

In Midst of Mountains and Desert



- This issue of Manzar journal was published with a delay. In the meantime, the sad news of the decease of Dr. “Mohammad Shahir”, the Indian landscape architecture influenced the professionals of his field profoundly. Professor Shahir had written articles on restoration of Indian and Afghanistan historic gardens in Persian style. He had a significant role in updating and activating Persian garden in the current life. His experiences in architecture and restoration of Persian gardens are precious remnant for the youth. May God bless and rest his soul in peace.

- Tehran is confined collaterally by two natural features: Alborz Mountains in north and salt desert in south. These two are the most significant elements defining Tehran territory and creating a way for Tehran people to interact with the environment; while there no sign of them exists in city currently. Landscape is born of man and environment interaction; if their dialog proceeds normally. External interferences lay destructive effects on the system based on their mutual interaction, creating a disheveled landscape with few fundamental landscape signs. A landscape that has headed a normal process in its formation is a context that creates space (place) for its residents while being legible to its observers.

Mountain and desert, two fundamental landscape elements of Tehran are derived to margins in today's city image. Despite the fact that living in their contradicting midst brings a privilege to Tehran and turns it into a unique city for tourists and citizens, the two mentioned elements are middle and micro landscape elements that can set urban projects and program foundation.

Rivers that flow from the mountains to the plains connects two main elements of Tehran landscape and they are considered as the backbone of the city. The material and colors of the earth in the heart of stone mountains and clay plains feature a distinctive composition. The north to south slope with flowing streams within and the blowing breezes explicates the city orientation clearly.

Eight hundred altitude variances create two different climates with two distinctive solar radiations and two blue colors of sky, light, heat and vegetation.

The persistence of these differences and many other characteristics in history has determined two separate identities for the north and south of Tehran, if observed, rejection of original landscape elements will remain on the face of Tehran, turning it into a son without a father.

Traditional cities of Iran with such characteristics, due to lack of human interferences, offer legible and interaction based landscape and these similarities provide beauty.

Modern cities, slaughtered by intoxicated outcries of master plan, lose their connection with environment; since engineers do not only know everything, but also resist variation. Thus, despite the call of «Revitalization Tehran Landscape» from every corner, in a way that even the supervisors of the master plan are also chanting it, the answer is not practical.

The cover picture is obtained by Ayda Alehashemi's and Farnoush Poursafavi's participation and their technological combination of the two photos where the dilemma of polluted air and visual processes led them through building up a true picture of actual Tehran territory.

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