

## SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

**Manuscript info:**

*Received July 9, 2018., Accepted August 11, 2018., Published August 30, 2018.*

# THE INFLUENCE OF IRANIAN ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE ON THE HOUSE OF QAJAR PERIOD IN TABRIZ (STUDY CASE AMIR NEZAM HOUSE)

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.26739/2573-5616-2018-8-7>

**Abstract:** In this article, the authors study the influence of Iranian Islamic architecture on the house of qajar period in tabriz (study case amir nezam house) also Amir Nezam house, Iranian Islamic architecture.

Considering many old buildings around the world, it is noticeable that there are reasonable relationships between the human way of life and the architecture of the place. The internal form or structure is an organic combination into an integral whole - an architectural object - of the inner, enclosing and outer space. The interior space of the architectural object is its soul, is formed by a function, is evaluated by use. The space protecting the architectural object is its physical body, it is formed by the construction, it is evaluated durably The outer space of the architectural object determines its spirit, is formed by context, is estimated by beauty.

**Keywords:** Iranian history and culture, architecture, design, Amir Nezam House, Residential buildings.

**Recommended citation:** Ashurova Khurshida Sagdullaevna. Features of cosio-political ideas of Samarkand jadids. 7-8 American Journal of Research P. 57-64 (2018).

## INTRODUCTION:

This essay is an attempt to discover the place of residential houses in Iranian history and culture. As a place where they spend a significant amount of time there, should be able to fulfill their needs physically and spiritually as well as satisfying their cultural and religious aspects of their lifestyles.

By looking at many old buildings around the world, it is noticeable that there are reasonable relations

between human lifestyle and the architecture of the place. As Alexander, who is the writer of architectural books about identity of places, has mentioned: The identity of old buildings come from each of their parts being united with their environment and, can recognize the forces around it and obeys the principle of environment and human nature. [1]

Eastern art is based on spirituality. It pays more attention to traditions,

which has been formed by the people of society.[2]Iranian traditional art can perform functionally in such a way that aims to console the human soul. [3]

While architecture attempts to create an environment that suits particular aspects of human life, which respects his beliefs and personal ambitions, his thoughts and high spiritedness [4]

In addition to the importance of spiritual issues in architecture, Islamic architects has considered climate and environment as one the most important factors that generates a correlation between the spiritual demands of the inhabitants, the environment and the climate, and applied these factors to create a formal form. [5]

Tabriz is one of the most significant historical cities of Iran with a history dating back to the pre-Islamic period.[6]

The ancient city of Tabriz is located at latitude 38°8' N and at longitude 46°17' E. The area of Tabriz is about 1650 square kilometers. It is 619 km from west of Tehran - the capital of Iran - in North- West of Iran [7]Cold weather is the main climatic problem in this city. Therefore, the major concerns for the traditional builders of these high latitudes were to create a warm and comfortable environment for human activities.At the beginning of the rule of the Qajar dynasty, Tabriz became the second capital of Iran and was established as the formal settlement for the

crown princess of this dynasty.In order to create a harmony within this climate condition, the vernacular architect has implemented some strategies in response to such weather, while basing his designs on environmental concerns and the sustainable interaction between the human and the environment is observed.

The technique that Iranian architects have used in house construction has taken advantage of the climate and is in harmony with climate conditions in each region. Traditional Iranian houses in vernacular architecture show that the people have been developing their homes based on climatic comfort in a variety of climatic conditions. An appreciation of the architecture of in each region and period necessitates an awareness of its subtle correspondence with its respective climate. [8]

#### **Amir Nezam House:**

The construction date of the structure is Qajar period. It consists of an exterior and an interior courtyard. The interior courtyard is in the eastern front with a brick arch. The western part has two stories. It ground floor has several nested rooms. The central building has two floors and in its south facade is located a high veranda whose central ceiling has Santouri and plaster decorations.(Fig. 1)

The central part of this edifice also has two floors and a high ivan supported by sixteen columns with

stone capitals and a pediment decorated with stucco-work. Access to the ground floor is provided by means of two staircases located on both sides. A reception hall with lattice sash windows with stained glass is situated in the central part of this floor and two traverses

located on its sides lead to lateral rooms Access to the basement is through two main stairways and a traverse. The vaulted basement houses a large pool room in the middle with brickwork decoration and stone columns The restoration of this building is now complete. [9]



**(Fig. 1), Amir Nezam House, Iran, Tabriz**

**1. Condensed Urban Fabric:**

The urban fabric in Tabriz was compacted and spaces were enclosed. Because,

this compacted spaces was utilized for buildings to keep the heat in the winter time.(Fig. 2) Moreover, spaces would be protected against the winter winds. Buildings forms in this city were also designed according to the cold climatic

conditions. Therefore, building form in Tabriz had the following characteristics:

1. Buildings were adjoined buildings
2. Buildings were inward oriented and had a central courtyard
3. Low ceiling
4. Flat roofs for houses
5. Small or no verandas
6. Thick masonry walls [8]



**(Fig. 2) Section, Amir Nezam house, designed according to the cold climatic conditions**

## 2. Intervention:

it from the moral point of view including meanings that have a tendency to inner feelings and avoid from showing them. Facades have been presented in Iranian Islamic architecture at very modest level? however the interior has been decorated in an elegance way. (Fig. 3) Here, this can be called as an introverted architecture. [10] This type of architecture has been applied in many residential houses where there isn't any direct connection or

openings between interior and exterior spaces. By creating some openings in interior spaces, it opens the spaces into a private environment that will be explained fully later. Privacy can be achieved by various external design interventions, such as the location and design of entrance doors, the placement and sizes of windows and openings, the control of building heights and balconies, and the incorporation of internal courtyards and gendered spaces



(Fig. 3), Amir Nezam house, Decorated interior facades

## 3. Vernacular materials:

In Tabriz they use the material with high quality thermal capacity. Moreover, residents in such a cool climate attempt to protect the buildings from cold winds and also keep the thermal heat inside of the buildings.

Walls absorb the heat from the sun radiation during a day and they preserve the heat till the night time. Consequently, thickness of the wall and fewer openings prevent the exchanging of the heat between

inside and outside of the buildings.

Traditional builders in this region used the local materials, which were available and accessible. Therefore, most of the walls are made by stone and also they use wood and thatch for covering the ceiling and roofs. [11]

## 4. Courtyard:

In extroverted houses the courtyard runs all around the building on four sides. In general during this era, courtyards are four-sided in shape and lie vertical to the constructed parts of the building on

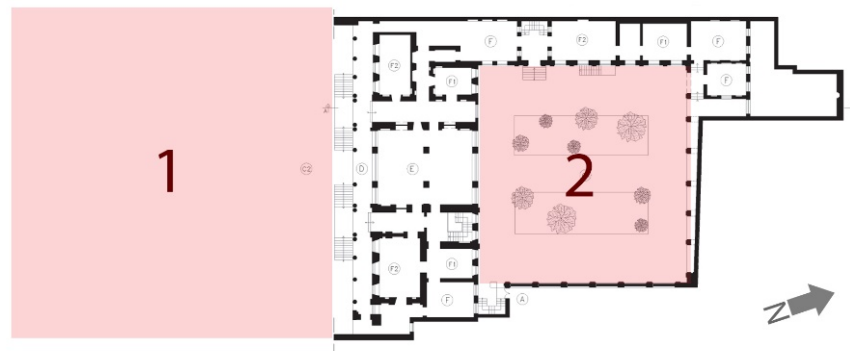


one or two sides. The other sides border plain walls or blind arcades. They lie at a lower level than the entrance and this level difference is bridged by a number of steps or through a platform and steps. A central pool is located in the middle of the courtyard around which flower beds are placed. [9]

Courtyards are the main core of social gathering in Iranian culture. It provides outdoor activity and privacy. A family can get together in the evenings and water the gardens and enjoy the small environment and beauty provided inside their house in a private and comfortable atmosphere. Courtyard

gives life to buildings in a dry climate and few greenery. Water in the courtyard not only smooths the air but also creates a good perspective. [12] Sound of water coming from water work and the reflection of light on it can all add a dynamic quality to the space, while water and light are two aesthetical parameters in Islamic architecture. [13]

Amir Nezam house consists of two courtyards, private and public, of which the former is located to the north of the complex with its frontdoor opening to the alley on the eastern side. The eastern part of the private courtyard is decorated with brickwork blind arcades. (fig. 4,5)



(fig. 4), Ground floor plan, 1- public courtyard 2-private courtyard

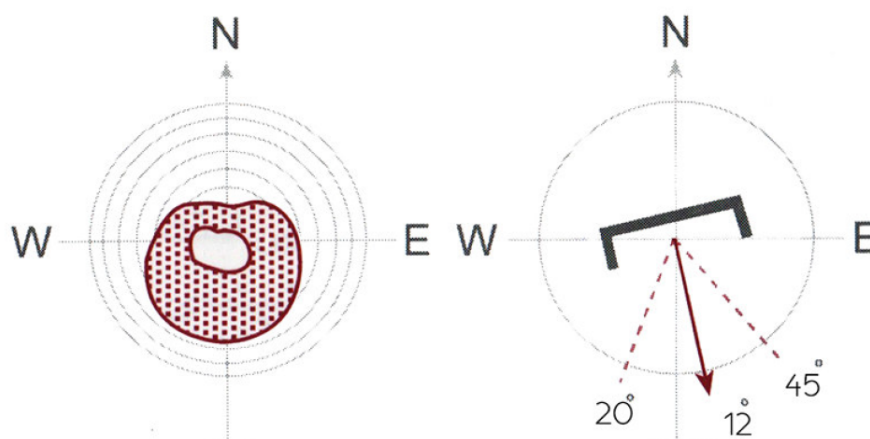


(fig. 5), Basement plan, 1- public courtyard 2-private courtyard

## 5.Orientation and Seasonal Function:

Generally in cold climates and high latitudes where the weather is usually cold, the building should be in a direction that receives maximum sunlight throughout the year. On the other hand, in warmer areas and in low latitudes, the building should be in a direction that is exposed to minimum sunlight throughout the year. To determine the most suitable direction for

building in different geographic widths, Olgyay studied the intensity of sunlight on vertical surfaces in different geographical directions and different seasons and times. He measured the radiated energy on the vertical surface with difference of 30 degrees around a circle and recorded in the table. According to this test, the building optimum direction in the cold climate of mountainous areas is as shown in Figure 6. [14]

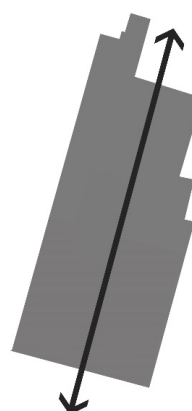


**Figure 6. Building optimum direction in cold and mountainous climate of Tabriz**

In Tabriz city, the main parts of the buildings were constructed on the north

direction of the courtyard. In so doing the rooms, which are located on the north can get a lot of benefit from sun radiation. Furthermore rooms, which are not

significant, situated on the east and west directions.[10]



**(fig. 7), Amir Nezam house direction**

### **6. Privacy and Hospitality:**

The concepts of privacy and hospitality have had a great impact on home culture and house formation in Iranian Islamic architecture.[15] The entrance and the main spaces of the houses were not directly vision because of the Islamic culture.

Iranian family both needs to have privacy as well as social contact with neighbors'. In order to achieve this aim, the hierarchy of spaces starts with a public space and it continued with a semi-public space, semi-private and at last a private space. Spatial configuration to manage this divided the whole house into spaces with different characteristics such as the entrance, the exterior (guest room) and the interior (private rooms). In Iranian houses the entrance were extremely important and sequences as well. The intention of the entrance was to block direct sight to the interior. Vestibule or "Hashti" was designed as a stopping point and could be used as a temporary reception room for those who did not need to enter the quest room. reception area or exterior room is a part of the house into which male guests can enter.[16] This room is a main space in house where has been well decorated.[17] at the same time marks the economic condition of the family. This room is situated in the main ax of the yard and has the best view to the courtyard with double height ceiling. Its interior is the most private part of the house where it has been designed in a way that

should not be seen or accessible by guests. As walking from the entrance towards the interior spaces, there are usually two different corridors; first one is facing to the exterior part and the second one, which is usually longer curvy, facing to the interior part. This pattern of spatial configuration is by no means accidental, it is a carefully considered response to balance needed relation between hospitality and social contact as well as providing privacy throughout the house.

### **Conclusion:**

Residential buildings in Iranian Islamic architecture have been designed based on culture, religion, traditions and in response to climate and environment of each region and lifestyle. This architecture could create forms which is able to generate a correlation between these parameters. Old residential houses in Iran despite of having a simple outer shell or facade, they were providing a complex inner shell in order to create an elegance and comfortable atmosphere for its residence. In spite of the rich history of Iranian Islamic architecture of traditional houses, today residential buildings are not designed as carefully as before. They are mostly designed by focusing more on its appearance or its outer shell rather than creating a complex and comfortable interior. As lifestyle in Iran has been changed quite fast recently. this has evoked new demands. It is the responsibility of contemporary architects to realize

them and achieve a comprehensive understanding of these needs in order to be able to response to the new conditions. They can design spaces and create forms adapted to the new lifestyle and be able to satisfy these requirements. Studying of history of architecture in residential

houses in Iran can introduce a new path to architects that how those traditional houses could find suitable responses to people's demands at that time and lead them to create a better architecture appropriate for this period of time.

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