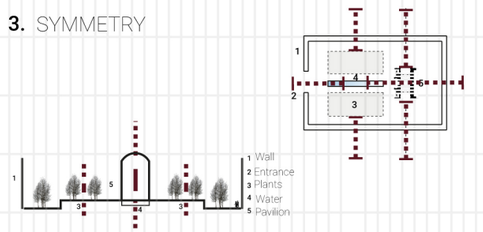
1. RECTANGULAR GEOMETRY



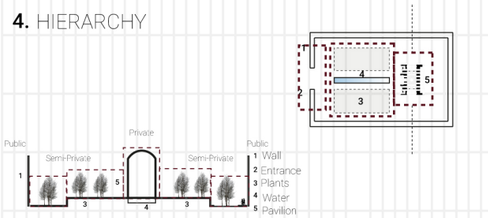
2. LINEAR ACCESS



3. SYMMETRY



4. HIERARCHY



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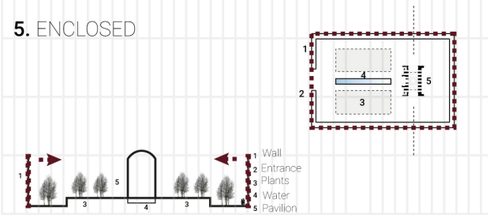
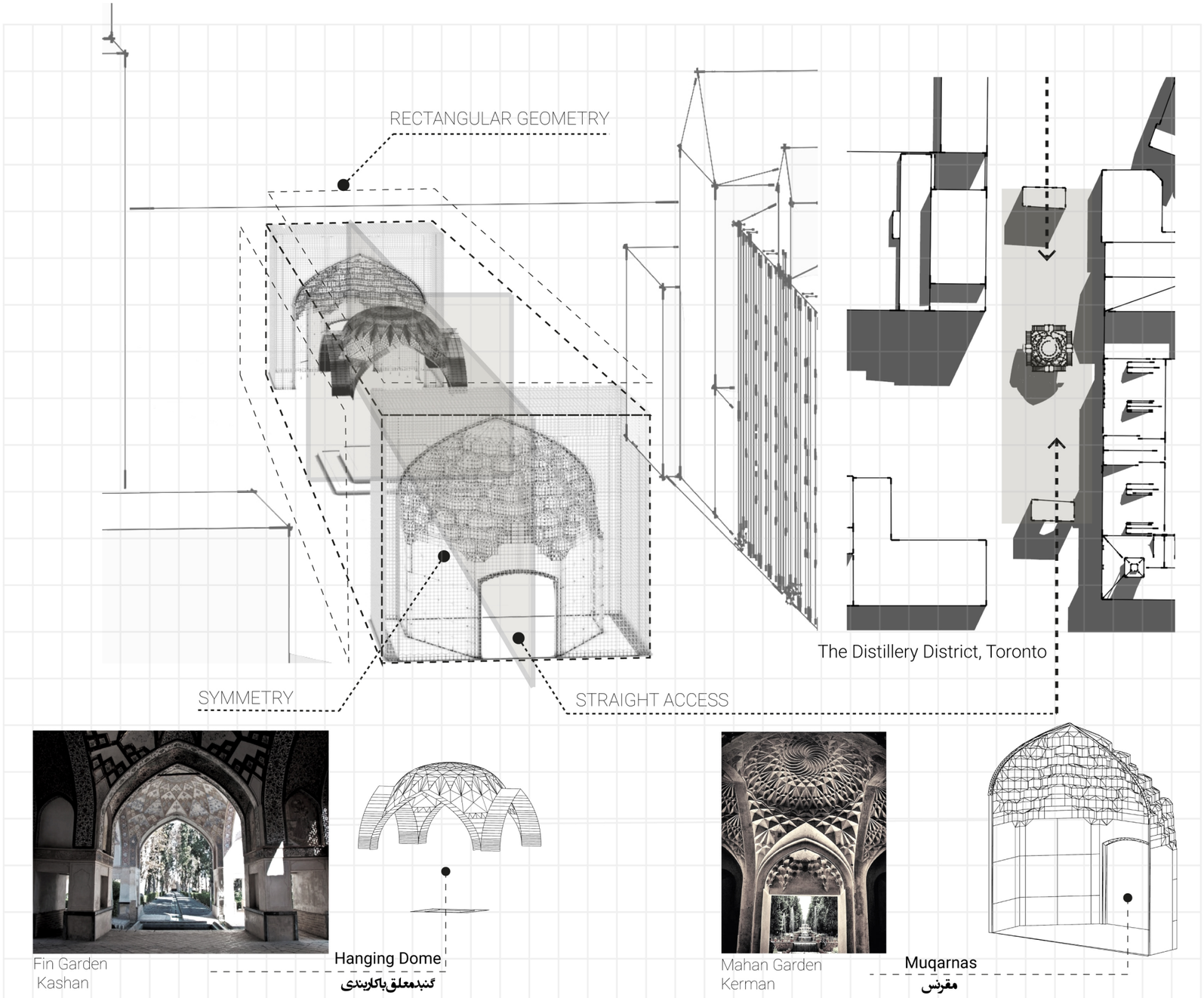




Fin Garden
Kashan

Hanging Dome
گنبدمعلق یاکاربندی

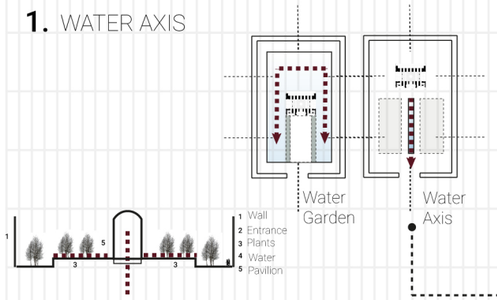
Mahan Garden
Kerman

Muqarnas
مقرنس

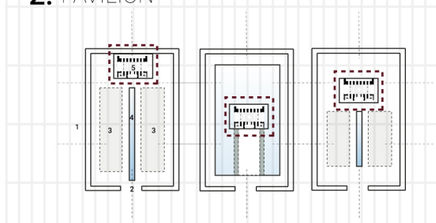
Contemporary Case Studies

Persian Garden Paradigm: **Common Physical Elements**

1. WATER AXIS

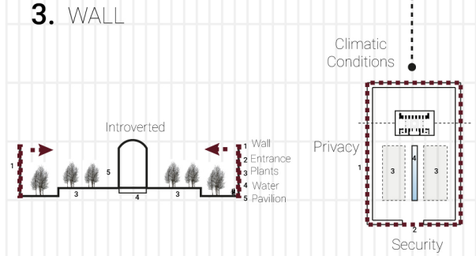


2. PAVILION

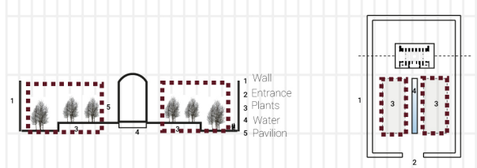


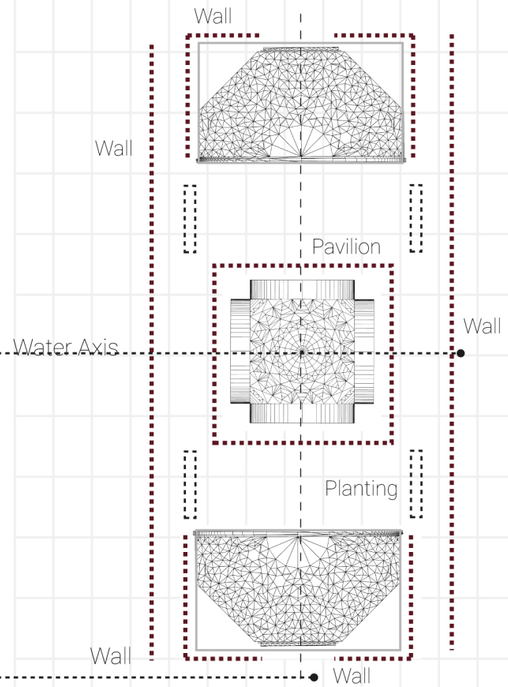
Pavilion at the middle of the garden

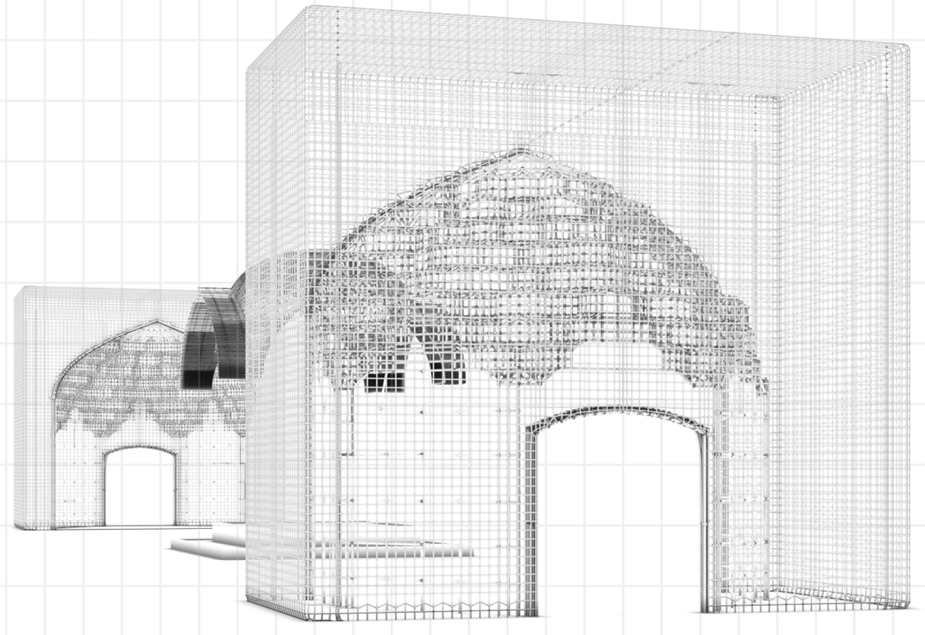
3. WALL



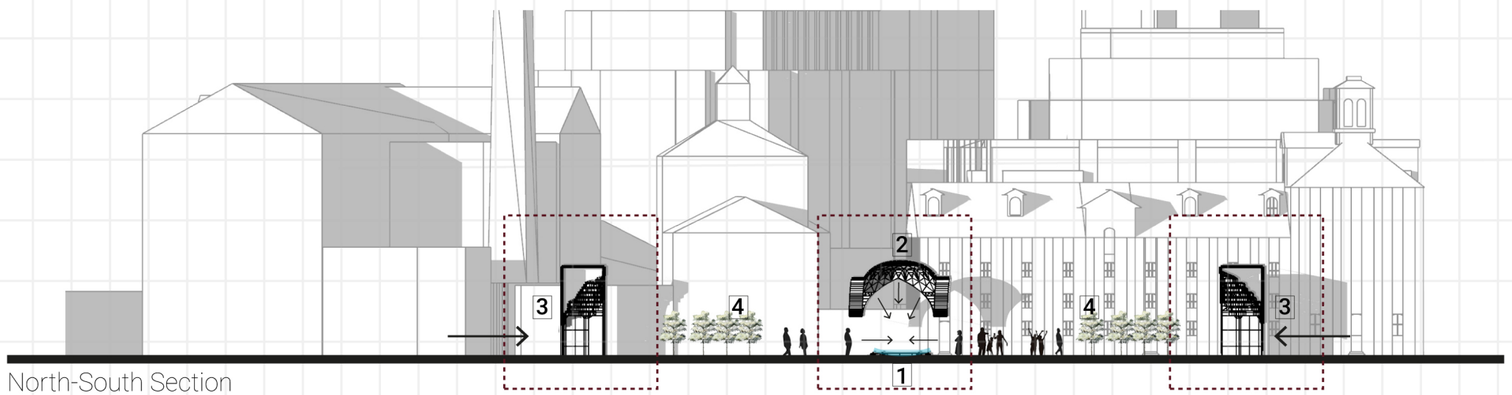
4. PLANTING







Entrance from the Trinity Street



North-South Section

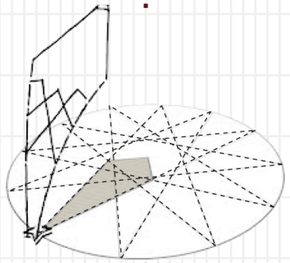
Contemporary Case Studies
Persian Garden Paradigm: **Intangible Characteristics + Material**

Fin Garden/ Kashan

باغ فیـــن

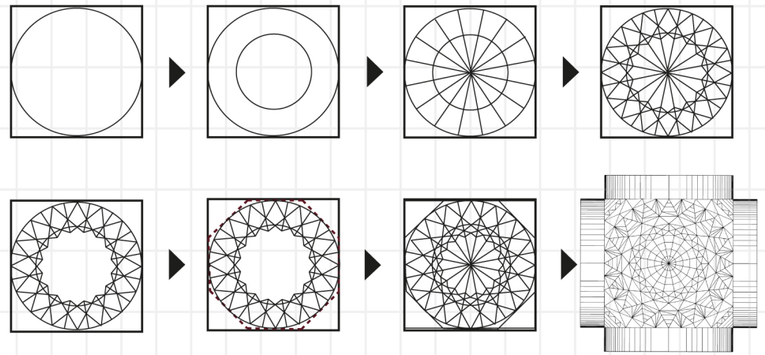
Centrality

Privacy
(Khalvat)

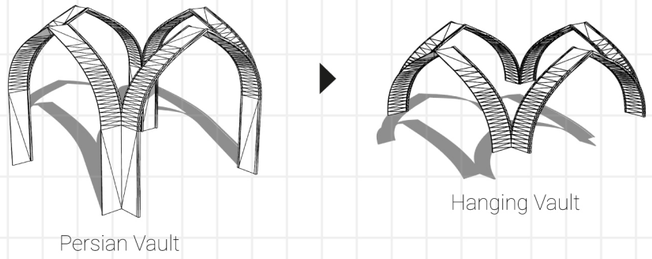


karbandi

Fin Garden/ Kashan

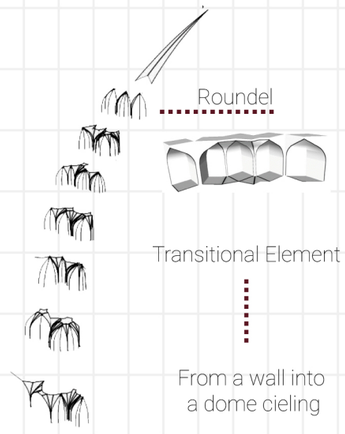


karbandi
نحوه ترسیم کاربندی



Persian Vault

Hanging Vault

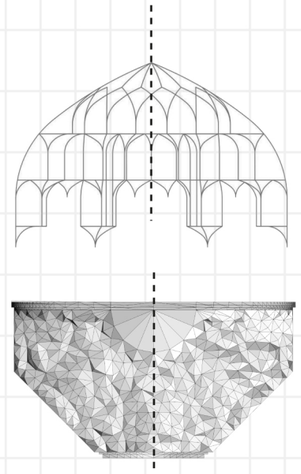


Roundel

Transitional Element

From a wall into
a dome cieling

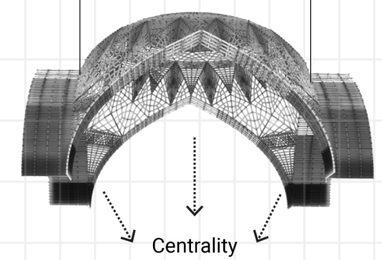
Exploded Muqarnas



Symmetry

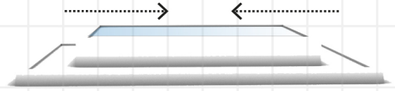
suspended Dome

گنبد معلق با کاربندی

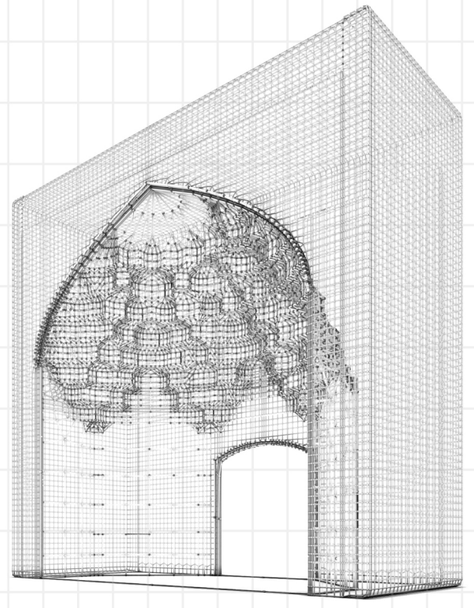


Centrality
نظرگاه

Reflection



Privacy
(Khalvat)



View from North to the South

View from East to the West

View from North to the South

View from East to the West

PART FIVE : CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

“I wish...
I wish we could carry our homeland
Like violets flowers
In soil boxes
with ourselves wherever we want
In the rain,
In the clear sun”

ای کاش...
ای کاش آدمی وطنش را
مثل بنفشه‌ها
)در جعبه‌های خاک(
یک روز می‌توانست،
همراه خویش ببرد هر کجا که خواست
در روشنای باران،
در آفتاب پاک

شفیعی کدکنی

5. Outlook

In both of the proposed installations, there is a relationship between the classical and the contemporary volumes. While, in terms of design principles, both structures are rooted in a Persian cultural archetype, their materiality and overall compositions have been translated into a new language. One possible misinterpretation that might occur in perceiving these proposals is to read them as merely Persian objects or monuments installed in the context of Toronto.

These two installations are condensed versions of the Persian garden paradigm, which, has the potential to be recontextualized and emerge in different contexts based on given socio-cultural requirements. This emergence can extend or purge elements in order to achieve a comprehensive configuration of the whole design, considering both the given context and the main elements of the Persian garden paradigm.

In this thesis, the proposed designs in both locations are silent cultural representatives of a familiar and established archetypal element in Persian culture. From entering these pavilions to walking through their spaces, and even observing them from the outside, all the design elements act as a reminder calling forth the memory of well-experienced spaces for the Persian community. This monolectic communication in silence is a mode that has been practiced by Iranians through their traditional style of architecture and landscape design pattern in which every element has a hidden meaning that needs to be explored by the observer. However, this pattern might not necessarily be perceived and understood by people from other cultures. In this case, these pavilions are mediums through which people experience other cultures in an environment conducive to cultural and social interactions.

This is the point where the dialectical dialogue evolves into a monolectic dialogue that needs to be translated for people from other cultures. Rather than creating a platform for this monolectic communication, this thesis has been focused mostly on the communication between these two temporary pavilions and the Persian community in Toronto during a Persian festival. Future studies can investigate if these types of cultural representations can create mutual communications with other cultures.

Following the original framework of the Persian garden paradigm, the proposed temporary installations compose formal and geometric spaces with blended materials. In spite of the application of mixed approaches, the function of each element and its assigned socio-cultural role can be perceived by the Persian people. These cues are followed by expected social activities within these spaces.

Iranians know how to utilize and enjoy these spaces while reimagining memories of their homeland. However, people from other cultures do not share these common memories and experiences of the original patterns and it might be unclear to them how these spaces are employed to respond to socio-cultural needs. This is the main reason for simplifying and updating the Persian garden paradigm using the minimum required elements in these proposals. Persian gardens are inherently complex structures, which respond to various social, cultural, political, and economic needs in the original context. However, this does not prevent the paradigm from being applied in other contexts.

For Iranians, it is clear what they should expect to observe and feel in each part of either installation. After entering through the main gate, they expect to feel the freshness of a planting area and see flowers along the walking path while imagining the sound of water and the petrichor emanating from the rapidly drying soil. In both installations, the main axis is merely a walking path that prepares the observer to reach the main pavilion. The proposed wire mesh configurations help in creating uncertainty and the dual character of the space, which is the intention of this thesis. After following the walking path, the main pavilion appears. At this point, two different reactions are expected to be observed in each of the proposed designs.

In Harbourfront, the pavilion at the centre is expected to be utilized for small performances during the festival. Originally, these types of central spaces were used for performing arts such as traditional storytelling, public gatherings, or as a tea house. People anticipate a social event or small gathering in this central space.

In Distillery District, rather than expecting a social event in the central space, the hanging dome and a pool are elements that promote self-reflection and concentration. This pool is a reminder of coins tossed into the pool by people while making a wish at a more private part of the Persian gardens.

Despite many other studies which might have an open-ended character, this thesis concludes by proposing a design framework regarding the recontextualization of the Persian garden paradigm. This analytical guideline can be applied to any other context while using different design approaches. Here, the significant point is to implement the guideline so that the overall composition represents the harmony and integration of the original pattern. The level of abstraction does not matter if the design communicates with the Persian community and acts as an anchor for their memories.

There are a few open questions that are worthy of future investigation. Although designing for an "in-between" space is about providing a context for activities in the host land, it is not the same as conventional design practice in the host land. As a result, these specifically designed structures for an "in-between" space might not be legible to people who do not share certain life experiences. For instance, in this thesis, the wire mesh material is the simplest and least intense material that could be used to illustrate the dual character of the "in-between" space. It seems valuable to investigate other modes of communication to create a moment of remembering for people from different cultural backgrounds. It would also be interesting to investigate the differences and similarities between an "in-between" space for one culture and an "in-between" space for people from another culture. Is there any way in which we can connect them to create a physical context and enable mutual communication?

6. Conclusion

People might experience different feelings regarding their homeland after moving to a new country. "In between" is a condition of life described in this thesis as a separate entity from both one's homeland and the host land. People never quite realize how strongly they are bonded to their home country until they leave it. That is the point at which they might feel a great change and many differences in their life.

Although moving to a new country provides new opportunities for learning and growth, it is not necessarily a simple adjustment. People must try other ways of living to adjust themselves to the condition of life in a new context. What they generally tend to achieve is to create a familiar and comfortable space that resembles the cultural and social context of their home country.

For the Persian community in Toronto, the Tirgan festival is the most significant cultural celebration of Iranian art and culture, which has the potential to provide the desired familiar context for an "in-between" space. But what are the characteristics and differences between this familiar context and the original context of their homeland?

The most recognizable feature of life in "in-between" space is the virtual presence of real ties to the homeland. People get accustomed to virtually connecting themselves to their homeland in order to maintain strong ties with their family and friends. As a result, in a given moment they can feel connected to both their homeland and the host land.

In this thesis, the two temporary installations are communicators of the Persian culture to the Persian community and the greater context of Toronto. Merged with the context of the Tirgan festival, these installations are manifestations of cultural patterns of Persian gardens that temporarily connect people to their memories and social values. The people who live in an “in-between” space know how to celebrate and enjoy those virtual moments by completing the rest of the unfinished patterns in their mind.

Considering the context of Toronto, these installations create a cross-cultural dialogue between different ethnicities. Within the cultural mosaic of Toronto, these cultural representations can act as a strong means of communication that enhance the general perception towards one specific culture. Thus, people can explore and experience the values and beliefs of a culture and even find out if there is any overlap between different cultures. This can open a new perspective on the application of these temporary installations after being used for the Persian cultural festival. What are the other ways in which these cultural reinterpretations can collaborate to fulfill another socio-cultural need?

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