

The Landscape Capillaries

The 'water stream' is a symbol of life in the Persian cities. The 'water distribution system' in the traditional cities of Iran is the main infrastructure that is required for surviving and constructing residential houses in an urban organization.

In cities with no flowing river, the initiating point of the city is dependent on water, which either boils in form of a natural spring or representing a man-made aqueduct. If consistent with an urban topography, this point will establish the urban center and the city will subsequently develop along with the path of water streams that are expanding from this point.

In each of these conditions, the urban spaces were being formed along the waterways and the residential houses were built on either side of them. The water streams in addition to supplying water for the gardens and agriculture fields located inside and around the city was constituting the system of water supply for the inhabitants, that was providing the traditional water reservoirs (Ab-Anbar) for the house buildings. The water dividing and diffusing points were being considered as the focal points of the neighborhoods, which traditionally were built along an ancient tree, a mosque, and a tomb, creating together the major points of a traditional landscape in the Iranian city. The water stream was also a place for children's playing. A safe, dynamic, natural, fresh, and appropriate landscape of human nature; it was of the best attraction place for children and a community for elderlies to make their social life. Water, as an active element and the source of biological life, was used to be a symbol of passion and community [in Persian land], due to its important role in people's lives. The water streams of Tehran city are being considered as the capillaries of the urban historical-natural landscape, which were alive in the past, with more than five hundred aqueducts, of which only about ten percent have remained today.

The urban gradient of Tehran, which is positioned in the slopes of the Alborz Mount, making the abundant supply of the plain undergrounds aquifers flow, arising from Alborz, in numerous water streams, which gives the city of Tehran an exemplary and unique position compared to other cities in the world. The steep slope of 'Tehran Plain' increases the speed of the water flow, generates the sound of water, and the water foam in the margins of its sidewalls that enhance the capacity of people's memory and their perception of the city.

Artist 'Khosrow Khorshidi,' a prominent Iranian designer, has painted a picture of Valiasr Street in his memoirs of old Tehran city in 1320 SH (1941), in which children, similar to miniature pond fishes, were playing in the water stream under the rows of plane trees. Today, this urban environment has turned into a concrete and solid paved path, due to the inadvertence of the urban management, which is an inappropriate place dedicated for the urban rats and for trashes thrown away by passers-by.

One of the most important constituting factors preserve the historical and natural landscape is the continuation of their position on their People's mind, which, if lost, their objective and physical remaining will be consequently destroyed as well; This is the disaster that awaits the trees of Valiasr Street; If now the trees are getting dried, the first reason is due to the removal of water flow and cutting off the natural watering of the trees, and the second is due to the construction of tall buildings that prevent wind blowing to the crowns of the available trees.

To save (the trees of) Valiasr Street its global registration would not be helpful; rather, the 'Salvation' will be achieved by reviving its landscape.

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