Narrated City

Using a narrative-ethnographic-grounded approach in urban design studies
Case study: Yazd, Iran
First Inspiration

“This is my Place; This is my Home”.

Statement of Problem

Iranian Contemporary Developments and the Lack of Efficient and Accepted Methods of Analysing.
Traditional Iranian Women’s Dresses as Symbols of Diverse Local Cultures of Iran.
Map by the Author.
Knowledge Gap

Lack of Social Studies in Analysing Iranian Traditional Cities.
Lack of Citizen Participation in Iranian Urban Development.

Table Source: (Centre of Studies for Urban Planning, 2000 in Mohammdi, 2010, p.11).

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**Legend:**
- very low: 0
- low: 1
- fairly much: 2
- much: 3
- too much: 4

Research Methodology

A Combination of four Inductive Social Research Methodologies:

- Case Study
- Grounded Theory
- Ethnography
- Narrative

City Level: Intrinsic Case

District Level: Single Embedded Case

Neighbourhood Level: Constructive Grounded Theory

Community Level: Inductive Ethnography

Individuals Level: Oral and Autoethnography Narrative
Parcheh-e-Kohneh: Worn-out Fabric

Pineh-e-Shotor: A Naturally Tanned Camels’ Hide after Exposure to the Desert.

Zayeat-e-tCharm-e-Tabiee: Scattered Natural Leather

Nakh-e-Tabiee: Natural Cotton

Top  Sole
The Main Roads of Iran.
Map Source: (Nader Ardalan in Habibi, 2005, p.18).
Ancient Iran or Persia.
Map Source: (Axworthy, 2008, p.11).
Present Day Iran.
Map Source: (Katouzian, 2009, p.xii).
The People of Iran

Iranians were a branch of the Indo-European lineage.

They moved from ‘the shores of the Caspian Sea’ (Durant, 1935, p.350) and settled in Western Europe, Iran, Central Asia, and northern India, in successive migrations and incursions near the end of two millennia B.C. (Axworthy, 2008).

Religion

Ancient: Zoroastrian
Current: Islam (Shia Sect)
Urban Development in Iran

The history of urbanization can generally be divided into three phases (Habibi, 2005):

- Pre-Islamic Cities:
- Islamic Cities
- Contemporary Cities
Pre-Islamic Cities:

Before the Arrival of the Migrants (9000 BC).

After the Arrival of the Migrants:

Medes Cities
(700-550 B.C.).

Achaemenid Cities
(550-330 B.C.).

Parthian Cities
(247-224 B.C.).

Sassanian Cities
(224 B.C.-651 A.D.).

The original maps were hand drawn sketches later redrawn by the author using AutoCAD software.
Islamic Cities:

- **Early Islamic Cities** (7-8th Century)
- **Seljuk Cities** (1037-1194)
- **Safavid Cities** (1501-1736)

Map Sources: (Habibi 1976 in Habibi 2005, pp.67-110). The original maps were hand drawn sketches later redrawn by the author using AutoCAD software.
Contemporary Cities:

A Map of the City of Tehran, 1789.
Map Source: (Mir-Miran and Bigleri in Habibi, 2005, p.122).
The Various Natural Settings of Iran.

Map by the Author.

The information used to draw the map has been sourced from (Seyedna, 1982) as well as Google Map.
Why Yazd?

- Historic City
- Old City
- New City
Historic Fabric
Historic Fabric
New Fabric
Selected Cases within Yazd

- Old City
- Nersi/Nasr-Abad Centre
- Historic City
- Fahadan Centre
- New City
- Safaieh Centre
Fahadan
The Official Boundary of the Neighbourhood or Mahalleh Named Barzan-e-Fahadan as Defined by the Locals (Khademzadeh, 2007).

The Official Boundary the Neighbourhood or Mahalleh Named (2-1-5) as Defined by the Latest Tarh-e-Tafzili (Armanshahr, 2017).

The Traditional Boundary of the Neighbourhood or Mahalleh Named Fahadan as Defined by the Locals (Khademzadeh, 2007).
The Location of Osta’s House outside of the Official Boundary of Fahadan.

Drawing by the Author. Map taken from the current plan of Yazd.
The Centre of Fahadan.
The drawing has been made through information extracted from photos and films recorded by the author in Fahadan 2016 and 2018.
Bala-Khuneh or Up-House Used During the Winter Season

Paeen-Khuneh or Down-House Used During the Summer Season
Fahadan

Place of Tradition

Respecting and Practicing Local Traditions
Living in Traditional Dwellings

Some Low-income Natives and Migrants’ Reasons for Remaining in Fahadan: Out of Deprivation
Being a Native of Fahadan and Personal Identity Attachments
Recalling Memories
Living Nearby Family/Relatives

The Natives’ Reasons for Remaining in Fahadan:

- Visiting Family/Relatives
- Visiting the Historic Fabric
- Attending Festivals
- Available Living Places

Visiting Family/Relatives
Recalling Memories
Feeling Peace
Experiencing Traditional Facilities
Attending Festivals
Being a Native of Fahadan and Personal and Community Identity Attachments

Experiencing Modern Facilities
Moving to a Better Place
Visiting Family/Relatives

Old City

New City

Outside of Yazd
نصرآباد/ نرسی آباد
Nersi/Nasr-Abad
The Official Boundary of the Neighbourhood or Mahalleh Named (1-1-2) as Defined by the Latest Tarh-e-Tafzili (Armanshahr, 2017).

The Traditional Boundary of the Neighbourhood or Mahalleh Named Nasr-Abad by Muslim Community (see Khademzadeh, 2007).

The Traditional Boundary of the Neighbourhood or Mahalleh Named Neris-Abad by Zoroastrian Community.

The Zoroastrian Religious Boundary Defined by Seven Religious Places Known as Pir, which the Author Learned through Living with the Community.
A Zoroastrian Traditional Dwelling or Chahar-Peskami with Courtyard.

A New Residential Dwellings with Front Yard.

A New Residential Dwellings with Back Yard.

A Zoroastrian Religious Place

A Jewish Religious Place

A Zoroastrian Traditional Dwelling or Chahar-Peskami with Converting Courtyard to a Livingroom.

The Cistern’s Door Used by Zoroastrians.

The Cistern’s Door Used by Muslims.

A Ab-Anbar or Cistern with Two Doors; One Door was Used by the Zoroastrians while the Other was Used by Muslims.

The Centre of Nersi/Nasr-Abad.
The drawing has been made through information extracted from photos and films recorded by the author in Nersi/Nasr-Abad in 2016 and 2018.
A Zoroastrian and a Jewish Religious Places Located in the Middle of the Street in the Centre of Nersi/Nasr-Abad

The Centre of Nersi/Nasr-Abad Centre.
The drawing has been made through information extracted from photos and films recorded by the author in Nersi/Nasr-Abad in 2016 and 2018.
A Zoroastrian Religious Place Located in the Middle of the Street.

Map and Photo by the Author, Nersi/Nasr-Abad, Yazd, 2016.
Zoroastrian Internal Religious and Social Gatherings
Lack of Open Spaces and Public Places within the Neighbourhood

- At Home
- Within Religious Places
- Outside the Neighbourhood
An Example of a Zoroastrian Traditional Dwelling. In this house, Peskam-e-Mas or Pure-Peskam is of the same height of other Peskams, which speaks of the time of Zoroastrian segregation.

An Example of a Zoroastrian Traditional Dwelling or Chahar-Peskami.

The drawing has been made by Negin Khosravi and the Author through information extracted from photos and films recorded by the author in Nersi/Nasr-Abad in 2016 and 2018.
This Doorknocker is Recognized as the Male Knocker by the Locals.

This Doorknocker is Recognized as the Female Knocker by the Locals.

Gender and the Use of Different Doorknockers.

Photo by the Author, Fahadan, Yazd, 2018.
A Zoroastrian Traditional Dwelling or Chahar-Peskami with Converted Courtyard to a Livingroom.

Converting the Peskam-e-Mas to an Otagh-e-Pak.

Converting the Long Room, Tanabi, to a Back Yard and a Bedroom.

Zoroastrian Traditional Dwellings or Chahar-Peskami with Courtyard.

Functional Changes in a Chahar-Peskami Dwelling.

Drawing and Photo by the Author, Nersi/Nasr-Abad, 2018.
Safaieh
The Official Boundaries and Class Divisions of Safaieh.
Map by the Author.
The official boundaries of Safaieh sourced from Armanshahr (2017).
The Centre of Safaieh.

The drawing has been made through information extracted from photos and films recorded by the author in Safaieh in 2016 and 2018.
An Example of Affluent Dwellings of Safaieh.

Photo by a resident of Yazd.
An Example of Low-income Dwellings of Safaieh.
Photo by the Author, Safaieh, Yazd, 2016.
Safaieh
Place of Modernity-Policy-Economy

The Natives’ Reasons for Relocating to Safaieh:
- Visiting Family/Relatives
- Respecting and Practicing Modern Socio-Cultural Relationships
- Accessing Modern Urban Facilities
- Having Good Neighbours
- Investment and Job Opportunities
- Moving to a Better Place
- Experiencing Modern Facilities
- Feeling Peace
- Experiencing Traditional Facilities
- Attending Festivals
- Being a Native of the Historic Fabric and Personal Identity Attachments
- Being a Native of the Old Fabric and Personal Identity Attachments
- Recalling Memories
- Attending Festivals
- Visiting Family/Relatives/Old Neighbours
- Visiting Family/Relatives

Migrants’ Reasons for Relocating to Safaieh:
- War Effects
- Out of Deprivation
- Job Opportunities

Visiting Family/Relatives/Old Neighbours
- Spending Leisure Time
- Moving to a Better Place
- Experiencing Modern Facilities
- Visiting Family/Relatives
- Being a Native of the Historic Fabric and Personal Identity Attachments

Old City

Historic City

Outside of Yazd
A Family Photo Not Displaying the Hijab.

A Broken Taboo in Safaieh.
Photo by the Author, Safaieh, Yazd, 2016.
A Photo of Bibi’s Father in the Researcher’s Room.

Respecting Local Tradition.
Photo by the Author, Fahadan, Yazd, 2016.
The absence of cushions for sitting on the floor indicates that this traditional activity is not normally practiced in some residential dwellings of Safaieh.

Photo by the Author, Safaieh, Yazd, 2018.
Fake Badgir as a City Identity

Physical Identity.
Photo by the Author, Safaieh, Yazd, 2016.
The Zoroastrian Tower of Silence.

Photo by the Author, Safaieh, Yazd, 2016.
Historic City: Place of Tradition

New City: Place of Modernity-Policy-Economy

Old City: Place of Community

Yazd: Socio-cultural Interrelationships

Overall Result
سمینار
پژوهشی برای سهولت در راه رفتن
(رزم‌نظامی و اجتماعی و گردشگری)

مکان: تالار اجتماعات باغ دولت آباد
زمان: جمعه 97/17 ساعت 20 - 18

پژوهشگر: فاطمه رستمی
دانشجوی دکترای طراحی شهری از دانشگاه انگلستان UEL
Yazd in London

A One Day Exhibition on the City of Yazd from the Perspective of Urban Design

Hearing the voices of the people of Yazd talking about their living places

Based on PhD research by Fatemeh Rostami at the University of East London (2015-2019)

Venue: WORLD ZOROASTRIAN HOUSE [WZH]: 5 Hanworth Road, Feltham, London, TW13 5AF.

(WZH is just below the Feltham Railway bridge and between the children’s playground and pond).

Date: 14 September 2019.

Time: 3-6pm:
3:00-3:20: Welcome, refreshments, and viewing displayed materials.
3:20-3:30: Introduction by Shahin Bokhradnia (A member of World Zoroastrian Organization’s committee).
3:30-4:00: The performing of traditional Iranian instruments (Santur, Tar, and Daf) by Hossein Tavan and Hamid Tavan.
4:00-4:15: A Zoroastrian religious ceremony performed by Jimmy Madin (The centre’s priest).
4:15-4:30: A talk by Roland Kerthaus (Director of Matter Architecture).
4:30-5:15: Presentation by Fatemeh Rostami (Researcher and Organiser of the Exhibition).
5:15-5:30: Questions and discussion.
5:30-6:00: Networking, refreshments, and viewing displayed materials.
6:30pm: End of exhibition.
Research Contribution
A narrative-ethnographic-grounded approach for analysing traditional Iranian cities
The Last Word

‘Every site has a long history that bears on its present. Every site will have a long future, over which the designer extracts only partial control. The new site form is one episode in a continuous interplay of space and people. Sooner or later, it will be succeeded by another cycle of adaption’ (Lynch and Hack, 1984, p.12). As the Iranian poet, Rumi says:

هست یارب کاروان در کاروان
میرونده این کاروان ها دم به دم
از عدم ها سوی هستی هر زمان
باز از هستی روان سوی عدم

From non-existences to the universe at any time
And from the universe goes towards non-existence

Oh lord caravan comes after caravan...
Go these caravans time after time...