**Original Research Article**

# Rereading the Role of Social Identity in Building a Public Space

## (Case Study: Naqsh-e Jahan Square, Isfahan, as a Public Space in the Safavid Era)*

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Abstract | The architecture of public spaces of every civilization is one of the most underlying issues determining the social identity of that age. Also, social history is a guideline for the formation and success of these spaces. For the retrieval of the lost identity of races due to preservation of historical identity sequence, one can refer to the past and reread the signs and meanings hidden in the body. Despite using coercion and seizure of public property by the state to build Naqshe-e Jahan Square in the Safavid Era, the state could make a balance between social identity and public space and the effects of which have remained to date. This study aims at analyzing the effectiveness of the Safavid Era in the transformation of the meaning of space and making a social identity for Public spaces. In other words, the study aims at analyzing the way of making social identity in the Safavid Era and its role in making favorable public space. The study has applied documentary and library methods and has employed the social history method to analyze the effects of social trends in architecture. In this way, this study has focused the theoretical analysis of Naqsh-e Jahan Square as the indicator of public space of that age. To this end, after introducing the intellectual basis of the Safavid Era, the social results obtained from these thoughts and the impact on public space architecture and its social acceptability in this age have been investigated. This study is based on the hypothesis that the political and social measures taken to make religious and cultural unity have left the most effect on making an identity for the Public spaces. The results of the study show that along with the increased authority of central government, choosing dominant religion plays a key role in creating new contexts in different sections such as art and architecture. On the other hand, belonging to Iranian history has affected the creation of a new Iranian identity. The results obtained from the study showed that the public space of the Safavid Era includes three political, religious, and geographical dimensions in terms of establishment time. Also, in terms of reasons in the social procedure, it includes three systematic physical, spatial, and constructive sections. These factors changed the public spaces of that age into spaces with unique properties, which could find social legality and identity according to space audiences, other than the governors.

Keywords | *Social identity, Safavid, Public space, Social history, Naqsh-e Jahan Square.*

Introduction| What is known as Safavid Era Architecture today has been affected by macro decisions of the

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government similar to other historical ages. It can be realized using coercion when necessary. Safavid Government, as the first integrated government ruling on Iran after Islam,

took many efforts to make a public and national identity. The first underlying measurement taken by Safavids was the formalization of Shiite religion in Iran, which caused important evolution in the rest of the political, economic, and cultural history of Iran. Hence, the government is different from other governments of Iran before that (Shayestehfar, 2005, 45). On the other hand, Shah Ismail tried to define a new identity for the Iranian history and culture in addition to making an ancient place for him as a king and emphasizing independence from Ottoman Government. By changing the political, military, economic, and religious structure, the Safavids obtained underlying developments in cultural promotion, especially in field of architecture. The promotion was manifested more than before by the advent of Shah Abbas I, and the Safavid golden architectural Era, with its center in Isfahan, was established (Motevali, Hassan Beigi & Hoseinabadi Farahani, 2017).

Because of such durability of the architecture, it could be mentioned that artistic, cultural, and physical achievements of each era can be the identity of the epistemological and political system of the governments. Hence, the governments tend to identify the historical and cultural achievements of the contemporary people and the posterity. The architecture of every age can more and less introduce the religious, cultural, social, economic, or even political identity of that age, and can be analyzed from various aspects.

## Problem statement

The formation of many types of architectural spaces, especially public and ritual spaces, is affected by material factors such as the environment, materials, and building technology in addition to cultural and identity factors. It could be claimed that architectural work is not only an external phenomenon like some material phenomena but also it has subjective aspects. This has made architecture be a medium for the development of human society culture over time. With the understanding of the importance of architectural, cultural, and artistic achievements for the governments over history, and change in evaluation discourse of cities in sociability and public acceptability components in comparison to each other; making successful Public spaces can be the sign of the ability of the governments to have mutual dialogue with the societies and control social forces. The achievement is important because of crediting the innate need of human beings to communicate with others, to have social actions, and the necessity of providing situations and spatial facilities to make social and cultural relations among different urban groups (Talebi, 2004, 162). In this regard, the historical experience of urban management on building public spaces and making the favorable spatial quality of citizens has been the most underlying challenges of contemporary Iran. This issue has not led to building favorable public spaces over the time in most cases (Imam Hussein Square in Tehran) and has caused public dissatisfaction. Hence, finding the way or the process of designing a successful public space has been changed into one of the most fundamental concerns of the community of experts and managers to organize and build human-oriented cities. By referring to the rereading method of the successful historical patterns and samples as a common method in architectural design, landscape, and urban design, and with a review of the success of the Safavid Era in providing brilliant architectural and cultural achievements in Iran, it is hoped that the processes of successful public space and using that in contemporary Iran can be achieved. Hence, for rereading the manifestations of development of the Safavid Era in public and architectural culture, Naqsh-e Jahan Square is focused as the most well-known public space of this age (in terms of the plurality of historical references). The formation of public space in the frame of the architectural body in this square, which has made it an analyzable sample in the evolution of public spaces in Iran, has been affected by macro changes in the governmental policies. The direct and implicit signs show the change in approach in making relevant social identity. Although the square was known as a governmental square, it has always played the role of Public space from that time to the date and has been used by ordinary people.

The main purpose of this study is to nvestigate the relationship between the effect of social identity in Safavid Era, as underlying age in the history of Iranian culture and architecture. Naqsh-e Jahan Square is a brilliant Public space of the Safavid Era with the place to make governmental decisions. This can prove Public spaces to meet social and cultural needs of Safavid Era to identify the effective actors and components for the reproduction of Public spaces at the present.

## Research question

The main research question is: despite noting the authoritarian dimensions of Safavid rulers in building Nqsh-e Jahan Square, how the square has been changed into a representative of the social identity of its age and is identified as one of the most successful urban public spaces in Iran?

Secondary research question: how one can reproduce the base of the Public space on the social identity of the contemporary age by examining the role of effective factors in the formation of successful public space of past time, and considering communications and historical sequence in Iranian-Islamic identity of the recent century?

## Hypothesis

The hypothesis in this study is: despite authoritarianism in the construction of Naqsh-e Jahan Square, the Safavid

government made social identity caused by historical, religious, and economic components of its time, and mixed it with public architecture to form such Public space that could be changed into today's Public space in addition to a governmental square because of structural relationship with the new identity.

## Research method

This is a qualitative research, which has employed the social history approach as a secondary branch of architectural sociology. Social history is a qualitative method, and one of the majors of field of history, which analyzes a wide range of different reflections of life and culture of ancient people. Also, it considers the structure of the process and the feedback of human being actions (Zandieh, 2011). Social history study paves the way for rejoining the social members. In this study, this method was used to analyze the intellectual approaches of the society toward the events and the consequences in a special period on the architectural body. Also, the method tends to go beyond the physical appearance of events, structures, and infrastructural mechanisms generating them. The data collection in this study was done using the library method.

## Literature review

Examining factors for the success of historical public space in Iranian cities with a social identity approach, and to present a model for recreation of these spaces is an issue that is rarely considered by studies in the field of architecture and urbanization. In relevant experiences of this field, some studies make originality for the meaning to make value for the public space and make public identity. Also, the studies believe that memorability of space is the factor for success in creating identity and responsiveness:

Tarkashvand, Jahanbakhsh and KarimiNezhad (2018) conducted a study under the title of "recognition of the influential components on the formation of public identity and memory in urban spaces around historic bridges". The author analyzed the concept of memorability of space in the formation of social identity by case study of Langerud's Historical Bridges. The study showed that physical planning should be done within the limit of historical bridges by the empowerment of social and cultural activities and giving meaning to the city.

Besides, Hasani Mianroudi, Majedi, Saeide Zarabadi and Ziari (2018) conducted a study under the title of "Analysis of the concept of social memory and its retrieval in urban spaces with a semiotic approach (a case study of Hassanabad Square)". In this study, in addition to prioritizing the concept of social memory as the main factor of urban space quality, the components affecting the formation of social memory and presentation of semiotic conceptual model hidden in urban spaces werediscovered. The study found

that observance of the semiotic model can be the factor in creating a common understanding of public space and the success of space. Other studies in this field go beyond semantic issues and believe that the issue of activity and function of space in the frame of social participation can be the factor to create the identity. Torkaman, Ghaed and Shemtoub (2018) conducted a study under the title of "hangout, urban and architectural public space and place of social and cultural interactions (a case study of Borazjan city)". The study analyzed the role of different parameters in making public urban space using statistical investigations. The study showed that environmental, social, and physical factors can affect the hangout space properly. Besides, the climatic factors are underlying factors, which have been solved as a subset of other factors. Manaflouyan and Sattarzadeh (2014) conducted a study under the title of "the role of urban spaces in the emergence of social interactions using public identity approach". The study investigated types of public spaces and their function in urban structure to emphasize the role of social participation in the sociability of public spaces. The study showed that increased social interactions can be a guarantee to increase the sense of belonging to this place.

Habibi and SeyedBerenji (2017) conducted a study under the title of "the relationship between memorability and social participation in recreating urban identity, a case study: Rasht municipality square". The study analyzed the issue of lack of spatial identity in urban spaces and considered memorability as the factor creating the identity. Also, the study introduced the social participation as a solution of returning the memorability and spatial identity. In the majority of references, by the prioritization of semantic components, the sub-components in the success of a public space are analyzed. The role of physical and functional components is also referred to. The present study analyzes the role of the time and social factors in semantic and architectural construction of public space in addition to studying the social history in the analysis of public space success. In addition to analyzing the case study, the regeneration model can be also developeed.

## Theoretical framework
### • Social identity

Various studies have been conducted in the world on social identity. Some studies are referred to here as the theoretical framework. Social identity is an issue in the framework of identity. The theory was proposed by Richard Jenkins and was developed under the impact of the thought of Herbert Mead.

Richard Jenkins says in the book "Social Identity": "social identity is an interpretation made by the person on self in relation with others, and is formed based on membership in various social groups and classes. The identity of people

is dependent on the perception of others, and identifying others needs proving the identity. In the original meaning, identity is absolute similarity and differentiation" (Jenkins, 2002, 45). According to Herbert Mead, social identity is a factor find out that who we are and who others are? How is perception of people about self and others? Hence, social identity is the consequence of expectations and lack of expectations (ibid., 15).

From the artistic viewpoint of Tajfel and Antony Giddens, many theories of social identity deal with intragroup communications, so that they consider themselves as members of a group or class compared to others out of the group. As social identity has no united form and is changeable, and is formed due to the sources used in making identity, they are considered relative in the theory of social identity. This is because identities are organized in a hierarchy, which can be divided into three upstream, midstream, and downstream classes (Stets & Burke, 2000). Besides, Tajfel defines social identity as the awareness of a person of belonging to a certain social group and the emotional value of the membership for the person. Hence, due to belonging to different groups, they achieve a certain social identity introducing them (Turner, 1999, 9).

Vugt and Hart (2004) implemented an experimental study including three separate examinations and showed that how social identity can make people remain in the group, and consider it as a social connection factor because of creating loyalty to the group. Analysis of social identity and its relation to the issue of social presence and connection results in hesitation of realizing this issue. This issue reminds at first that because of the relevant nature of social identity and effectiveness of such relevance, the identity may be affected by the spatial context of the formation of that.

• **The social fields of creating public spaces**

Sociability is some part of the nature of every person, and social relations in society are formed on this basis. This occurs when private entities gather together and make conversation. Through the manifestation of public opinions, the public area is formed and memories are formed over time, and the place becomes meaningful (Bagheri Beheshti, 2006). To regard the nature of architecture and to regard it as an art providing relations and motivations for the foresight of people, one can rely on spatial frames to hold the individual and public relations of citizens (Falamaki, 2013, 63). It seems that monogamous and organized human beings always need open and public space to express their social and interpersonal desires, examine their thoughts, arts, and culture in public, and make a deal on the products of self and others (ibid., 65). Empowerment of a sense of being together is possible by creating types of public spaces. For example, one can refer to the spaces for functional and ritual activities causing communication of people; the space

for the peaceful presence of strangers, and making non-personal communications. The empowerment of public space as the point for people to gather together can properly emphasize the significance of being together (Madanipour, 2013, 246-247).

The worldwide experiences and studies reveal that urban public spaces are platforms to express cultural values and context for social interactions. The spaces can be also a domain for the identification of citizens, which should be evaluated and improved in physical dimensions (Mahmoodinejad, 2009, 150). As a result of complicated characteristics of social relations and urban spaces, it could be mentioned that public space is the place for the crystallization of public and free life belonging to citizens, in which social interactions are formed. The public space includes three residential, working, and living dimensions (Barkhordar, Zare & Mokhtabad Amrei, 2020, 19).

According to Rappaport, the deformation of identity and irrelevance of today's public spaces seems out of mind. Hence, the social and cultural origin of the society encounters survival and reuse of social symbols and values or deformation in form and meaning over history. It could be mentioned that today's public spaces are functions of historical sequence, apart from expressing the special social values. Hence, the analysis of these spaces s vital from two perspectives of time and causes of sociability (Rapoport, 2009, 72). On formation time of public space, the time features of every age is dependent on required meanings and cultural heritage caused by that (primary factors); and in terms of the causes of public space creation, social-economic actions and activities made by the social needs can affect the physical form of the space (secondary factors).

## Public space in the ideology of the Safavid Era; analysis of Safavid public space in terms of formation time

In the post-Islam history of Iran, the advent of the Safavid Dynasty is a focal point, because Iran could be changed into a powerful and independent country in the Islamic east region after a few centuries by obtainng national identity. One of the underlying components of the social history of Iranians in the Safavid Era has been Islam Religion and Shiite beliefs. The sociologists have paid attention to the role and function of religion in creating social solidarity, and have considered it as the powerful headband and the foundation of social organization, which can connect people with common religious rites and systems (Neekzad Tehrani & Hamzeh, 2016). The government established by the Safavids in the early 10th century was a religious government and based on Shiite opinions, which lasted more than two centuries. With the establishment of this government, a new phase was began in the history of Iran, the time that Iranians began to reconstruct their identity.

The achievements of the Safavids in all fields have left long-term effects; some of which have been continued to date (Andisheh, 2016). Time conditions affecting the formation of public space in the Safavid Era was obtained due to the factors to empower the Safavids caused by Shiite worldview and with reliance on three main axes of religious unity, political unity, and territorial unity:

1- The first axis was creating religious unity, which was obtained by selecting Shiite religion as the main religion. To this end, the Safavid took measures to make pedigree, to prove acceptability and social legality among people (Tobeyani & Alviri, 2017). By this, Safavid tended to create the unity of the government and the religion to decrease the influence of the Sunni empire of the Ottoman and to empower the government again based on the religious unity of the Iranian community.

2- The second axis was making political changes and returning to the federative kingship system to improve the economy to attract financial resources, and to create strategic unity with new European powers so that they can cope with the danger of invasion and domination of Turks and Uzbeks.

3- The territorial unity was the third axis of the ideological approach of the Safavids, in which the old culture is going to be reconstructed by adding Shiite religion to the community. They revived the customs and rites and held ancient celebrations to make social memories, and to preserve the interest in the homeland and social division and classification system of the past time (Hafeznia, Valigholizadeh, 2007).

With the formation of the identity and by the mediation of historical relation of religion and government, and the close relationship with the past centuries, it was essential for the Safavid government to connect the religious and governmental spaces, and protect the religious aspect using Islam. Hence, they had to connect the religious and governmental space and show their tight relationship. On the other hand, the construction and durability of such spaces in cities need the participation of people. This was obtained at the first by attracting the followers of three wings empowering Safavid Dynasty (religion, power, and national past), secondly by creating a sense of social belonging and increasing the participation of people in the society. As the sense of belonging and participation was dependent on improving economic conditions and communication of social institutes and making good relations among people and the rulers; the necessity of building and decorating public spaces was cleared to meet the economic, functional, and cultural needs of people. In the history of Iranian cities, this need is felt in building a bazaar as a public space. Hence, the attachment of the bazaar to the previously mentioned requirements refers to adding the potential social capability to a set, which paves the way for the interaction of government, religion, and people.

The relationship was empowered by investment in cultural Iranian features such as ancient ceremonies, religious and national celebrations, and empowerment of public activities such as local market, the participation of people in assumptive public space in the Safavid Era and as a result of:

1. Emphasizing the role of religion in public space as the main indicator of the Safavid Era;

2. Presence of governmental element in public space to show the authority and supervision of the ruling system;

3. Adding the element of the bazaar (market) to guarantee the promotion of communications of people with the government and religion.

The space become socially acceptable because of presence of the aforementioned components to establish social identity of Safavids.

## Public space and social approaches (secondary causes); analysis of Safavid public space because of formation causes

In addition to the primary factors of formation of public space considered as time-based meaning derived from the public space and affecting that, secondary factors can be also effective in systemizing the space as the causes and social-economic and technological approaches. The secondary factors include options such as designing methods, climatic conditions, and historical accumulation of forms and available technology and materials. These factors can be divided into three groups including physical system, spatial system, and construction system (Fig. 1):

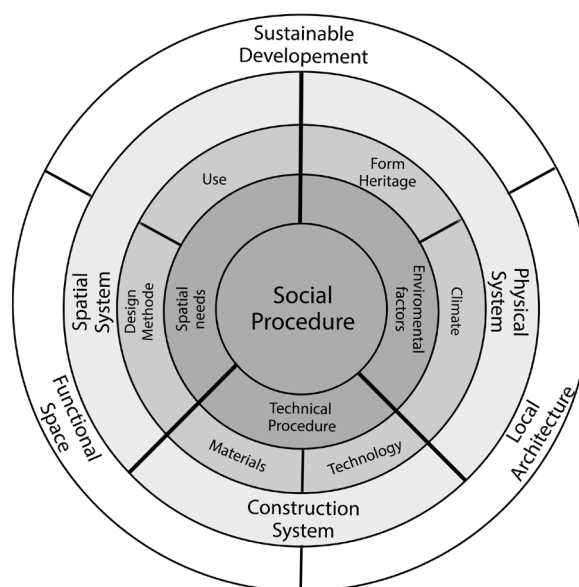- The physical system borrows the environmental conditions



Fig. 1. The construction systems and the results of social procedures (secondary factors). Source: Authors.

and includes two general sections of climate and selected forms. If Iranian architecture is placed on several main bases, one of them can be climate and architectural-climatic responses. Iranians have tried to create an environment making various decisions, along with the surrounding nature during the history of several thousand years of the architecture of this land, so that they can provide peaceful conditions in any season and hour of the day based on the utilization of the desired space (Memarian, 2013, 39). Thinking of architectural forms and matching them with the regional climate over the several thousand years of responding to climatic conditions has led to the creation of forms with matched functions with the climate. Repetitive use of these forms has affected the taste and aesthetic criteria of these forms in addition to communicating with the users.

Analysis of the social history of building Public spaces of the Safavid Era based on the hot and arid climate of the Central Plateau of Iran shows that the architecture of Isfahan in the Safavid Era has been completely adjusted with the climate and environmental conditions. This type of architecture protects the houses, markets, mosques, and public spaces of all spaces, and used to prevent direct sun radiation. Also, they used to apply shadowing elements (like a porch), water, and trees in case of needing spatial openness (square, yard, street, and garden) to provide climatic comfort. Besides, the fabric of the streets in Isfahan, same as other physical elements, was affected by environmental elements, especially climate (Alamolhodaei, 2017, 12).

1. Spatial structure is formed as a place to meet the spatial needs based on the required use and accepted architectural design methods to meet social and biological needs. The spatial structure of a city is formed of a backbone and an interconnected network of required urban uses (Mokhtarzadeh, Ghalenoee & Kheyroddin, 2018, 71). The spatial structure gets a response based on the way of designing a proper response.

In the analysis of change in the urban structure of Isfahan, the most underlying measures taken in this age in the organization of urban spaces include building Chaharbagh recreation axis, Naqsh-e Jahan Square, and the local access of the square to the old Square by the market lane, along with building bridges, gardens, and new neighborhoods in the south of Zayanderud River. Hence, using an urban development plan in the Safavid Era in Isfahan, a physical and spatial organization and formality axis was created, which has maintained its values to date (Ranjbar, Azarm, Marti Casanovas, 2019, 34 & 35).

2. A construction system is formed based on the climate and is made by technical procedures resulted from construction and material technology. In this classification, the construction system includes the process of building, thinking about the building method and materials,

techniques, and building systems (Golabchi & Shahrudi, 2010). The most underlying issues about the architecture of that age are: simplification of the designs and geometry used in buildings compared to last periods; using a foundation in buildings; utilizing seven-color tiles instead of mosaic and Mo'qali; using various techniques of dome construction; and increased quantity and speed in making bricks, tile, and other required materials. The abovementioned issues have differentiated the architecture and construction system of this age, compared to previous ages as Pirnia says; especially in terms of the construction volume in urban scale (Pirnia, 2004, 279-285).

## Construction of Naqsh-e Jahan Square; from the authoritarian approach to the realization of the social identity of the time

During the Safavid Era, same as governments before and after that, deployment and displacement of government in selected cities has been along with making changes in the city and adding urban organs based on the power of the government. The urban construction samples made by the ruler are evident in Tabriz (the first Safavid capital), Qazvin (second capital), and Isfahan along with the authoritative and identity-seeking approach of the Safavid Era in the formation of urban public spaces. As it is mentioned in many proses such as Tarikh Alam Ara Abbasi, confiscation of properties was an underlying part of the development plans of Shah Abbas in Isfahan (Machesney, 1998, 68). The coercive approach was along with negative social impacts.

In Isfahan of the Safavid Era, the task of creating authority and modern identity of the government was assigned to the Urban Complex of Naqsh-e Jahan Square. Naqsh-e Jahan Square was built at the first by the king as a place with governmental functions. Over time, with the formation of primary factors of establishment in the reconstruction of the old square of Isfahan, public activities and public participation were also observed in this region. As a result, both original and structural dimensions (secondary causes of social approaches of Public space formation) were realized in the field of creating public spaces. Andre Godard investigated motivations of Safavid projects in Isfahan and believed that Shah Abbas had two constructive plans. The first plan tended to establish kingship capital in the construction of palaces, Naqsh-e Jahan Square, and Shah Garden, and the second plan was made to show the glory and power in the construction of Masjid Shah, and completion of Naqsh-e Jahan Square (Godard, 1996).

As a result of deciding to select Isfahan as capital, Shah Abbas showed a great interest in the status of Isfahan markets and the organization of their activities. It seems that Shah Abbas tended to renew the markets in the old square (Haron Velayat), which encountered inattentiveness and opposition of powerful owners. According to Jonabadi, the opposition

forced the king to decide on the commercial development of Naqsh-e Jahan Square as the competitor and successor of the old market (Machesney, 1998, 73-74). Opening the new market and motivating the merchants to move from Haron Velayat to the market could not guarantee the boom of the new market. Building Masjid Shah was an essential element for the reconstruction of the square commercially. Using the Great Mosque plan and design for the success of the old market made the king decide to build the mosque on the southern edge of the square, so that Isfahan people could pass from the market (ibid., 80). Hence, the competition between two urban centers was started, and in terms of the development of urban spaces, the urbanization engineers of the Safavid Era built Naqsh-e Jahan Square instead of the old square, new markets; built the surrounding area of the square instead of the old market of the city; built Masjid Shah instead of Isfahan Great Mosque, and Alighapoo instead of the palace next to the old square (Shafaghi, 2007). This issue, along with the will of the king, could result in the generation of a new social identity based on existing roots (Figs. 2 & 3).

In Naqsh-e Jahan Square, the governmental will, unified religion, economy, and market could meet the interactive demands of the people as the arenas of social participation. Also, the arenas formed some type of Public space introducing the characteristics of the Public identity of a period.

## Main discussion
### • A social history of Naqsh-e Jahan square in the Safavid Era; analysis of the causes of making the social identity of public space through historical texts

To prove the presence of time in the unified identity of the Safavid Era and the causes of its formation, the factors affecting the formation of social identity in the social history of Naqsh-e Jahan Square were studied. The social histories of Naqsh-e Jahan Square as an example of public space with certain identities can be derived from the histories and travelogues. Many travelogue writers have written things on this square. The historical texts on ownership of the land of Naqsh-e Jahan Square give three different narratives, which confirm the lack of absolute emptiness of the square lands and belongings, especially the land of Masjid Shah (with a difference of number and type of properties in these narratives). At the same time, the place of the complex is selected with the previous plan. The reports of Jalal Monajem and Chardin in this field



Fig. 2. Left: Naqsh-e Jahan square. Source: www.persiaexpedition.com, Right: Old square (Atigh). Source: www. nosytourist.com.



Fig. 3. Left: Masjid Shah. Source: www. persiaexpedition.com, Right: Isfahan Great Mosque. Source: www. whc.unesco.org.

show that the conflict among small private owners with the development plans of the king could leave an intense effect on public opinions (Machesney, 1998, 81). The issue of examining the process of social life in the square from the mouth of eastern people traveled to Iran in the Safavid Era and writing things in their travelogues on the situation of Naqsh-e Jahan Square and descriptions of the participation of people in this square refers to the issue of social identity and change in public opinions on that.

For example, the description of Chardin on his travel to Isfahan on Naqsh-e Jahan Square is considered from three perspectives: first, the aesthetic definitions and descriptions, and physical descriptions of the square; second, the governmental function of the square, and third, its social function. On social function, Chardin refers to the presence of retailors in the square and calls the square a unique place in terms of refreshing and comfortable. What is evident from the descriptions of Chardin in this age is the social aspect of Naqsh-e Jahan Square. The square has a social identity for the ordinary people and different social classes can use that (Chardin, 1956, 456). Also, he has discussed the security for the property of shopkeepers and hawkers by the officers at night (ibid.). At the first, Chardin describes the status of the square in the time of Shah Abbas I, in which the place for selling each type of commodity was specified. Also, he has reported the presence of doctors and pharmacologists in the upper part of the north side porch (Eshraghi, 1999, 187).

Existence of various trades in Naqsh-e Jahan Square in a secure place by paying rent shows the supervision and control of the government on the performance of the trades (Fig. 4). Secondly, it can mention that each trade, except for job holders, had clients from ordinary people, and the congestion could be observed in these centers, which shows the presence of different social classes in Naqsh-e Jahan square. Kaempfer has said in the travelogue "the upper space of the square is divided into small rooms, which are rented as a bedroom. The lower floor is the walking space for the pedestrians; although it is mostly used as large shops for retailers selling various types of goods" (Kaempfer, 1981, 193). The descriptions of Kaempfer show that the space of Naqsh-e Jahan Square is not monopolized and has been usable by the government and ordinary people. The description can be derived from the idea that is not the only one and is referred in all travelogues in the Safavid Era[1].

Besides, Tavernier has said on the policies of the king to control the performance of people in Naqsh-e Jahan Square: "Shah Abbas, who was a wise king, was informed that the legislators oppose renting the rooms for the negotiations of people and governmental officials. To prevent chaos and oppositions, he ordered Mullahs to sit in rooms before that people come in and take their time to teach them history, religious questions, and poetry, and this custom is still going on there. After 2-3hrs, Mullah used to stand up and tell the participants to go on their works. People used to accept immediately and leave. Also, before leaving, they
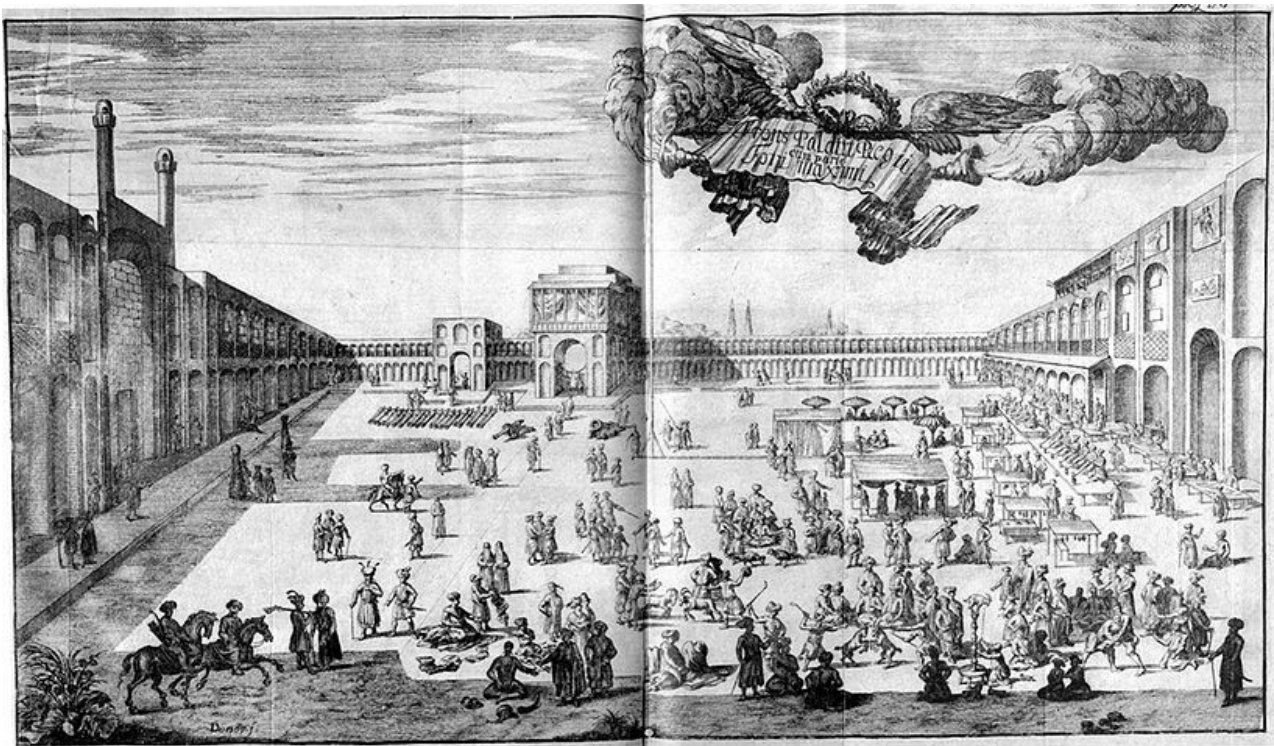


Fig. 4. The drawing of Engelbert Kaempfer of the square: the drawing shows women without concomitant, selling fruits, using tobacco, the fight between animals, canopies, crowds of people, and the presence of government officials. Source: Kaempfer, 1981.

used to give Mullah some money" (Eshraghi, 1999, 134). The narrative shows that the square has had potentials for political orientations of people because of nearness to the palace of the king. Shah Abbas used to make plans to prevent these events.

According to the multiple narratives of historical references, the square has been a place of holding ceremonies like Nowruz Celebration and executions (Honarfar, 1984, 25, 26). Besides, Katev names the entertainments of the square: "in addition to the celebrations and ritual ceremonies, some people play by dice, spread the soil and make different shapes by reeds, the dervishes inform about the past and the future based on their books, and take the promotion of their sects" (ibid., 53). Tavernier has counted several cases of entertainment in the square. One of them was betting on a fight between animals, which was the favorite entertainment of the king. Another entertainment was with eggs. Also, at night after dinner, the trick and puppetry machines used to be set up in the square (ibid., 130). Kaempfer names the entertainments of the square on the north side: "actors, jokers, wrestlers, poets, and similar people gather together. In colorful groups in fights in coffeehouses, and bars, the artistic taste of Iranians is evident" (ibid., 234). As the travelogues say that some people used to gather together just for entertainment and time pass, this can confirm the social function of Naqsh-e Jahan Square.

In the analysis of the formation causes (secondary) of the social identity of Naqsh-e Jahan Square and formation of physical climatic form, analysis of visual documents and description of tourists such as Chardin (1956, 38), Della Valle (1991, 36-38), Olearius (2000, 606), and Kaempfer (1981, 194) show that providing proper climatic conditions in Safavid Era was done through five ways:

1. Extending market around the square
2. Surrounding the square by tall bodies and architectural monuments
3. Using natural elements such as water and trees in open space of the square
4. Using semi-open rooms in open space of the square
5. Using temporary elements such as tents in the open space of the square (Shahabi, Abuei & Ghalenoei, 2017, 7).

Besides, in discrimination of the construction system of the square and the architectural spaces, Afushtei Natanzi has talked in the book "Tafavot Al-Asar fi Zekr Al-Akhyar" (difference of works in mentioning the options) on the determination of the construction area of the square, the gardening around it, primary surrounding, and smoothing the heights of initial walls and whitening them (Afushtei Natanzi, 1971). This shows the technical prediction of the ruling system of the technical ability of construction of this square in such dimensions. Besides, the evolution of the elements used in the monuments around the square (Pirnia, 2004, 282), and the gradual construction of the square

within about 50 years (Shahabi-nejad, 2019, 126) such as adding the second floor of the square wall and gradual construction of Alighapoo Palace (Galdieri, 1983, 19) show the firm and stable foundation and technical ability to build the high-rise monument. Tourists have mentioned some of the issues on the relationship of the square with urban space structure; connecting Naqsh-e Jahan Square to the market and Chaharbagh Street (as the backbone of new urban structure); and development of the city in two sides of the Zayanderud River (Shafaghi, 2002, 302).

## Summary
As it was mentioned before, social aspects of Public space are dependent on two general groups of factors: the primary factors are dependent on the time and historical period (historical aspects of social identity), and secondary factors are related to the contextual and physical factors of space creation (Fig. 5). Matching the model with the social history of construction and the causes of formation of Naqsh-e Jahan Square in the historical references, travelogues, and analyses show the relative adjustment of the factors creating the social identity in the Safavid Era with the factors used in the construction of Naqsh-e Jahan Square (Table 1).

Accordingly, it could be claimed that the square could take the formal meanings of its time with the allocation of special social and governmental functions to connect the society and the government. On the other hand, the body of the square plays mediating role in connecting the face and meaning required by that time. Also, the public nature of the square shows the cultural requirements and social rites of that age in the physical framework. To answer the first research question, it could be mentioned that description of the distance between the conflicts and the coercive rules from the time of building the square to the time of providing social life in Naqsh-e Jahan Square in Isfahan shows that the presence of social identity in the mind of the ordinary users of the space can refer to its meaning and function over the time. Also, it can pave the way for the relative success of the space. Certainly, the square could be considered as a public space with the social identity in the Safavid Era by the companionship of primary and secondary factors creating identity in public space. The square could create proper replacement for the previous spaces.

## Conclusion
One of the most underlying factors affecting social integration is having a sense of belonging and commitment to the values and cultural heritage of a society that explains why the government tend to introduce their history and culture to the people of their territory, so that they can achieve integration at the national level. The architecture of every era can reflect the religious, cultural, social, economic, or even political identity of that age more and less. Religion,

Table 1. Adjustment of factors making the social identity of Safavid Era with the causes and conditions of making Public space in Naqsh-e Jahan Square based on historical and analytical references. Source: Authors.

| Formation of Public space | Components | Sub-components | Keywords in references | Reference |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Time conditions of formation (primary causes) | National identity and territorial unity (cultural heritage) | Society | Commonly used by people and government | Katev Cited in Honarfar (1984) Kaempfer (1981) Honarfar (1984) |
| | | Culture | Holding ritual ceremonies (Nowruz) | |
| | Religious unity (religious beliefs) | Religion | Religious buildings around the square - holding religious ceremonies - answering religious questions | Tavernier (1957) Chardin (1956) |
| | Political power (governmental conditions) | Policy | Authoritative approach | Machesney (1998) Godard (1996) |
| | | Economy | Construction and communicating market | |
| Formation causes- approaches (secondary causes) | Physical system (environmental factors) | Climate | Using climatic elements to provide comfort | Chardin (1956) Kaempfer (1981) Olearius (2000) Della Valle (1991) |
| | | Forms | Extending market and surrounding the square- semi-open space- temporary elements | |
| | Spatial structure (needs) | Use | Attempting to establish kingship capital | Godard (1996) Shafaghi (2007) |
| | | Design | Placing new structures of the city instead of the old structure | |
| | Construction system (technical procedures) | Technique | The technical power of building on a wide-scale- change in needs | Afushtei Natanzi (1971) Galdieri (1983) Pirnia (2004) |
| | | Materials | Change in arrays and making materials in high volume and speed | |
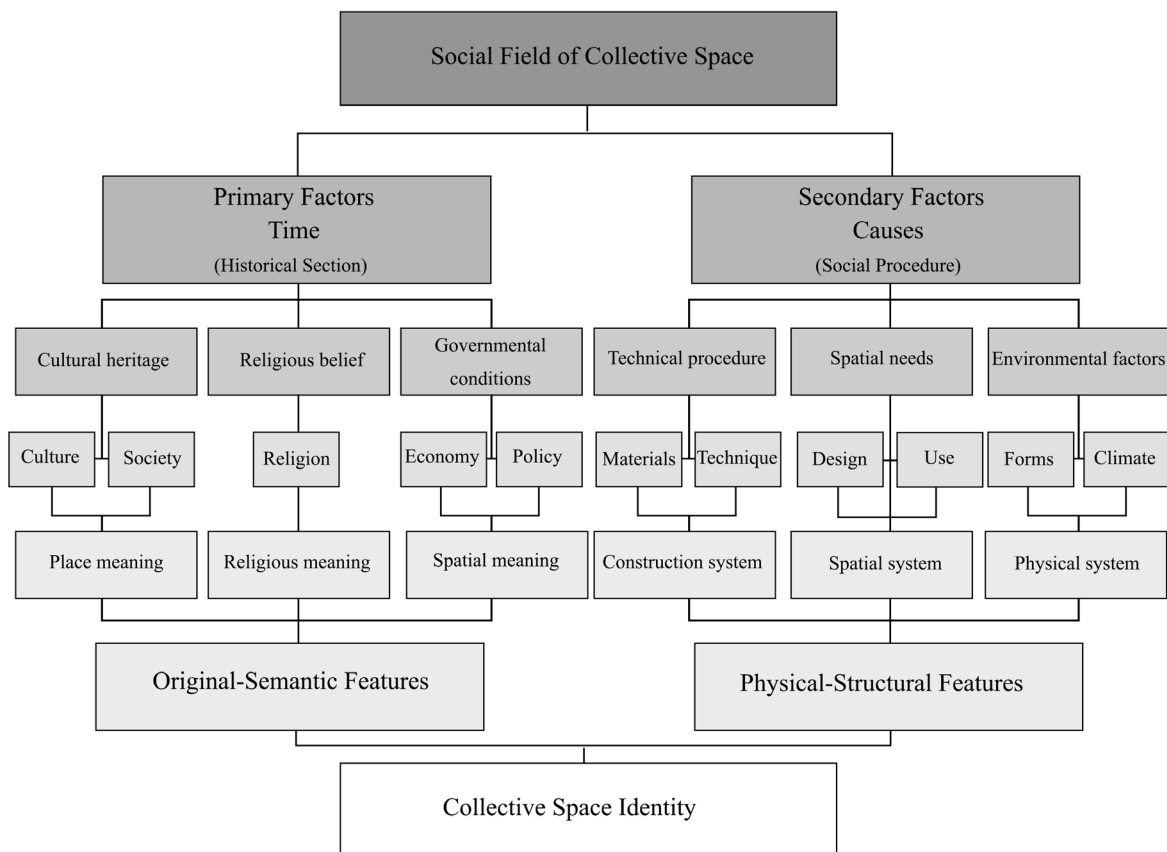


Fig. 5. The diagram of the connection of triple axes in the Safavid Era, and secondary factors with the formation of Public space identity. Source: Authors.

economy, and policy are in a tight relationship, and their manifestation in art is the most common way of showing the relationship. The forms are responsible for transferring the architectural concepts, in which the cultural values and thoughts of society are evident. Hence, public architecture can be studied from two perspectives: physical aspect resulted from environmental conditions and needs, and secondly intangible aspect of a work, which is not observable at the first and is caused by semantic and social conditions resulted from mining inner layers of the culture. The two aspects are factors forming the social identity of a society. In this study, analysis of the performance of the Safavid Government can be a pattern to handle the issue of identity at the current world. On one hand, Shiite religion as the dominant religion of the society of the Safavid Era played a key role in changing the attitude and creating a new approach in the field of art and architecture. On the other hand, Safavids could integrate religion and belong to Iran's past times. As a result, a new Iranian identity was presented, which was adjusted with the requirements of post-Islamic Iranian society, and could realize the continuity of Iranian identity. The result of such national unity after social history can be presented from two perspectives of time conditions (primary factors) and social causes (secondary factors). In terms of time, it includes three political, religious, and territorial dimensions. In terms of causes in the social procedure, three systematic parts including physical, spatial, and constructive parts can be referred to. Despite social conflicts and the conflicts with the public interests, the Public space in the Safavid Era used the components and referred to physical evidence, political analyses, and contemporary narratives, and could be changed into space with social identity with the special definition given by rulers, residents, and audiences of the spaces.

## Suggestions

The study recommends that understanding the process of creating contemporary social identity and analysis of success factors of public space in the Safavid Era can be a functional introduction to make public space in Iran in the current age based on the social identity of the date. The process shows that the reproduction of social identity in public space can change the nature of authoritative space into social space as the place for public affairs and negotiations of the people and the government. This is the same lost ring of the chain of building Public spaces in contemporary Iran such as the experience of Imam Hussein Square in Tehran. Despite spending lots of money and to find proper solution to ownership conflicts, compared to Naqsh-e Jahan Square, relative failure was observed because of inattentiveness to use semantic components and construction technology (primary and secondary causes) of public space. Also, there was no opportunity to define and analyze the real nature of social identity.

## Endnote

* This article is taken from Babak Barkhordar's doctoral dissertation entitled "Recreation contemporary public spaces based on the embedded identity in the historical context of safavid Dynasty, Isfahan, Iran", conducted by Dr. Leila Zare and consulted by Dr. Seyed Mostafa Mokhtabad Amrei, on February 10, 2020, in Faculty of Art and Architecture, Islamic Azad University, West Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran.
1. Tavernier, Sanson, Katev, Kempfer, and Sharden have mentioned the wholesale and retail sales and the presence of guilds with specific locations in Naghsh-e Jahan Square: Sanson has referred to the square just as a place for trade "the palace of the king is located in the west of the big square, in which people buy and sell things" (Honarfar, 1984, 204). Russian Katev has described the uses of the square in the time of Shah Abbas I as follows: "types of commodities are dealt in the square in whole or retail, and vegetables and fruits such as apple, watermelon, melon, and grape, and different types of plant seeds and oilseeds are sold" (Eshraghi, 1999, 53).

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