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A design research towards developing an appropriate domestic architecture in Iran: A case study of Kerman

Submitted by
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Abstract

Until the beginning of the twentieth century domestic architecture and the design of Iranian houses was sympathetic to the social, cultural and religious values of traditional Iranian society. A wave of Westernisation, which started in the early 20th century, greatly impacted on domestic architectural style and design in Iran. Due to a continuous process of disconnection from traditional and vernacular design principles, contemporary residents' needs and values. Domestic architecture spaces are largely designed in an attempt to merely mimic some aspects of Iranian traditional houses while failing to function properly, hence new spaces do not relate to the sociocultural and religious practices and lifestyles of people. In this context, this research focusing on middle-income people, investigates ways in which contemporary housing solutions can cater better to the constantly changing lifestyles of residents while retaining various cultural and symbolic connotations that are embedded in various spaces in a house. The research focuses on Kerman, a historical city in Iran. Adopting a qualitative methodology, this research employs narrative workshops, photo elicitation and in-depth semi-structured interviewing methods for data collection. The research adopted diverse techniques during the interviews, such as drawings, models and films, to capture the rich narratives of participants' experiential understanding and perceptions of their houses. These rich and complex narratives were analysed to examine the relationship between various spatial arrangements and residents' sociocultural and religious practices. The research findings show the complex relationship between residents, the places in which they live and the organisation of their home and suggests key architectural design propositions that relate to *social interaction, inside-outside connectedness, privacy and re-inventing the past*, which play a prominent role in developing an appropriate domestic architecture in contemporary Iran.

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To my beloved husband, Ali

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Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is presented in six chapters

Chapter 1 Background and History explains the various factors and events that were responsible for the transformation of architectural design and styles in Iran during 19th and 20th centuries.

Chapter 2 Traditional Domestic Architecture of Iran brings into focus the importance of the concept of the house in Iranian architecture. Diverse disciplinary perceptions of the notion of house, home and dwelling are discussed. The chapter also explains various important architectural elements, spaces and practices of early houses (from 8,000 BC to 500 AD) and traditional Iranian house (19th century) design.

Chapter 3 Methodology explains the research methodology, including the strategies and methods of data collection and analysis. The chapter is particularly significant as it explicates the framework which is used to develop the narrative workshop sessions.

Chapter 4 Context and Pilot Study introduces the context of the city for this research, which is Kerman. The geographical and cultural context of the main case study is explained. The chapter presents a pilot study to understand in detail how the house functions and residents' behaviours in contemporary Iranian houses in Kerman.

Chapter 5 Main Study: Workshop Narratives presents the main study for this research, conducted in the form of a workshop with selected native subjects in Kerman. Various sessions were run as part of the workshop and the narratives of the research participants are discussed.

Chapter 6 Summary and Findings presents the summary and findings of this research. The summary explains the context of the research and how the research methodology was developed to address the research aims and questions. The contribution of the thesis is presented and includes the significance of the thesis's contribution to knowledge. This chapter also explains the limitations of the research and explores trajectories for future research.

Research Statement

Recent archaeological discoveries in an area called Sang-e-Caxmaq, North of Shahrod, are evidence of residential buildings dating back to 5,000–8,000 B.C.,¹ indicating the long history of domestic buildings in Iran. The rich history and identity of residential buildings in Iran have been undergoing significant changes in recent times. These changes are largely associated with the ways in which houses are used and built. They impact greatly on traditional and vernacular architecture and building methods, as these are gradually being replaced by modern architecture in both style and construction. Furthermore, the changes that took place in 20th century were rapid and completely disconnected from vernacular architectural forms and typologies; entirely new layouts and designs were introduced which, according to Mirmoghtadaee, disregarded people's physical and cultural needs over thousands of years.²

The rapid rise in population in the 20th century, along with a growing interest in Western ways of living and lifestyle, greatly impacted on the processes of evolution and transformation of Iranian cities, particularly Tehran. The research is based in Kerman, which shows the characteristics of a well-developed city, like Tehran, but which still embraces a number of buildings designed and built according to traditional architectural principles, making it a particularly interesting city for understanding and/or investigating the transformations of Iranian domestic architectural design and principles.

In the contemporary urban context of Kerman, studies suggest that residents are dissatisfied with their housing conditions³ and that new

¹ Mohamad Karim Pirniya, *Orientation to Iranian Islamic Architecture – Ashnaee ba memari eslami Iran – اشنایی با معماری اسلامی ایران* (Iran University of Science and Technology, 2005).p 153.

² Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, 'Process of Housing Transformation in Iran', *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No 2009): 69–80. P70.

³ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P167.

high-rise apartment buildings do not meet residents' needs.⁴ Vaziritabar argues that it was the break with traditional architectural concepts of planning and design that caused the failure of contemporary housing developments. New buildings neither align with nor evolve from traditional designs and also do not satisfy the requirements of newer ways of living for the majority of families in Iran.⁵ There are several examples where the domestic architecture of Iran does not correspond to the needs of the people, e.g. fully exposed balconies in new apartment buildings that offer no privacy, which is an aspect that is deeply embedded as part of everyday life. This growing problem in domestic architecture reflects the gap between residents' perceptions of appropriate design (based on their experience and values) and what is available for them to purchase or rent in the housing market. To address this gap, there is a need to examine current Iranian domestic architecture and explore design solutions that can cater to changing lifestyles, while at the same time providing space for accommodating rich cultural connotations. Such research with a focus on Iranian domestic architecture is limited and hence this thesis addresses this knowledge gap.

Examining the context of domestic architecture in Kerman and focusing on middle-income people, the research aims to answer the following questions:

What are some of the social and cultural factors that have historically shaped residential buildings in Iran?

What practical lessons can architects learn from a critical investigation of early and traditional Iranian houses?

⁴ Shahram Vaziritabar, 'Design and Privacy in Modern and Traditional Housing in Iran' (PhD, Oxford Polytechnic, 1990), p.7.

⁵ Ibid. p.7.

What are the enduring factors and emerging needs that need to be considered when designing apartments and houses for the middle class in Iran today?

By conducting in-depth studies of residents' everyday sociocultural and spatial practices, the research draws on the significant relationship between housing design and residents' experiences and perceptions of space. In addressing these questions, the thesis contributes to knowledge about contemporary domestic architecture in Iran by identifying and presenting emergent architecture design principles that play a significant role in developing housing solutions that are spatially, socioculturally and religiously appropriate in the contemporary Iranian urban context.

Key terms

For the purposes of this thesis the following key terms are understood as follows:

Appropriate architecture: architecture that caters to the physical, social and cultural needs of people;

Domestic Architecture: domestic architecture includes individual houses, apartments & semi-detached houses;

Iranian/Persian: 'Iranian' and 'Persian' are used in different places in this thesis. Persia is the name used before the 20th century and Iran is the name used from the 20th century onwards.

Chapter 1

Background and History

1.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the various factors and events that were responsible for the transformation of architectural design and styles in Iran in the 19th and 20th centuries. The chapter discusses the transformations that occurred in a hierarchical manner, first delineating the socio-political factors impacting on overall changes in perceptions and urban living in Iran, then focusing on transformations in architecture in general at a city scale and finally elaborating transformations in the organisation of space in dwellings. The chapter aims to set the context for the research by explaining critical junctures in the evolution and transformation of traditional Iranian dwellings.

1.2 Socio-political development in Iran

The Persian art expert Arthur Upham Pope, in his book “Persian Architecture”, mentions that the history of architecture in Persia spans more than 7,000 years (dating back to at least 5000 B.C.).⁶ Recent archaeological discoveries in an area called Sang-e-Caxmaq, north of Shahrod, might be evidence of the history of residential buildings dating back to 5,000–8,000 B.C.,⁷ indicating the long history of domestic buildings in Iran.

From the 19th century onwards, due to Iran’s intensifying business and cultural trade with the West, Iranian traditional and vernacular

⁶ Arthur Upham Pope, *Persian Architecture: The Triumph of Form and Color* (G. Braziller, 1965). P9.

⁷ Mohamad Karim Pirniya, *Orientation to Iranian Islamic Architecture – Ashnaee ba memari eslami Iran – اشنایی با معماری اسلامی ایران* (Iran University of Science and Technology, 2005). P 153.

architecture gradually lost many of its prominent characteristics. The traditional Iranian house is characterised by brick construction and features a central courtyard (a dominant housing typology until the early 20th century), it is designed around sociocultural practices that have almost disappeared. Similarly, layouts that were previously intricately linked to religious and cultural values have changed considerably.

The 20th century in Iran saw several historical, political, social and cultural events and turning points. Iran's first parliament was established in October 1906 as a first step towards democratic rule.⁸ In 1921, the Tehran municipality adopted European urban-design regulations and began to implement those. The first comprehensive plan was for Tehran, which was produced with the help of French corporations.⁹ This was significant for other cities, as Tehran, as the capital city of Iran, was then, and still is, the most important city in the country. In 1925, the Qajar dynasty was replaced by the first King of Pahlavi, after about 130 years of ruling the country.¹⁰ The new king was determined to accelerate the country's development and believed this would not be possible without modifying or changing people's cultural values. For example, the king encouraged women to play an active role in society and so women gradually started to take part in social activities and to work for private or government institutes. The strict Islamic dress code for women, which until then had been mandatory in public, was banned. Despite these external changes, however, residents in their own houses followed Islamic guidelines; for instance, when they had guests, male and female guests gathered in different rooms.¹¹ Having adequate privacy, in accordance with social customs, was an essential part of daily practice and was reflected in the spatial design and planning of residences.

The aforementioned officially sanctioned social changes coincided with the introduction of other elements, but most notably the radio and cars. Through radio, people were learning about and becoming familiar with other Western ways of living, especially through advertisements for new

⁸ Siros Bavar, *Modern Architecture in Iran/نگاهی به پیدایی معماری نو در ایران* (Tehran: Faza, 2009). P 51.

⁹ Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, 'Process of Housing Transformation in Iran', *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No. 2009): 69–80. P. 69.

¹⁰ Cyrus Ghani and Sīrūs Ghani, *Iran and the Rise of the Reza Shah: From Qajar Collapse to Pahlavi Power* (I.B. Tauris, 2000). P 150.

¹¹ Mohammad Yusef Kiani. *Architecture of the First Period of Pahlavi / معماری دوره پهلوی اول*. Tehran: Iranian Institute for Contemporary Historical Studies, 2004. P 25-26.

appliances.¹² Cars were also a symbol of the new era. Properly designed streets had to accommodate the ever-growing number of cars. Private garages began to appear, which further affected the layout of houses on plots of land. The price of land started to rise, reflecting a steadily growing population, which subsequently necessitated the construction of a different type of housing – predominantly realised as apartment buildings from the early 1960s onwards.

Perhaps one of the most dramatic changes in Iran, however, occurred from the late 1960s onwards, including the Islamic Revolution in 1979, followed by the Iran-Iraq war of 1980–1988. The increasing population, for example, was a direct result of the national family planning programme introduced by the Pahlavi government and established in 1967, which was suspended shortly after Islamic revolution in 1979.¹³ By 1988, fertility rates had dropped again massively.¹⁴ Despite this, Iran’s population grew from around 34 million in 1976¹⁵ to 75 million in 2011.¹⁶

All of these events had a significant impact on people’s perceptions of different ways of living and brought a wave of changes to Iranian urban living. An overall inclination towards Western ways of living alongside high population growth caused a housing shortage and affordability issues.

¹² Pamela Karimi, *Domesticity and Consumer Culture in Iran: Interior Revolutions of the Modern Era*, 1st edition (London ; New York: Routledge, 2013). P 37.

¹³ Mohammad Jalal Abbasi et al., ‘Revolution, War and Modernization: Population Policy and Fertility Change in Iran’, *Journal of Population Research* 19, No. 1 (n.d.): 25–46, doi:10.1007/BF03031967. P.2.

¹⁴ Ibid. P.1.

¹⁵ ‘Statistics – The Population of Iran, آمار - سیمای جمعیت ایران به روایت آمار’, accessed 13 September 2016; available at: <http://khoy-pnu.mihanblog.com/post/39>

¹⁶ ‘Selection of General Population and Housing Census 2011’, گزیده نتایج سرشماری عمومی 1390 (Statistical Center of Iran, 2011); available at: [http://iran.unfpa.org/Documents/Census2011/census-90-results\(3\).pdf](http://iran.unfpa.org/Documents/Census2011/census-90-results(3).pdf)

1.3 The Architecture of Iran

1.3.1 History and transformation

According to the Iranian architect Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, Iranian architecture can be divided into the Pre-Islamic period, the Islamic period and contemporary architecture¹⁷ (see Fig. 1). Around 2,400 years ago, Islam was introduced to Iran and this greatly influenced the style and character of architectural works. But there was still a solid link between Pre-Islamic and Islamic architecture. Until around 400 years ago, both pre-Islamic and Islamic architecture were established as vital eras in the history of Iranian architecture. After the Safavid period, Iranian architecture could not keep its high profile in the world.¹⁸

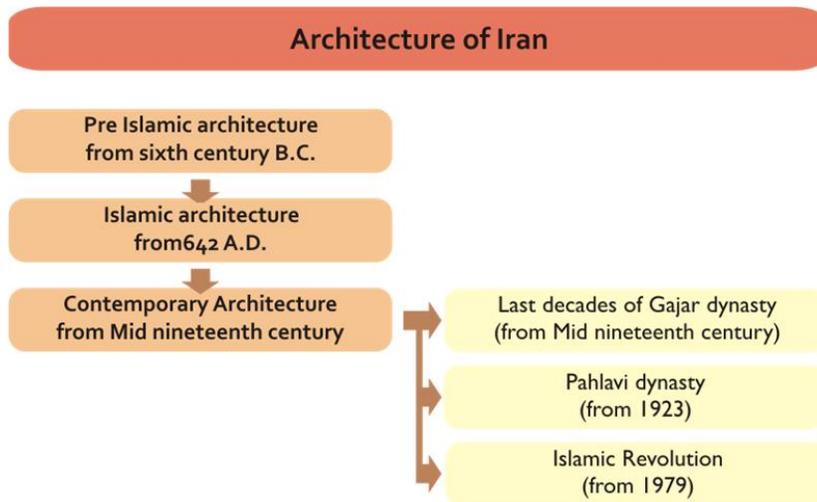


Figure 1: Historical periods of Iranian Architecture.
Source: the author

According to archaeological discoveries, the history of Persian architecture goes back to 8,000 B.C. Since then, different styles have been established and practised. Ancient Persian Architecture developed through a process of cultural influence between Iran and neighbouring civilizations. According to the Persian art expert Arthur Pope, Iran

¹⁷ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه، فرهنگ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 144.

¹⁸ Ali Asghar Salamati, 'Urban Housing Design in Iran in Response to Socio-Cultural and Environmental Conditions' (PhD thesis, University of Strathclyde, 2001); available at: http://oleg.lib.strath.ac.uk:80/R/?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=20365. P.30.

adapted important elements from each of these cultural sources, while maintaining its own unique individuality.¹⁹ It has been discussed earlier how some sociopolitical events in the 19th and 20th centuries impacted on Iran's overall transformation. The following section lists some important social and political events that resulted in particular changes to people's ways of living, had an impact on the vernacular architecture of Iran and led to today's predominant architecture and design in Iran (Figure 2).

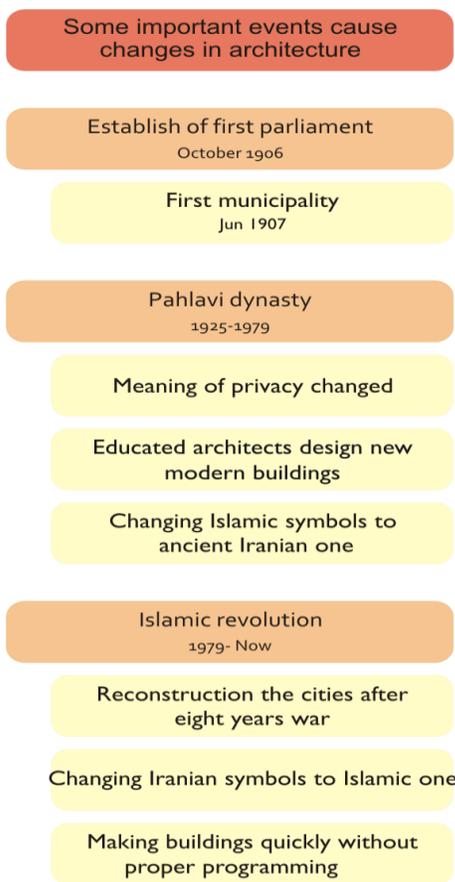


Figure 2: Architectural changes in the 20th century.

Source: the author

- The first parliament of Iran was established on 7 October 1906.
- The first modern-style municipality was inaugurated in Tehran on 10 June 1907. In 1921, European urban regulations were introduced that aimed to accelerate the modernisation of the country. During this time, some Iranian architects who had trained in Europe came back to Iran and started to design buildings that were inspired by Western architecture.
- End of the Qajar dynasty on 13 November 1925. The Parliament made a decision to terminate the dynasty and recognized Reza Shah as the first King of the Pahlavi dynasty on 26 November 1925.
- Reza Shah introduced several changes to Iran, one of the most important events being the ban on the Islamic dress code in public. Gradually, this also resulted in changes to the understanding, meaning and practice of privacy in buildings. For example, having separate guest rooms for males and females appeared to be an option rather than a requirement.
- Reza Shah established modern universities in the 1930s, educating architects to design new “modern” buildings.²⁰
- He also tried to change Islamic symbols of architecture to ancient Persian ones (Achaemenian and Sassanian).
- The second King of Pahlavi was appointed (circa September 1941)
- Apartment-building started in the 1960s.
- Islamic revolution of 1979.
- The Iran-Iraq war, the longest war in the 20th century, left many cities in ruins.
- The period immediately following the end of the war in 1988 was dedicated to the rebuilding of cities and buildings.

¹⁹ Arthur Upham Pope, *Persian Architecture: The Triumph of Form and Color* (G. Braziller, 1965). P 10.

²⁰ Siros Bavar, *Modern Architecture in Iran/ نگاهی به پیدایی معماری نو در ایران* (Tehran: Faza, 2009). P 65.

- The population increased dramatically between 1976 and 2011,²¹ prompting the rapid construction of residential buildings, with less attention paid to the quality of spaces.

As can be seen from the above list of events, both political and architectural transformations were intertwined, which paved the way for the overall transformation of architecture and urban living in Iran.

1.4 Transformation processes of dwellings in Iran

Though the Iranian government had very good relations with the West, the general public had a limited understanding of and exposure to Westernised societies. During the early part of the 20th century, younger Iranians went to European or American universities to pursue various degree courses. When they returned to Iran they wanted to create similar living environments in Iran to those they had experienced elsewhere. Housing design was an essential part of these new ways of living. The media, in particular newspapers and magazines, were promoting new perceptions of lifestyles.²³ Consequently, more and more people were becoming aware of modern ways of living.

These changes were reflected in the steady replacement of single-storey houses with multi-family and multi-storey residential complexes and apartments. Mirmoghtadaee, for example, argues that, “In the first comprehensive plan of Tehran, which was prepared with the assistance of French companies, it was explained that one-storey houses are the consequence of poor construction techniques, and central courtyards are the reflection of old social conventions, women's freedom will eliminate the need for introverted areas and will add to the prevalence of apartment

²¹ 'Statistics – The Population of Iran, according to the Statistics' آمار - سیمای جمعیت ایران به 'روایت آمار'.

²² 'Selection of General Population and Housing Census 2011', گزیده نتایج سرشماری عمومی، 'نفوس و مسکن 1390'.

²³ Mohammad Yusef Kiani. Architecture of the First Period of Pahlavi / Memari Dorehe Pahlavi Aval/ معماری دوره پهلوی اول. Tehran: Iranian Institute for Contemporary Historical, Studies 2004. P 112.

living. Balconies will substitute for courtyards, and elevators will increase the number of building stories.”²⁴

From the early 1960s, these changes took place more rapidly and were almost independent of other urban changes. The growing numbers of private cars and associated facilities, such as parking spaces, were one of the strongest forces in this wave of change. At this time, the spatial organisation of housing was divided into: courtyard (open spaces) and building (closed spaces) (Figure 3).

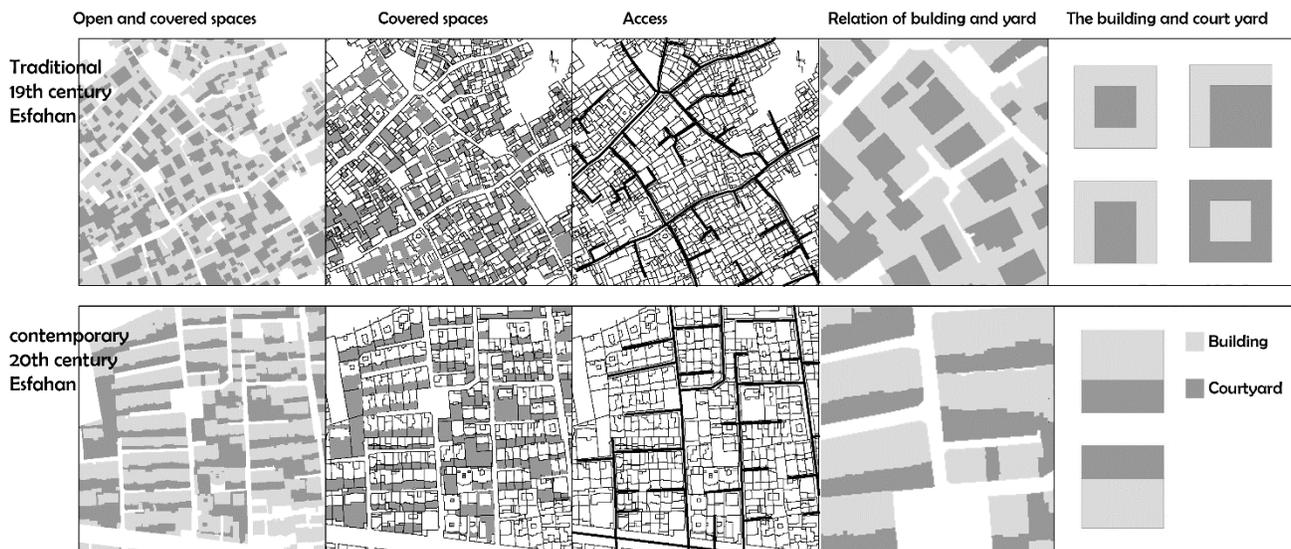


Figure 3: This picture shows changes in the relations of buildings, courtyards and streets. Street forms changed between the 19th and 20th centuries. The courtyard was placed at the centre of a plot when building traditional houses, but it was now placed to one side of the plot, beside the building, in front of it or behind it.

Source: the author

In Iranian houses, the courtyard is an open space that is located between the street and the building, or two buildings that are located to the south and the north of the land. A house has several rooms and corridors and occasionally some roof spaces, such as a porch or open spaces like roof balconies. Closed spaces are generally between two crossing walls with two facades.

²⁴ Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, 'Process of Housing Transformation in Iran', *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No. 2009): 69–80. P.69.



Figure 4: Relationship between a building plot and open space.
Source: the author

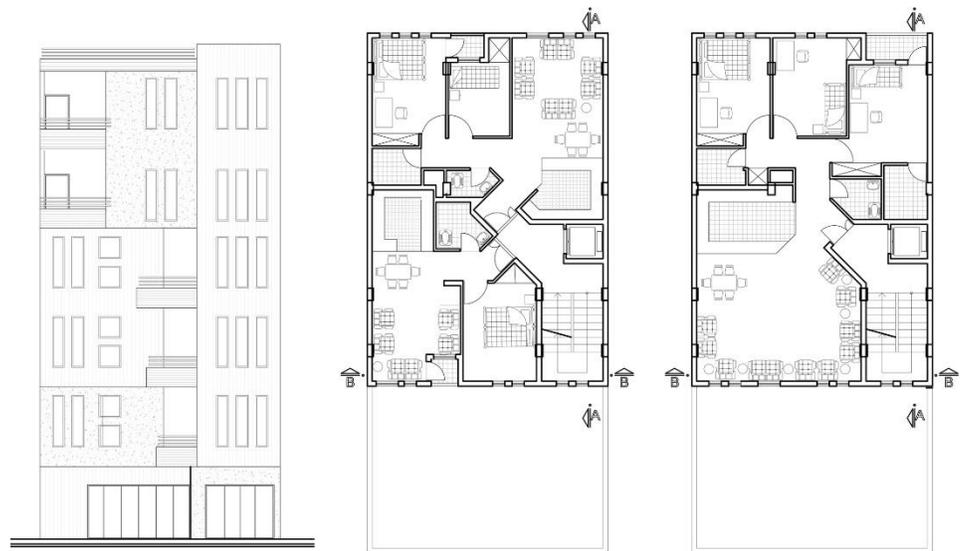


Figure 5 : A typical contemporary apartment plan. Generally, houses and apartments today have two main elevations, as shown in this figure.

Source: the author

Over the following decades, the apartment building became the dominant housing typology, while traditional houses were gradually abandoned. In contrast with traditional houses that had a private courtyard, this new typology has smaller courtyards that are shared by all the families who live in the same apartment building. In the 1970s, new regulations for the construction of buildings were introduced, these stipulate that a maximum of 60% of a plot of land can be covered, with the remaining 40% to be left as open space (Figure 4). This affected not only the spatial organisation of houses, but also had a significant impact on urban planning and design.

Instead of the central courtyard, the courtyard today is located in front of a building (Figure 5).²⁵

There were other changes that occurred from the 1920s onwards, though these became more prevalent over the following decades and were related to technological advances that began to impact on ways of living. For instance, using electric cookers and ready-made meals became more common, so that today's kitchen is often reduced to a space for warming food and washing dishes. Consequently, women spent less time doing housework and instead became more active in social and economic activities.²⁶ While changes before the 1920s were only subtle and tended to relate to the lifestyles of the previous generation, during the 1960s new house designs began to deviate more from traditional house design.²⁷

In the years after 1951, when Dr Mosadegh was elected Prime Minister of Iran, several economic and political factors had consequences for Iranian ways of living. The prominence of Western-educated architects and increasing relations with other countries accelerated this process. The traditional lifestyle was quickly replaced by a European one. As a result, the new Iranian architecture inclined towards Western architecture, adapting its style for instance in the implementation of material and environmental ways of living and design concepts.²⁸

From the 1960s onwards, the functions of space were divided into different categories, such as material, structure and furniture, and they were designed and conceived separately. Structural design became a separate part of the building-design process and differences between varying heights of spaces were ignored. The differences between spaces were understandable from the area (length x width) and floor. There were no differences in terms of height between different ceilings of different spaces. In the past, changes to spaces could be seen in their varying volumes, but later this changed to surface area instead of volume. In traditional Iranian houses, considering the volumes of designed spaces was a very important factor, while in modern designs this 3D concept based

²⁵ Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, 'Process of Housing Transformation in Iran', *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No, 2009): 69–80. P.75.

²⁶ Ibid. P69, P.78.

²⁷ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه، فرهنگ، طبیعت (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010).P 172.

²⁸ Bavar, *Modern Architecture in Iran/نگاهی به پیدایی معماری نو در ایران* P 53.

on volumes was turned into 2D plan-level thinking (e.g. the height of the ceiling remained the same).²⁹

As Mirmoghtadaee writes, “The physical characteristics of houses have been transformed profoundly. Inward-looking courtyard houses changed to outward-looking residential complexes with a shared courtyard. The arrangement of the housing space, which used to follow geometric rules, now follows the geometry of land parcels. Multifunctional spaces are replaced by single-function rooms. The combination of open, semi-open, and closed spaces, which formerly enhanced spatial diversity, has been replaced by a shared courtyard and private, closed living spaces. Balconies, which were intended to substitute for courtyards, were instead combined with closed spaces and used chiefly as store-rooms. There is no usable rooftop or basement to accommodate living activities in hot summers.”³⁰

The structural design, which was an integral part of building, now became a separate part and was independent of space organization and design. Air-conditioning systems replaced traditional architectural solutions.

At first, complex spaces changed to become simple ones, and then they evolved to become similar and homogenous. The section of a building no longer had an interesting 3D volumetric design, it changed to just a simple rectangle, which was similar in every single space. The functions of spaces were limited to just a few that were essential parts of everyday life, e.g. bedrooms for sleeping compared to spaces like courtyards in the past, and spaces also became more similar.³¹

According to Amir Bani Masod, an Iranian architect, there are no longer architectural elements in contemporary houses; instead, they have been turned into more construction elements without character. Materials and façades became symbols of identity; structure is an important part of security. Electrical and mechanical services were included to boost the comfort of spaces.³²

²⁹ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 175-6.

³⁰ Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, ‘Process of Housing Transformation in Iran’, *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No. 2009): 69–80. P.79.

³¹ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 176.

³² Amir Bani Masod, *Contemporary Iranian Architecture/ معماری معاصر ایران*, 2010. P 41.

In conclusion, the evolution and transformation of house design over the past 100 years in Iran can be summarised as follows

1. Before the 1920s: Houses were pre-dominantly constructed from brick; they have a central courtyard and are generally introverted; outside facades tend to be plain, but inside spaces are decorated; the urban layout is compact; streets and alleys are narrow and the design is responsive to the climate.

2. Between the 1920s and the 1960s: this is a period of great architectural transformation: streets became wider and the urban layout less compact; buildings become more extroverted, with windows facing onto streets; internal layouts change; balconies become a feature of new apartment buildings; steel and concrete replace brick as the dominant building materials.

With the influence of new streets and cars on house spaces, during these four decades there was a sharp rise in the numbers of imported cars to the country. Cities that had previously only seen horses and coaches then had significant numbers of cars that required different types of infrastructure. The entire image of cities, as well as people's perceptions of modernity and transport, changed in this period. According to the Iranian architect Hadi Mirmiran, from 1921 to 1941, the government was in a rush for modernization. Several European architects were hired to build modern buildings in Western styles. Also, many student went to Europe to study architecture. From 1941 to the late 1960s, the return of students from Europe saw new buildings built by these architects. And the first modern art and architecture school was established in Tehran.³³

The late 1940s onwards (after the Second World War) saw stagnation in constructing public buildings with priority going to house construction. The first residential complex with public spaces was built in 1944 on behalf of a bank (Rahni Bank). It contained 400 units and was an attempt to build affordable houses.³⁴ Nevertheless, apartment construction by public companies started in the early 1960s.

³³ Ali Asghar Salamati, 'Urban Housing Design in Iran in Response to Socio-Cultural and Environmental Conditions' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Strathclyde, 2001); available at: http://oleg.lib.strath.ac.uk:80/R/?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=20365. Pp.30–1.

³⁴ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P53.

After the 1960s: Contemporary houses³⁵ and apartment buildings were less responsive to the climate, constructed from modern materials, smaller in size (having shared space for reception and living area) and had open kitchens.³⁶

1.4.1 Impact on Climate-responsive Architecture

Soleymanpour, Parsaee and Banaei argue that as a result of technological solutions to climate control, some significant factors in human-oriented design have been forgotten. Although the vernacular architecture of Iran used to display different patterns according to different climatic zones, nowadays the same architectural forms are used everywhere, which does not provide the comfort needed.³⁷ And yet, they go on to state, traditional building design strategies – with strategies influenced by external environmental conditions and climatic zones – can offer a higher level of climate comfort. Not only that, they state that today's similarities in design across different climatic zones have caused physical and psychological discomfort for residents.³⁸ In contrast, traditional buildings display a harmony between human beings, buildings and the physical environment.³⁹

According to the Iranian architect Hadi Mirmiran, there has always been an attempt within Iranian modern architecture to investigate and understand traditional buildings, but the lessons learnt were not always successfully implemented.⁴⁰ The reasons for this may be found in the opposing forces that shaped Iranian cities. The Iranian architect Mohammad Mansour believes that buildings relate to their residents. One of the main features of vernacular Iranian architecture that was dominant before the 1920s – and similar to vernacular architecture elsewhere – was

³⁵ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 53.

³⁶ The white revolution happened during the 1960s, led by Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi.

³⁷ Rana Soleymanpour, Nastaran Parsaee, and Maryam Banaei, 'Climate Comfort Comparison of Vernacular and Contemporary Houses of Iran', *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, AcE-Bs 2015 Tehran (6th Asian Conference on Environment-Behaviour Studies), Iran University of Science & Technology, Tehran, Iran, 20–22 February 2015, 201 (22 August 2015): 49–61, doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.08.118. P.49.

³⁸ Ibid. p.50.

³⁹ Ibid. p.61.

⁴⁰ Ali Asghar Salamati, 'Urban Housing Design in Iran in Response to Socio-Cultural and Environmental Conditions' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Strathclyde, 2001), http://oleg.lib.strath.ac.uk:80/R/?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=20365. P.32.

the process of construction in which the builder, owner and user were all one person. Consequently, each house had its own style.⁴¹

1.5 Conclusion:

This chapter has outlined the framework for this research, it helps in tracing and understanding the various events that have played important roles in the transformation of architecture, and in particular residential buildings, in Iran. The chapter has also explained the impact on architecture, on various scales, by linking to the social and cultural practices of people. By shedding light on some of the shortcomings of contemporary architecture, the chapter has strived to explain the importance and significance of the research questions addressed in this thesis. Going further into context of the thesis, the following chapter will look at the concept of 'dwelling' in the Persian context.

⁴¹ Faza Scientific and Cultural Institute, *Vernacular Architecture/ Memari boomi/ معماری بومی* (Iran: Faza, 2005). P 9.

Chapter 2

Traditional Domestic Architecture in Iran

2.1 Introduction:

This chapter, presented in two parts, aims to bring into focus the importance of the concept of house in Iranian architecture. First, it briefly explains the concept of house within Persian culture and then introduces diverse disciplinary perspectives on the notion of house, home and dwelling. In the second part, the chapter explains the evolution and history of two distinct Iranian house designs: early Persian houses and traditional houses. An analysis of the various aspects of house design is presented with illustrations. Various Iranian practices of living are delineated using a study of selected films that focus on the domestic life of Iranians. The chapter concludes by discussing various important architectural elements, spaces and practices of traditional Iranian house design.

2.2 Concept of “house” in Persian culture

Language and culture are evolving concepts. Some words, as well as some aspects of culture, change with time. These gradual changes greatly reflect peoples’ changing perceptions of various aspects of living. How people adapt to their place of living and how they describe it are largely defined by their social and cultural choices and preferences. This notion is aptly demonstrated when understanding the concept of ‘house’ in Persian culture. This section delineates how the concept of house is embedded in language and place in early Persian and modern Iranian culture.

In Persian culture, the meaning of house (khane – خانه) is simply “a place for dwelling”.⁴² However, according to Haeri Mazandarani, Dehkhoda mentions that, in Persian, there are more than fifty words that include the word “house”. In these combined words, “house” is

⁴²Ali akbar Dehkhoda, *Dehkhoda Glossary* / 1940 , لغت نامه دهخدا, P 321.

used as a suffix. These words can be categorized into five groups: occupation, objects, activities, characteristics and space.

Occupation: When the word 'house' is added as a suffix to some words, it indicates the occupation of the person occupying the house. For example, "akas-khane" in Persian, if translated literally, means "the photographer's house", but it is used to refer to a "photo shop". This is also applicable to words like cook and so on.

Objects: The word 'house' can also be added as a suffix to objects such as tea, pit, medicine or fund – indicating the social function or role of a building. A medicine house, for example, is a pharmacy.

Activities: The word 'house' can be added as a suffix to verbs that relate to an activity, such as observing or reading; thus a reading house in Persian is a library in English.

Characteristics: The word 'house' when added as a suffix to certain words such as cold and warm describes their characteristics. A cold house means a cold room.

Spatial: When the word 'house' is added as a suffix to words describing certain spaces, it refers to the spatial conditions and location of a space. Referring to a 'dome house' articulates a space that has a dome above it.

Putting these words together presents a picture of life and society that shows people, activities and their roles, objects, feelings and emotions. Combining these words with 'house' creates another image of space. On the other hand, the way that the word house is used shows some aspects of how life and society are connected. It seems that when a function/ role or a type of service becomes permanent and essential or a relevant part of society, people like to allocate it a specific place: a house. 'House' is considered to represent a place that people settle in, it often represents a social and/or personal part of human life.⁴³ In the past few decades, Iranian society has faced several cultural and social changes and, accordingly, the meaning of house has been affected. Iranians, like other societies, have used different terms to describe 'house'. For instance, according to the architecture historian Pirniya, Iranians have started to use the word 'room' (otagh) instead of the word 'house' (khane).⁴⁴ Now, "otagh" is just used for a bedroom, not an entire house. The word house, which was added to

⁴³ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 55.

⁴⁴ Ibid. P 61.

different words in the past, as mentioned before, is rarely used now. Instead, 'house words' have been replaced by some new names that not only relate more closely to Western names for those spaces, but also play roles that are more similar to their Western counterparts. Also, they used another word – sara – that has several meanings, such as sanctum and home.⁴⁵ Neither of these two words is in use now to describe houses.

2.3 House, home, dwelling

In this section, various interlinking concepts of house, home and dwelling are explored to understand the rich and complex experiential relationship that exists between residents and their houses.

2.3.1 House:

According to the architect and academic Julienne Hanson:

“Houses are not just assemblages of individual rooms but intricate patterns of organised space, governed by rules and conventions about the size and configuration of rooms, which domestic activities go together, how the interior should be decorated and furnished and what kinds of household objects are appropriate in each setting, how family members relate to one another in different spaces, and how and where guests should be received and entertained in the home.”⁴⁶

The different spaces in house as, as Mathew Johnson explains, “will be organized around and will express the world view, or mentality of, the society that produces it, and will express that view, but this world view in turn has to be understood in terms of that society”.⁴⁷ He also mentions that meanings differ in different cultures.⁴⁸ The various layers of relationships and meanings of spaces in houses represent interlinking concepts of house, home and dwelling that may not be the same in

⁴⁵Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010).P 61.

⁴⁶ Julienne Hanson, *Decoding Homes and Houses* (Cambridge University Press, 2003). P324.

⁴⁷ Mathew Johnson, *Housing Culture: Traditional Architecture in an English Landscape* (Taylor & Francis, 1993), 32–3.

⁴⁸ Ibid. pp. 32–3.

different cultures, but often have common aspects. It is important to examine these three concepts in this research, as it helps to unravel the complex and rich relationship between residents and their houses.

Johnson has studied housing culture to determine its meaning and its relation or expression to cultural values, in order to understand them fully.⁴⁹ Johnson suggests that, according to recent developments, meaning is not single or unique, it is changeable for different reasons.⁵⁰ For example, the word “sara” – which has several meanings but can also be translated as ‘sanctum’ and, in the past, represented the home – would now never be used when talking about a house. This might be because of changing culture and the ideas people have about a house. In the past, Iranians would care more about privacy and the comfort of the family, and the house was a kind of sacred space. But now, people’s thoughts about privacy have changed. Women are more involved in society and social activities, and – often – the house is not a place where they spend most of their time, in contrast with the past when they spent most of their time in their houses.

A seminal work that looks at house as an intimate and profound object is ‘The Poetics of Space’ by Gaston Bachelard. Bachelard explains how the house offers intimate experiences that are strongly fixed in the human mind. He argues that experiences of one’s house are one of the “greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories and dreams of mankind.”⁵¹ According to Bachelard, the house is a container for daydreams and in order to examine and analyse ‘being’ more deeply, it is crucial to understand the experiential plane evoked by different places in the house which are identified by one’s solitude. Through his philosophical analysis of the house–person relationship, Bachelard coined the term ‘topoanalysis’, a “systematic psychological study of the sites of our intimate lives”⁵² and explained such an analysis can be extremely useful in psychoanalysis.

2.3.2 Home:

Miller has a simplified definition of home. According to Miller, in traditional anthropological debates the meaning of home refers to a specific location that is bounded spatially with four walls, windows and

⁴⁹ Matthew Johnson, *Housing Culture: Traditional Architecture in an English Landscape* (Taylor & Francis, 1993), p.28.

⁵⁰ Ibid. p.30.

⁵¹ Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (Penguin, 2014), p.6.

⁵² Ibid. p.46.

doors.⁵³ Miller Lane underlines this by referring to Reyner Banham who, according to her, saw “the modern home [as] a set of modern appliances and services, not bound to any location and therefore essentially rootless”.⁵⁴

Contrary to this functional description, Mary Douglas suggests that “a home is a place where households organize themselves over time by practicing the planning of resources and by developing household rituals”; for Douglas, home is thus an early form of social organisation.⁵⁵

Alexander Cuthbert sees the home as “the universal physical medium of expression for humans. Drawing examples from across the globe and across time, he considered the cultural, symbolic, religious and spiritual dimensions of home.”⁵⁶ He believes that home is the worldwide physical medium of expression for people.⁵⁷ He suggests that as a basic meaning, home can be a place for several primary or personal functions, such as washing cooking, eating etc. But there is something more than this that might be related to history or spiritual aspects.

“Home is where the hearth is” is an old saying in Iran, which reflects the level of feelings associated with the home. Home is the place we always go back to. There is a relation in people’s minds between the function and emotions of spaces.

As Norberg-Schulz argues, “When the environment is meaningful man feels ‘at home’.”⁵⁸ Such homes are places where people grow up and know exactly how to walk on a specific part of the ground, or to be under a specific sky.⁵⁹

Clare Cooper Marcus argues that a home meets many needs: “a place of self-expression, a vessel of memories, a refuge from the outside world, a cocoon where we can feel nurtured and let down our guard”.⁶⁰ The space for these needs can be almost anywhere. Cooper Marcus

⁵³ Daniel Miller, *Home Possessions: Material Culture Behind Closed Doors* (Berg Publishers, 2001). P.2.

⁵⁴ Barbara Miller Lane, *Housing and Dwelling: Perspectives on Modern Domestic Architecture* (Taylor & Francis, 2007), 50.

⁵⁵ Ibid. P 50.

⁵⁶ Loretta Barnard et al., eds, *Home: New Directions in World Architecture and Design* (Elanora Heights, NSW: Millennium House, 2006). P.21.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p.21.

⁵⁸ Ibid. p.23

⁵⁹ Ibid. p.23

⁶⁰ Clare Cooper Marcus, *House as a Mirror of Self: Exploring the Deeper Meaning of Home* (Ibis Press/Nicolas Hays, 2006). P.4.

says that, “Home can be a room inside a house, a house within a neighbourhood, a neighbourhood within a city, and a city within a nation. At each level the meaning of home gains in intensity and depth from the dialectical interaction between the two poles of experience – the place and its context at a larger scale.”⁶¹ She further adds that “home is a place of security within an insecure world, a place of certainty within doubt, a familiar place in a strange world, a sacred place in a profane world. It is a place of autonomy and power in an increasingly heteronomous world where others make the rules.”⁶²

Birdwell-Pheasant and Lawrence-Zúñiga explains the house as a place that "belongs to a particular group".⁶³ They believe that although houses involve areas for making food, eating, sleeping, sitting, storing etc., tensions often arise between meaning and praxis.⁶⁴ This is even more challenging for a society like Iran, where contemporary architecture has been influenced by Western culture, while traditional and religious beliefs are still strongly present in society.

Moore claims that space should be treated as a form of text. Space and text both have obvious and hidden meanings, so it is possible to reinterpret or reread them. Also, he mentions not only text but space too can have different meanings for different people.⁶⁵ The various layers of meaning associated with the concept of house, home and dwelling show the significance and need to explore and understand changing reconceptualizations in the contemporary urban context. Given the articulation of these dimensions, a deep understanding of how people perceive the meaning of home and its spaces is crucial for creating spaces where users can positively engage and establish a sense of belonging. In a society like Iran, where some domestic traditions were established at least 7,000 years ago,⁶⁶ and where religion continues to have a strong presence for many in everyday life, the concept of home needs to be closely examined. In this respect, Matthew Johnson’s perspective is interesting. He believes that “in the architecture of home, not only the functional and financial

⁶¹ Clare Cooper Marcus, *House as a Mirror of Self: Exploring the Deeper Meaning of Home* (Ibis Press/Nicolas Hays, 2006). P.191

⁶² Ibid. P.191.

⁶³ Donna Birdwell-Pheasant and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga, *House Life: Space, Place and Family in Europe* (Berg Publishers, 1999). P 51.

⁶⁴ Ibid. P 51.

⁶⁵ Matthew Johnson, *Housing Culture: Traditional Architecture in an English Landscape* (Taylor & Francis, 1993), P.32.

⁶⁶ Arthur Upham Pope, *Persian Architecture: The Triumph of Form and Color* (G. Braziller, 1965). P 9.

requirements influence the construction and arrangement but also the cultural and psychological needs of its users.”⁶⁷

2.3.3 Dwelling:

More in line with a phenomenological perspective, Martin Heidegger considers “building” and “dwelling” to be a single phenomenon.⁶⁸ Norberg-Schulz cites Heidegger’s definition of “dwelling”: “the way in which you are and I am, the way in which we humans are in the earth is dwelling...”. But “on the earth” already means “under the sky”.⁶⁹ He also calls what is between earth and sky the world, and says that “the world is the house where the mortal dwells”.⁷⁰ Also, Heidegger explains that a “dwelling means to be at peace in a protected place”.⁷¹ Dwelling here is considered to be an important concept of existence. According to Heidegger, it means to remain in a place and be situated in a certain relationship with existence, referring to a relationship that is characterized by nurturing, enabling the world as it is.⁷²

A similar notion of dwelling is developed by Norwegian architect and theorist Norberg-Schulz. Who explains that distinct functions need spaces with distinct character. “A dwelling has to be “protective”, an office “practical”, a ball-room “festive” and a church “solemn”.⁷³ Norberg-Schulz “used the word “dwelling” to indicate the total man-place relationship”.⁷⁴ When a person dwells, he or she is concurrently situated in a space and visible to certain environmental characters. In this case, two psychological purposes entitled “orientation” and “identification” are involved.⁷⁵ Although orientation is important,

⁶⁷ Matthew Johnson, *Housing Culture: Traditional Architecture in an English Landscape* (Taylor & Francis, 1993), P.1.

⁶⁸ Barbara Miller Lane, *Housing and Dwelling: Perspectives on Modern Domestic Architecture* (Taylor & Francis, 2007), P.50.

⁶⁹ Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1979) p.10.

⁷⁰ Ibid. p.10.

⁷¹ Ibid. p.22.

⁷² Martin Heidegger. *Poetry, Language, Thought*, translated by Albert Hofstadter, Harper Colophon Books, New York, 1971. Pp.150–151.

⁷³ Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1979). P.14.

⁷⁴ Ibid. p.22.

⁷⁵ Ibid. p.19.

dwelling relates more to identification. It is obviously improbable to position oneself without true identification.⁷⁶

According to Norberg-Schulz, “‘identification’ means to become ‘friends’ with a particular environment.”⁷⁷ Every human being, according to him, should be friends with his or her environment whether it is ice and cold winds for Nordic populations or sandy deserts and burning sun for the Arab. But their settlements should protect them from natural forces.⁷⁸

Norberg-Schulz explains that, “It is characteristic for modern man that for a long time he gave the role as a wanderer pride of place. He wanted to be “free” and conquer the world. Today we start to realize that true freedom presupposes belonging, and that “dwelling” means belonging to a concrete place.”⁷⁹ This statement resonates well with the current housing situation in Iran, which needs to re-engage with cultural values and people’s lifestyle preferences in constructing home.

2.4 Iranian house Design

The following section discusses in detail the evolution and history of two distinct Iranian house designs: Early Persian houses and traditional houses. Contemporary housing will be introduced in Chapter 4.

2.4.1 Early Persian houses

In order to understand early houses and dwellings in Persia, 14 different sites belonging to the period between 6,000 B.C. up to 500 A.D. were studied by the author. These include several houses but also palaces’ typologies. The examples were analysed based on orientation, scale, form and geometry to comprehend their importance for and role in Persian architecture.

⁷⁶ Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1979). Pp.20–21

⁷⁷ Ibid. p.21.

⁷⁸ Ibid. p.21.

⁷⁹ Ibid. p.22.

In the ancient world, houses were small and mostly consisted of a singular space. People slept, cooked and socialised in that space – but, gradually, different functions found their own spaces.⁸⁰

The very early houses were the most problematic to draw out qualities for, partly because the documents are really poor. Available information from different sources was gathered and redrawn for this purpose. When it is presented in the same style, scale and drawing cross-comparisons are easier. A list of important aspects of early houses is extracted in this part.

The complete study for this part, which include maps, descriptions and analyses of early houses, can be seen in Portfolio Part I.

Based on an analysis of early Persian houses, the following architectural elements were identified:

Fireplace / a kind of stove / oven in the middle part of the house.

Stone bench as a bed or a place for sitting in several rooms.

Niches in walls.

Some of the houses had storerooms and some special boxes for storage.

Not all the rooms were on the same level, some of them were elevated by about one or two steps.

The rooms were connected to each other, with small spaces like vestibules as shelters from the sun.

The courtyard had high walls for privacy.

There was an open space between several houses that connected them to each other.

The rooms shapes were predominantly rectangular and of different sizes.

The following maps show some elements found in buildings from Sang-e-Caxmaq, North of Shahrod, from 8,000 TO 5000 B.C. (Figure 6):

⁸⁰ Mohamad Karim Pirniya, *Orientation to Iranian Islamic Architecture – Ashnae ba memari eslami Iran – اشنایی با معماری اسلامی ایران* (Iran University of Science and Technology, 2005). P.132.

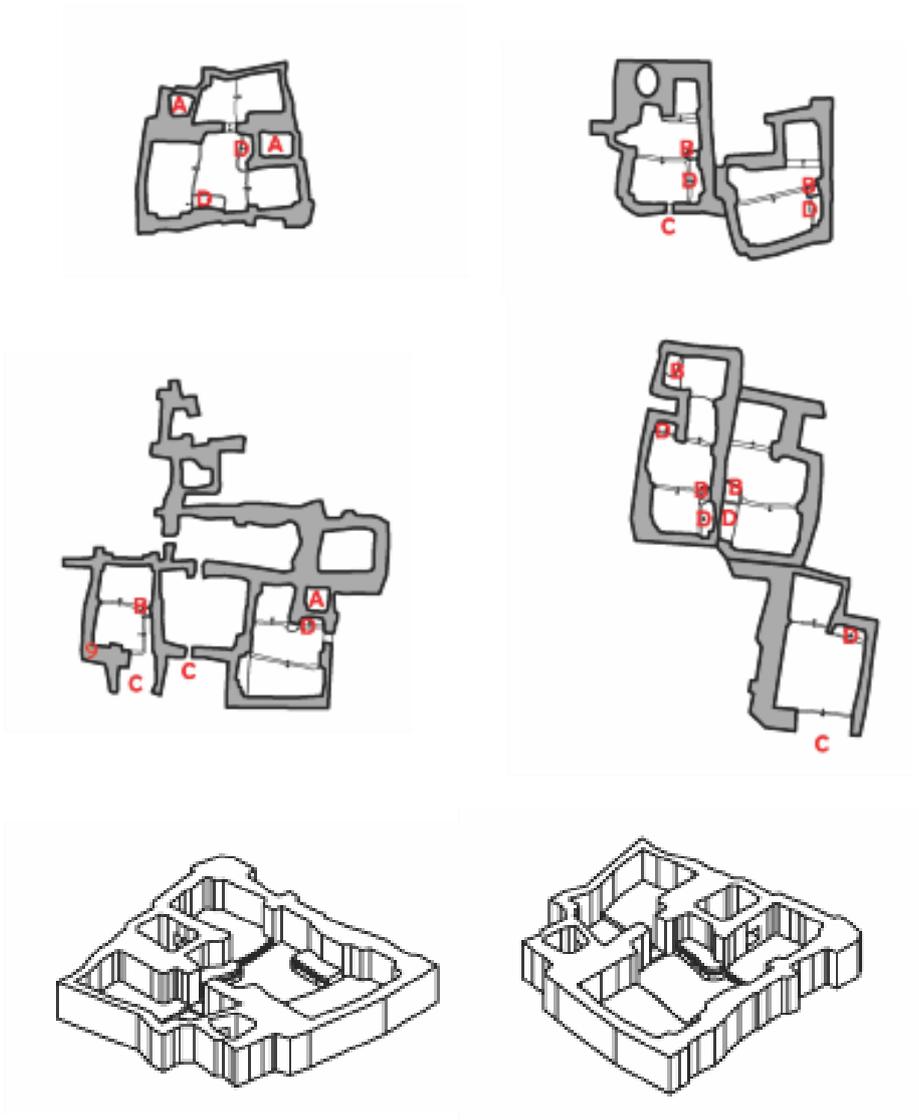


Figure 6: An example of early houses in Iran. A: Fireplace B: a kind of stove in the middle part of the house C: entrance to the south D: stone bench as a bed in several rooms.

Source: Adapted from Adibzadeh, 2005; Bahman Adibzadeh et al., *House in Iran (Neolithic to Sassanid)* / خانه در ایران از نوسنگی تا ساسانی (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2005). By the author.

2.4.2 Traditional Iranian domestic architecture

According to Haeri Mazandarani, traditional houses are those buildings that were used by people residing in towns.⁸¹

Traditional residential houses with a history going back more than 200 years are rare, either because of natural events such as powerful earthquakes, or owners' decisions to completely renovate or even redesign buildings. While public buildings have often been restored, residential buildings were often abandoned or completely rebuilt. Also, political and economic problems forced dwellers to move away and abandon their houses. Houses that were built after an earthquake were not substantially different in "style" or details to buildings that were there before as builders continued to employ the same techniques that had already been used by previous generations.⁸²

Studying Qajar architecture, dominant until 1925, shows that the same building types and concepts were used in different geographical parts of the country. This indicates that although there were no written laws, there were equal perceptions of space. The buildings of Qajar may have gathered together the outcomes of previous centuries.⁸³

In traditional ancient Iranian society, houses were designed in a way that separated them from the outside. Individual houses were clustered into a parish, which was a complex of compact houses that were built back to back, with each house having its own courtyard⁸⁴ (Figure 7 and Figure 8).



Figure 7: An aerial photograph of Esfahan city which shows back-to-back buildings with courtyards, approximate scale 1:2,500.

Source: *Esfahan City Map* (Iran, Tehran: National Cartographic Centre, 1975).

⁸¹ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه، فرهنگ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 8.

⁸² Ibid. P 8-9.

⁸³ Ibid. p 9.

⁸⁴ Ibid. P 175.

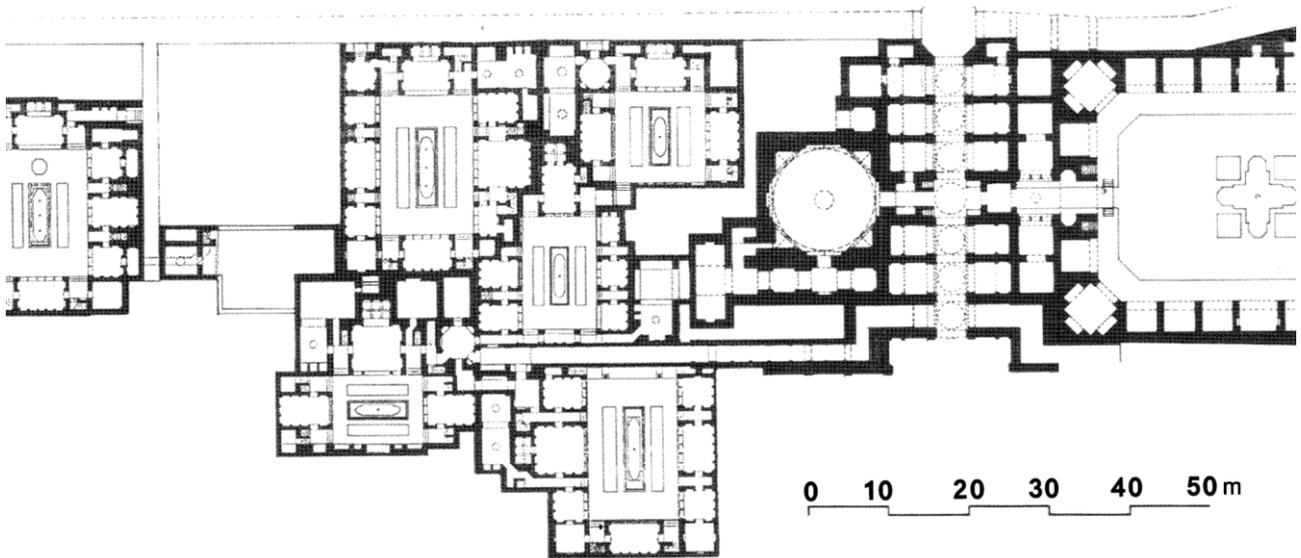


Figure 8: Arrangement of several historical houses.

Source: Fatemeh Kateb and Mazdak Anoshe, *The architecture of Persian houses/ memari khane haye Iran/ معماری خانه های ایران* (Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guiding (Printing & Pub.), 2006.

Before 1921 the entrance to a traditional house was from a lane and these lanes were often cul-de-sacs. Sometimes, when there were several houses that could be accessed from the same lane, a gate was built at the entrance to the lane to ensure privacy.⁸⁵ There was no way to enter a house except through the main entrance⁸⁶ (Figure 9).

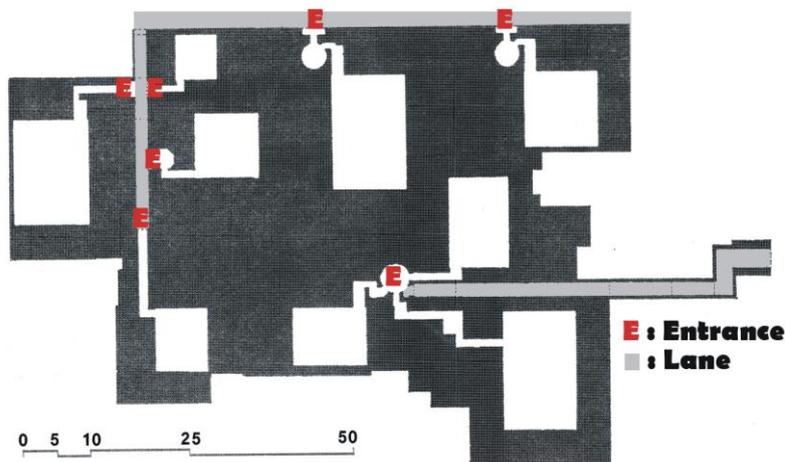


Figure 9 : A plan which shows the entrances to several houses.

Source: The author.

⁸⁵ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P178.

⁸⁶ Ibid.P 178.

The traditional house had quite tall walls. There was no decoration on the walls outside the house – but the entrance tended to be decorated⁸⁷ (

Figure 10–Figure 13).

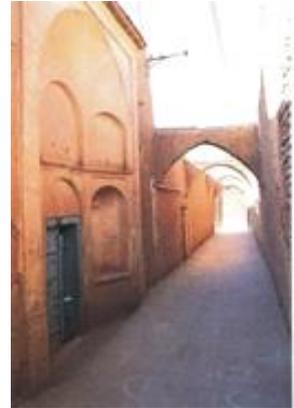


Figure 10: Entrance to Bakochi House, Kashan.

Source: Kambiz Hajjighasemi, *Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان* / Shahisid Beheshti University, 2004.

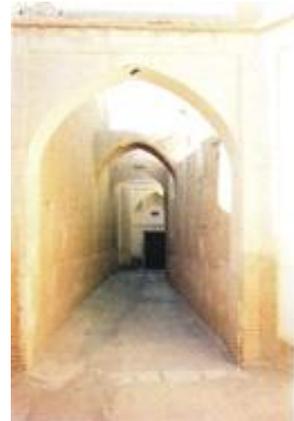


Figure 11: Entrance corridor of Sharifiyan House, Kashan.

Source: Kambiz Hajjighasemi, *Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان* / Shahisid Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 12: An alley in Yazd.

⁸⁷ Fatemeh Kateb and Mazdak Anoshe, *The architecture of Persian houses/ memari khane haye Iran/ معماری خانه های ایران* (Ministry Of Culture And Islamic Guiding (Printing & Pub.), 2006). P.165.



Figure 13: Portico of Lariha House, Yazd.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd* / خانه های یزد- گنجنامه
Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.

2.4.2.1 Significant features in Iranian houses

According to Pirniya, traditional Iranian houses had four important aspects, namely: orientation, modules/ proportions, isolation/ insolation, and privacy/ inward focus.⁸⁸ The following passages discuss these aspects in more detail:

Orientation

The orientation or direction of a house is related to climate, the angle of the sun, wind, location and Qibla.⁸⁹ Traditional Iranian architects, who learned their skills through training and experience, developed three types of orientation in different parts of the country. And they used a hexagonal plan to have accurate orientation⁹⁰ (Figure 14).

For middle- and upper-middle class houses, each part of the house was built for a special season and specific hours of the day (Figure 15). The north side, which receives sun from the south, was built for use in winter. The spaces that were used in summer were placed in the south-facing part of the house. Traditional architects avoided heat from the western sun by implementing different strategies. And, finally, in

⁸⁸ Pirniya, *Orientation to Iranian Islamic Architecture – Ashnaee ba memari eslami Iran* – آشنایی با معماری اسلامی ایران - P.154.

⁸⁹ Qibla: The direction of the Kaaba (the sacred building at Mecca, which is believed to have been built by the Prophet Abraham, to which Muslims turn at prayer.

⁹⁰ Pirniya, *Orientation to Iranian Islamic Architecture – Ashnaee ba memari eslami Iran* - آشنایی با معماری اسلامی ایران - P.155.

the western part of the house, they put less important spaces, often lit only by light trapped by the roof. ⁹¹

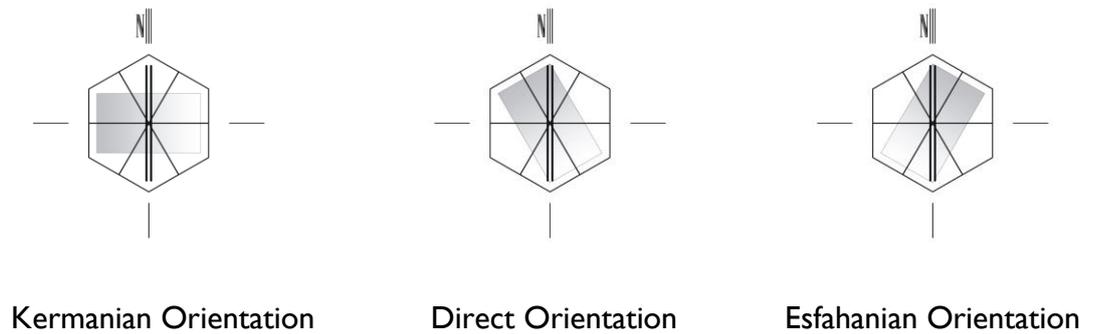


Figure 14: Different orientations in Iranian traditional houses (which reflect how geographical location affected the building design).
Source: The author.

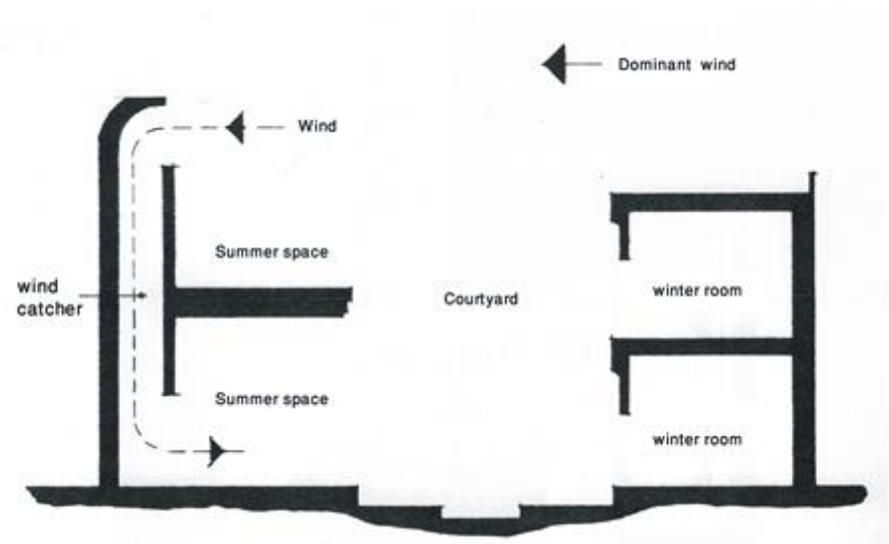


Figure 15: This section shows winter and summer parts of historical houses.
Source: Fatemeh Kateb and Mazdak Anoshe, *The architecture of Persian houses/ memari khane haye Iran/ معماری خانه های ایران* (Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guiding (Printing & Pub.), 2006).

Modules / Proportions

The module size used in the design of houses was the width of a door – which was either 117 cm, 104 cm or 92 cm wide (Figure 16).

In order to achieve the best proportions, the module was useful for architects. Also, carpenters could make prefabricated doors and windows as their widths were fixed. It is probable that the architects

⁹¹ Ibid. P.155.

used up to two different modules in one building. Spaces were referred to as 1-door, 2-door, 3-door and 5-door rooms (Figure 17).⁹²

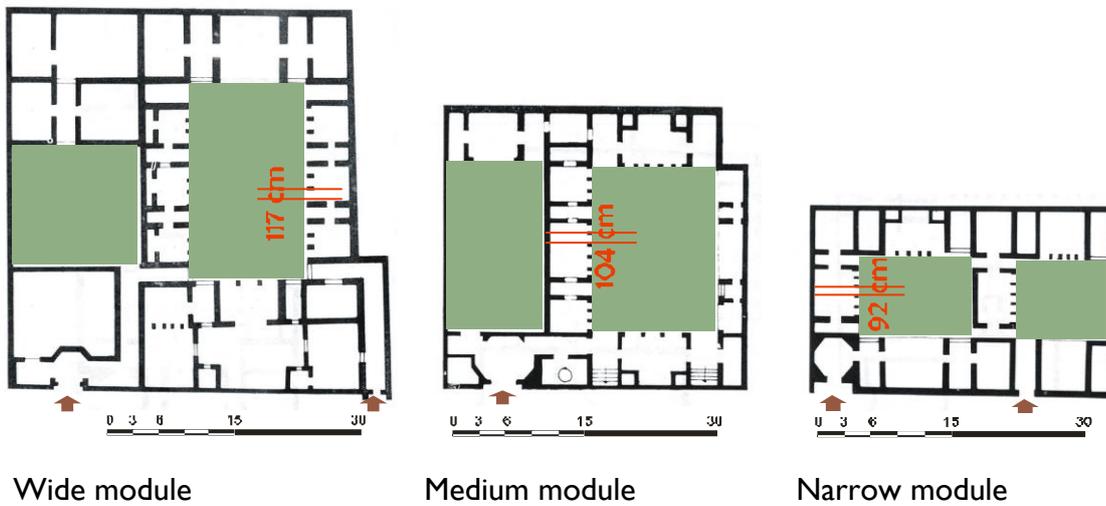


Figure 16: Different modules in traditional Iranian architecture.
Source: The author.

⁹² Pirniya, *Orientation to Iranian Islamic Architecture – Ashnaee ba memari eslami Iran* – آشنایی با معماری اسلامی ایران. P.166.

The Farhangi and Mozafari house in Yazd shows these “modules of construction” (Figure 17–Figure 21).

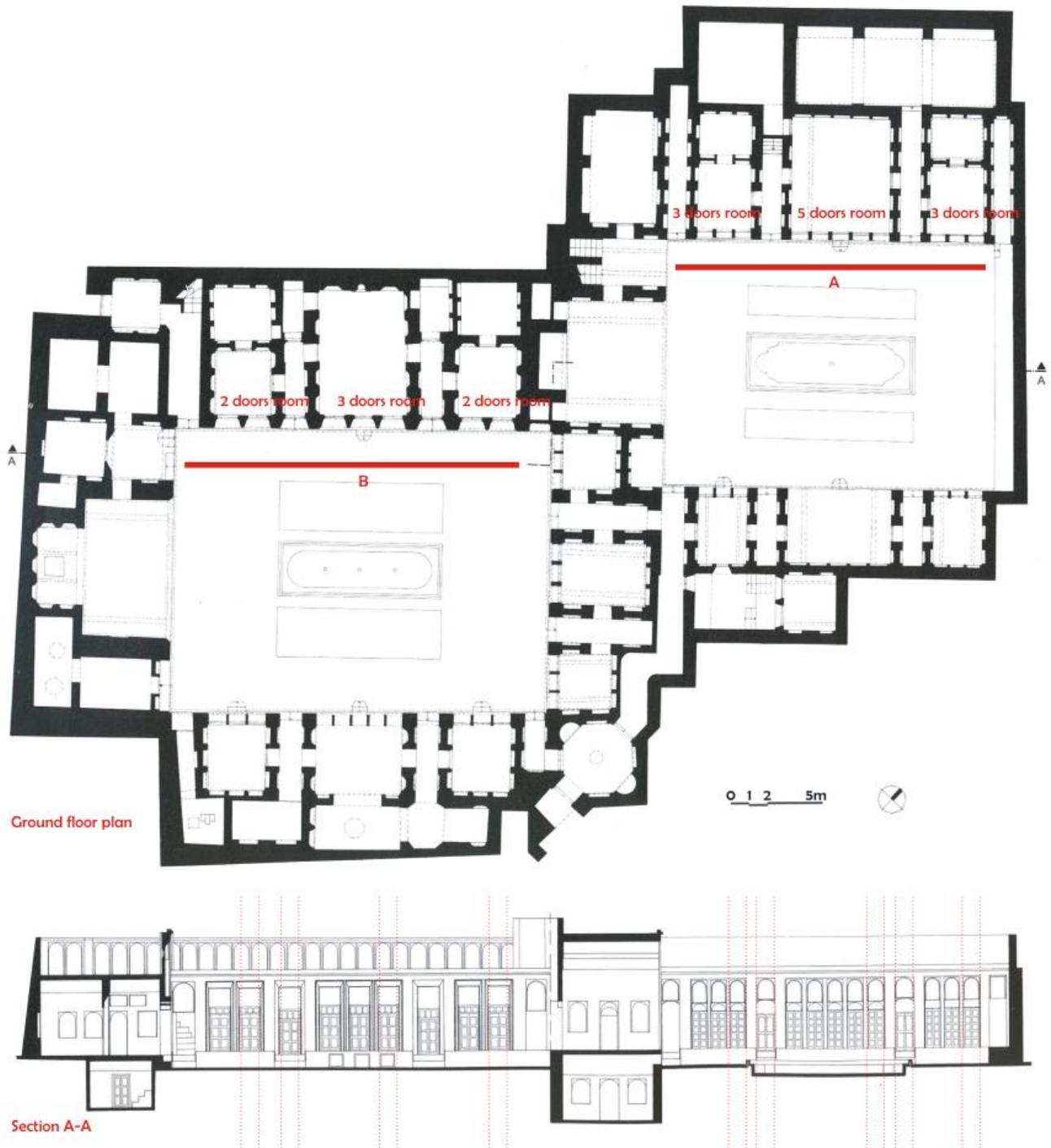


Figure 17: “Modules of construction” in traditional houses.

Source: Adapted from Kambiz Hajighasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haya Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه*. Shahid Beheshti University, 2004 by the author.

These images are of the Farhangi and Mozafari house in Yazd, its plan is depicted the previous page.



Figure 18: 3-door rooms and 5-door rooms of side A in previous plan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haya Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 19: 5-door room of side A in previous plan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haya Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 20 : 3-door room of side B in previous plan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haya Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 21: Side B in previous plan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haya Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004.

Privacy / Looking inward

Privacy and not being exposed to public view has been an important aspect in Iranian architecture. Pirniya believes that as a huge part of Iran is located in the desert, residents wanted to enclose a garden in

their house. If their financial status allowed it, they created diversity and beauty, as well as privacy (Figure 22– Figure 24).



Figure 22: Ameriha mansion, Kashan.

Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi, *Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان* Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004



Figure 23: Ameriha mansion, Kashan.

Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi, *Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان* Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004



Figure 24: Ghodosiye mansion, Esfahan.

Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi, *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan/ خانه های اصفهان* Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004.

The archaeologists Negahban and Malekzade explored a small city from 6,000 BC. There, the houses were introverted and featured courtyards. These findings suggest that the emphasis on privacy in

housing design goes back to the pre-Islamic era and was not necessarily implemented to adapt to religious preferences.⁹³

Climate responsiveness

Isolation: As in almost all parts of Iran the climate is hot and dry, Iranian architects have used different approaches to manage heat, e.g. double ceilings (Figure 28–Figure 30), vertical or horizontal elements to protect spaces from the sun's rays (Figs 25, 27) or different types of windows with stained glass (Fig. 26).⁹⁴

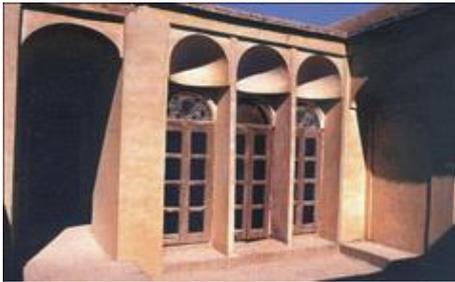


Figure 25: Davari house, Yazd. The photo shows how vertical elements are used to control sunshine.
Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi. Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه
Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 26: Tabataee, Kashan. Shows stained-glass windows.

Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi, Houses of Kashan- Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان
Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004

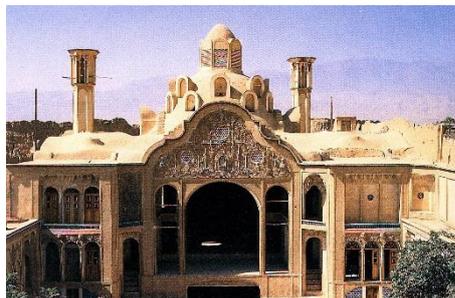


Figure 27: Borojerdha Mansion – Kashan. Openings in ceilings in order to catch indirect light.

Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi, Houses of Kashan- Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان
Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004

⁹³ Pirniya, *Orientation to Iranian Islamic Architecture – Ashnaee ba memari eslami Iran - اشنایی با معماری اسلامی ایران*, P.153.

⁹⁴ Ibid. P.156.

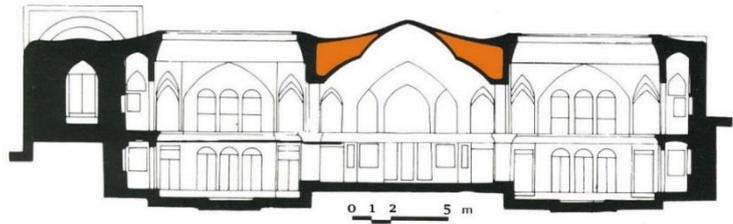


Figure 28: Section of Tabatabaee house, Kashan. Highlighted part shows a double ceiling.

Source: Adapted from Kambiz Hajjighasemi, *Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان*. Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004 by the author.



Figure 29: Section of Marta house, Esfahan. Highlighted part shows a double ceiling.

Source: Adapted from Kambiz Hajjighasemi, *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan/ خانه های اصفهان*. Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004 by the author.

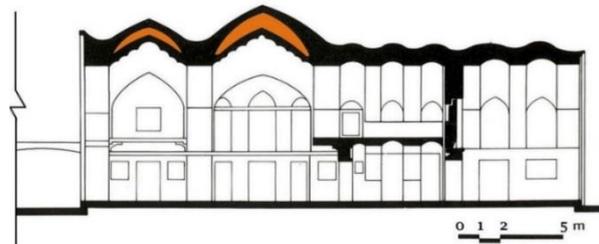


Figure 30: Section of Marta house, Esfahan. Highlighted part shows a double ceiling.

Source: Adapted from Kambiz Hajjighasemi, *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan/ خانه های اصفهان*. Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004 by the author.

Haeri Mazandarani introduces Iranian traditional houses by studying the works of earlier authors, including architecture historian Pirniya, Iranian architect Ardalan, Persian art expert Pope and Iranian writers Shahi, Najmi and Mostofi. He suggests that in each house with a central courtyard, there were three types of space: open, closed and roofed. They also had specific dimensions. Families could use all these types of spaces. They were also designed in such a way that their function was independent of the type of furniture and decoration. Privacy played a prime role in each house and so public and private spaces were completely separate. In general, spaces were flexible in relation to lifestyle and human behaviour. A space was not just for one specific

function. There was a relationship between water and the garden, and there were cool rooms leading to open spaces.⁹⁵

Jafar Shahri, a writer and historian, explains traditional Iranian houses in a book entitled *Social History of Tehran in the 19th century*.⁹⁶ The old houses in Tehran mostly had eight to nine rooms, and approximately ten residents. Almost half of the citizens rented houses or rooms because it was really easy to find a house, like buying clothes or shoes. At that time, building a house was easy. According to Shahri, two main criteria for a dwelling at that time were ease of building and simplicity.

Before the 1920s, several families lived around a courtyard, in cooperation and understanding, and with respect for all religious and moral opinions. He mentions that neighbours helped each other in ceremonies, he cites washing clothes, cooking and eating together as examples of cooperation.

A courtyard, pool, cistern, kitchen, roof and W.C. were shared between several families.

In the 20th century, extended families were replaced by core families with 4–5 members. So, vital changes happened in the form of houses and households.⁹⁷

Haeri Mazandarani believes that a roofed space between closed and open spaces is a very important feature of traditional Iranian houses⁹⁸ (Figure 31).

⁹⁵ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P173.

⁹⁶Cited in Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 56.

⁹⁷ Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, 'Process of Housing Transformation in Iran', *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No 2009): 69–80. P.71.

⁹⁸ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 192.



Figure 31: Arabha house, Yazd. The coloured parts show the three types of spaces in traditional houses: closed, roofed and open.

Source: Adapted from Kambiz Hajighasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haya Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه*. Shahid Beheshti University, 2004 by the author.

2.4.2.2 Entrance

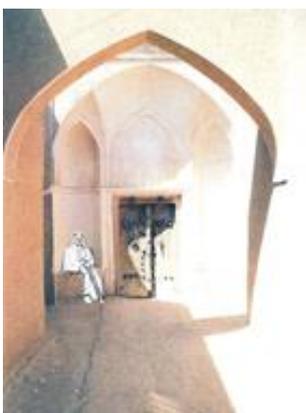
The doorway and entrance area were not only places to enter a house but also a place to welcome guests. Pedestrians also used it as a place of rest. The entrance area was a specific space consisting of a stone bench (

Figure 32, Figure 33), a portal or 'Sar-dar' (

Figure 32, Figure 34), a door knocker or ring and kobeh (Figure 35), a vestibule (Figure 37, Figure 38), and a corridor or passage – dalan (Figure 39) which connected the private house to the street. Especially in houses of wealthy people, decoration in the entrance was an introduction to the residents' character.⁹⁹

According to Pirniya, traditional entrances offered the protection of privacy; allowed permission to the entrance gradually; showed courtesy; indirectly controlled permeability; offered a different facade outside the house.¹⁰⁰

In addition to the spatial features of the entrance space, guests used specific words to inform the residents that they would be coming in or going out.¹⁰¹ These types of greetings and forms of communication aimed to make the residents of a house aware that someone else was at the door of their house so that they, in particular female residents, would be aware and could wear a scarf or Islamic dress. Words such as "ya allah" which means 'Hallo' is still in use in small towns and villages for this purpose. After these greetings were voiced, guests would not enter the house until they were told by the residents to come in. In other words, it was a way of asking permission to enter the house.



⁹⁹ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 188.

¹⁰⁰ Pirniya, *Orientation to Iranian Islamic Architecture – Ashnaee ba memari eslami Iran - اشنایی با معماری اسلامی ایران* - P.159.

¹⁰¹ Hosein Soltanzadeh, *Entry spaces in the traditional architecture of Iran/ fazahaye vorodi dar memari sonati Iran/ فضاهای ورودی در معماری سنتی ایران* (Cultural research bureau, 2005). P.62.

This explains the various social and cultural practices that were inherently linked to entrance spaces.

Elements of entrance

Figure 32 : A traditional entrance.
Source: The author.



Figure 33: Tehran in the first decades of the 20th century.
Source: Still from Ali Hatami's film: Tehran new condition.

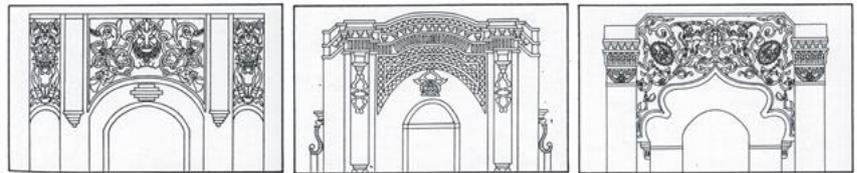


Figure 34 : Samples of portals that were used for houses during Qajar.
Source: Fatemeh Kateb and Mazdak Anoshe, *The architecture of Persian houses/ memari khane haye Iran / معماری خانه های ایران* (Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guiding (Printing & Pub.), 2006).



Figure 35: Traditional door-knockers.
Source: Fatemeh Kateb and Mazdak Anoshe, *The architecture of Persian houses/ memari khane haye Iran / معماری خانه های ایران* (Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guiding (Printing & Pub.), 2006).

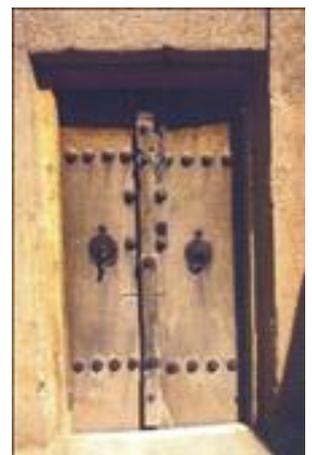


Figure 36: Traditional door.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi, Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haya Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه
Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.

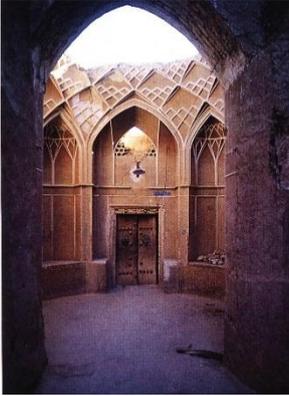


Figure 37: Vestibule of Borojerdiha House, Kashan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi, Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان
Shahid Beheshti University, 2004



Figure 38: A view from the entrance area of Abbasian House, Kashan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi, Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان
Shahid Beheshti University, 2004

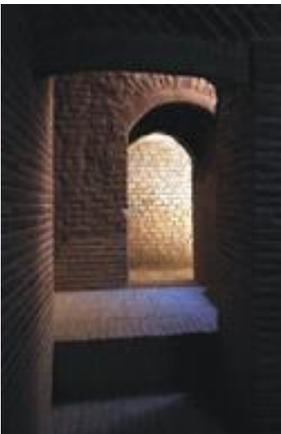


Figure 39: Corridor, dalan, Ameriha house. House of a famous wealthy family in Kashan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi, Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان
Shahid Beheshti University, 2004

2.4.2.3 Central Courtyard – Hayat Markazi

According to Fatemeh Kateb, an Iranian architect, the Iranian house yard (courtyard) had several functions. Firstly, and most importantly, it was about the representation and organisation of different parts of the house. It provided a green space and peaceful place for rest for its residents and also a channel for air to circulate.¹⁰² Each house could have several central courtyards and these would have some of the following functions:

The central courtyard with a porch around it is a key Iranian architectural feature (Figure 42). The scale of the courtyard depends on the spaces around it. Sometimes, as in the case of the Mahmodiha House in Yazd (Figure 40, Figure 41), there would be a pool and several crofts, related to climate and culture, with different shapes. According to Pirniya and Kateb, these courtyards were a place for ceremonies, including family and religious ones.^{103,104}



Figure 40: Courtyard of Mahmodiha House, Yazd.

Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه* Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 41: Courtyard of Rasoliha House, Yazd.

Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه* Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004.

¹⁰² Fatemeh Kateb-Valiankoh, 'Iran Domestic Architecture during Ghajar Period' (Birmingham school of Architecture, 1998). Pp.69–70.

¹⁰³ Pirniya, *Orientation to Iranian Islamic Architecture – Ashnaee ba memari eslami Iran* - آشنایی با معماری اسلامی ایران. P.161.

¹⁰⁴ Fatemeh Kateb and Mazdak Anoshe, *The architecture of Persian houses/ memari khane haye Iran/ معماری خانه های ایران* (Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guiding (Printing & Pub.), 2006. P.161.

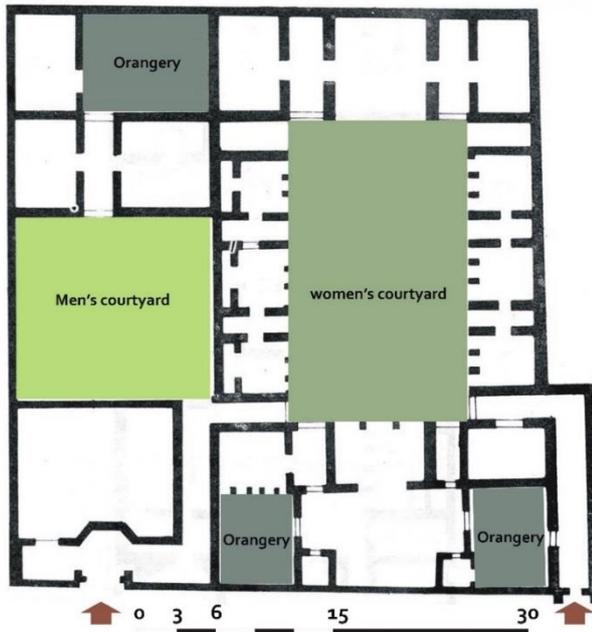


Figure 42 : Plan of a house with courtyards.

Source: The author.

There are different forms of the organisation and arrangement of courtyards, which relate to spiritual and physical needs. The different types of courtyards are:

Orangery type – Narenjestani: A small courtyard which can be covered in winter in order to protect the trees (a feature that has been common in the houses of wealthy people).

Men's courtyard – Hayate Bironi: This is a medium sized courtyard, used for guests and non-relatives.

Women's courtyard – Hayate Andaroni: This is the biggest one, in the private part of the house, so strangers cannot enter that part ¹⁰⁵ (Figure 42).

The majority of houses built before the 1920s, regardless of their size, had courtyards, and the organisation of spaces around the courtyard had special rules (e.g. guests could directly enter guest rooms via the courtyard). In some doctoral research that investigates domestic architecture, Qajar explains that whenever there are courtyards, these spaces are the 'heart' of the house and are intricately decorated (Figure 44, Figure 45); all other spaces would be connected to it, either directly or indirectly via a covered space (Figure 43).¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Penelope Hobhouse, Erica Hunningher, and Jerry Harpur, *Gardens of Persia* (Kales Press, 2004). P.148.

¹⁰⁶ Fatemeh Kateb-Valiankoh, 'Iran Domestic Architecture during the Ghajar Period' (Birmingham School of Architecture, 1998). P.80.

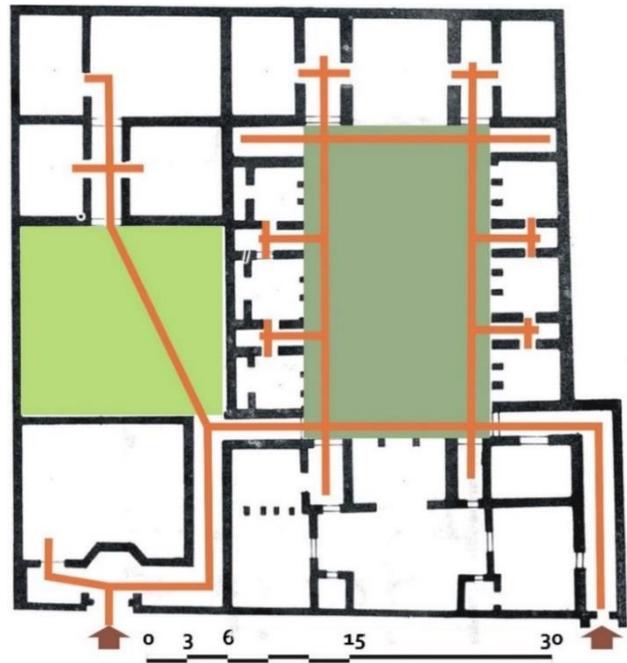


Figure 43: A path from open spaces to roofed spaces.
Source: The author.



Figure 44: Decoration on a courtyard's surrounding walls, Davarha house, Yazd. All sides of the courtyard had designs, even those that were just barrier walls. The walls were not flat; there were several reliefs on them.
Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه* Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 45: Decoration on a courtyard's surrounding walls. Borojerdiha house, Kashan.
Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi, *Houses of Kashan– Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان* Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004

The level of the courtyard would normally be lower than that of the street and was surrounded by high walls. It would have a north-south orientation so that the open space would benefit from sunlight in winter and provide shade in summer. The types of trees and flowers planted in the courtyard were related to the geographical and cultural

situation of the house. The level of building is higher than the yard and the street, which means the lowest level was the yard. Such yards often had a pool, which was the main water storage¹⁰⁷ (Figure 46).

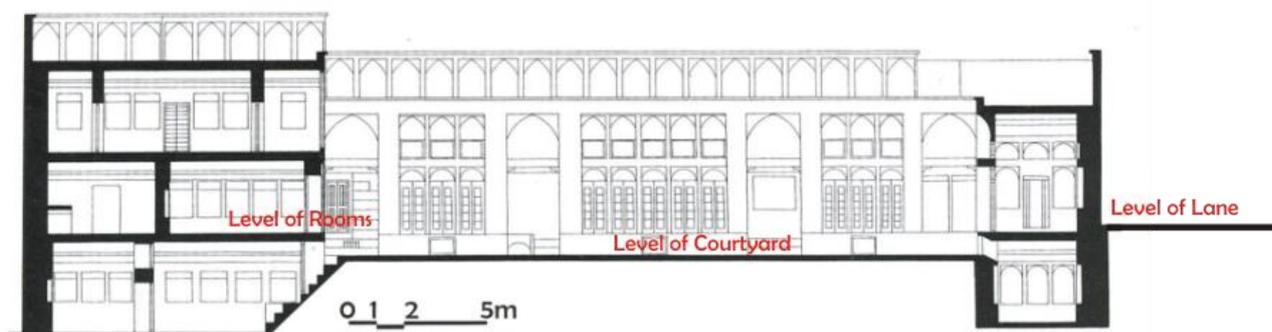


Figure 46: Different levels of spaces. Lariha house, Yazd.

Source: Adapted from Kambiz Hajighasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haya Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه*. Shahisid Beheshti University, 2004 by the author.

2.4.2.4 Rooms

The first groups of spaces that were directly around a courtyard were guest rooms and the family's bedrooms. These were all in direct contact with the light, water, plants and fresh air of the courtyard. These were 3-door and 5-door rooms, a room acting as a wind-catcher, with sash-windows,¹⁰⁸ a siding room and a winter room. The second group of rooms was towards the back of the first set of rooms and was less important – generally receiving natural light from the ceiling. Kitchens, bathrooms, entrance areas and stables were also in this group.¹⁰⁹

Some very big houses would have several courtyards and, in addition to the groups of rooms mentioned above, would have service spaces. Especially when the kitchen was located between two courtyards it had the ability to service both sides.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban Studies and Research, 2010). P 102.

¹⁰⁸ A sash window is a traditional wooden window with stained glasses. It is found in important spaces.

¹⁰⁹ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P109.

¹¹⁰ Fatemeh Kateb and Mazdak Anoshe, *The architecture of Persian houses/ memari khane haye Iran/ معماری خانه های ایران* (Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guiding (Printing & Pub.), 2006). P.161.

In most cases, the level of rooms around the courtyard was almost 60 cm higher than the ground floor, which generally signifies the importance of these rooms, but also provides a barrier so that water cannot come in. Before entering the first tier of rooms – often covered with square tiles and featuring integrated shelves – shoes had to be taken off. Walls would be covered with limestone and doors were wooden with intricate glass decoration¹¹¹ (Figure 47–Figure 50)



Figure 47: Ghafori house, Esfahan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan / خانه های اصفهان* / Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 48 : Arabha house, Yazd.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd / خانه های یزد- گنجنامه* / Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 49: Charmi house, Esfahan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan / خانه های اصفهان* / Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.

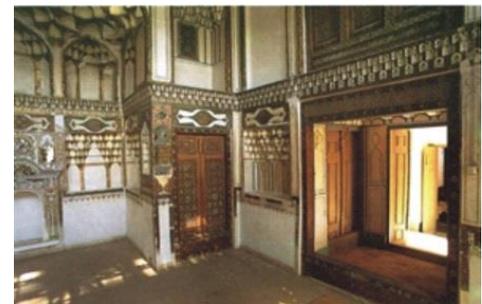


Figure 50: Haj Mosavi house, Esfahan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan / خانه های اصفهان* / Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.

¹¹¹ Fatemeh Kateb and Mazdak Anoshe, *The architecture of Persian houses/ memari khane haye Iran / معماری خانه های ایران* (Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guiding (Printing & Pub.), 2006). P.165.

Rooms were divided into two types according to their height:

Two storeys high with a high ceiling. These were always in the centre and had an axis of symmetry, e.g. three-door room, five-door room, a wind-catcher room, sash windows.

One storey high with a low ceiling. These were always beside the first type, such as a siding room etc. (Figure 51, Figure 52).



Figure 51: Section of Hajmosavi house, Esfahan. The highlight parts show different spaces with different heights.

Source: Adapted from Kambiz Hajjghasemi. *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan / خانه های اصفهان*. Shahisid Beheshti University, 2004 by the author.



Figure 52: Section of Karimi house, Esfahan. The highlighted parts show different spaces with different heights.

Source: Adapted from Kambiz Hajjghasemi. *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan / خانه های اصفهان*. Shahisid Beheshti University, 2004 by the author.

It was almost a constant concept, and an unwritten housing-design rule, that, in all houses, adjacent rooms connect to each other via a corridor or porch¹¹² (Figure 53, Figure 54).

¹¹² Fatemeh Kateb and Mazdak Anoshe, *The architecture of Persian houses/ memari khane haye Iran / معماری خانه های ایران* (Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guiding (Printing & Pub.), 2006. P.160.



Figure 53: Part of Tabatabaee house, Kashan. The highlighted parts show the different types of spaces (closed/ roofed/ open) and the path to them.

Source: Adapted from Kambiz Hajighasemi, *Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان*, Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004 by the author.



Figure 54 : The highlighted parts of the photograph show the roofed spaces.

Source: Adapted from Kambiz Hajighasemi, *Houses of Kashan- Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان*, Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004 by the author.

2.4.2.5 Walls, Floors and Ceilings

In traditional Iranian houses, walls would have several niches that were used to display different things or integrate features such as mirrors or images (Figure 55, Figure 56).



Figure 55: Niches were both decorative and functional. Hajmosavi house, Esfahan.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi, *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan/ خانه های اصفهان*, Shahisd Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 56: Decorative wall of a house from the Qajar period.

Source: Fatemeh Kateb and Mazdak Anoshe, *The architecture of Persian houses/ memari khane haye Iran* معماری خانه های ایران (Ministry Of Culture And Islamic Guiding (Printing & Pub.), 2006).

Nowadays, walls tend to be thin compared to the walls in traditional houses. Therefore, it is not possible to make niches as in the old houses – instead, cabinets and other elements are added to spaces to present and display things (Figure 57).



Figure 57: A contemporary house, its walls and decoration. The walls are flat surfaces, and so to make changes some kinds of moulded frames are added to the wall surfaces, and some frames with different patterns will fill those framed areas, as shown in the photograph.

Source: The author.

Traditional Iranian houses had windows with stained glass. It helped to cover the space and make it more private, while at the same time providing a warm atmosphere. Now, windows are different and are covered by curtains. Curtains not only cover the windows, they also serve as a kind of decorative element. Depending on the wealth of the owner, curtains may be more decorative and expensive (Figure 58).



Figure 58: Decorative curtains. A wall is fully covered by decorative curtain.

Source: The author.

Fireplaces were built in Iranian houses from early times. In contemporary houses, fireplaces are still common, but in most cases they are just a symbol and not part of the heating system (Figure 59).



Figure 59: Fireplace in a contemporary house.
Source: The author.

Traditionally, Iranians used to sit on the floor (Figure 60). With modernism, using chairs and sofas became popular. But it is still common to use traditional goods for sitting, such as backrests and cushions (Figure 61).



Figure 60 : Traditional backrest.
Source: The author.



Figure 61: Traditional backrest beside modern furniture.
Source: The author.

One of the crafts in Iran is making carpets. It is common to put carpets on the floor. Depending on income, carpets differ in different families.

After modernism, ceilings became flat surfaces (Figure 62), though they had some modelled decorations. Chandeliers are used for lighting and aesthetics. But it is common today to put some decorative forms on ceilings and to add different types of light (Figure 63).



Figure 62: Flat ceiling in a contemporary house.
Source: The author.



Figure 63: Decorative ceilings are now more common.
Source: The author.

2.5.4.6 Calligraphy

Calligraphy is an integral part of Iranian architecture, it is considered to be more of a form of art to decorate various spaces in houses. The art of calligraphy has been used in different ways in contemporary Iranian houses as a concept for interior design. In an interview with Mrs Adelkhah, she said “Some elements which seem important in Iranian houses to me are: Calligraphy, traditional symbols as decoration.”



Figure 64: Calligraphy and Persian poetry by Jamaladin Moadab.
Source: The author.



Figure 65: Calligraphy and Persian poetry on walls and floor.
 Source: Parastou forouhar . پارس‌تو فروهر, accessed 1 April 2017,
http://www.adambarfii.com/2013/02/blog-post_5120.html.

It is now very common in Iranian houses to have these kinds of images on the walls with different materials, such as paper, wood, stone and carpet (Figure 64, Figure 65). Sometimes they are mixed with miniatures, which is a form of Iranian traditional painting.



Figure 66: Traditional miniature by Reza Abbasi.
 Source: Vladimir Loukonine and Anatoli Ivanov, *Persian Miniatures* (Parkstone Press, 2014).

These images (see also Figure 65) were painted by Reza Abbasi, a very famous Iranian painter in the 16th century (miniature from the 16th century).



Figure 67: Miniatures of an Iranian myth and of a religious narrative.
 Source: Mahmood Farshchian, *The Selected Paintings of Mahmood Farshchian* (Zarrin and simin, 2007).



Figure 68: Miniatures of a contemporary Iranian woman and of a traditional Iranian woman
 Source: Mahmood Farshchian, *The Selected Paintings of Mahmood Farshchian* (Zarrin and simin, 2007).

Mahmoud Farshchian is a well-known contemporary Iranian painter. These are Farshchian paintings from the Twentieth and Twenty-first centuries (Figure 67, Figure 67). In the first row he illustrates some stories and myths. The second row shows two Iranian women from different centuries.



113



114



Figure 69: Traditional symbols.

These are some ancient artefacts which can be found in Iranian houses today (Figure 69).

¹¹³ Cyrus Cylinder.

¹¹⁴ Farvahar.

2.5 Examination of Iranian dwelling practices

Earlier sections of this chapter discuss rich and meaningful experiences that are linked to the multidimensional concept of dwelling. Further description and analysis of various aspects of traditional Iranian houses show that a house is much more than simply a place for living; in addition, it is an expression of people's preferences, social status, cultural and social values. Social and historical events also have a notable impact on housing design and architecture.

In order to understand how people lived in the 20th century, a number of Iranian films, which focus on domestic life in Iran, are used to inform this thesis. These films show the lives of extended families in traditional houses and are studied with reference to people's habits with regard to socialising, cooking, sleeping and domestic rituals, as well as lifestyle choices.

The films watched are listed below:

Akol the brother (Dash Akol), Masod Kimiyae, 1971. A drama film that shows Iran in the late 19th century. It is a love story set among working-class members of society. Interestingly enough, it also shows how conservative traditional Iranian society is. The story is set in Shiraz. Traditional Iranian houses and their residents' behaviours, in particular their sense of sympathy for each other, are depicted in this film.

Mother (Madar), Ali Hatami, 1989. A mother wants to spend her last days in her old house with her children. It shows how a mother acts in the hardest parts of her, and her children's, lives. Those children, now mature adults, live in different parts of town and even in other countries. The only thing that is common among them is the good memories they have from their childhood, e.g. the times they spent together in the courtyard, afternoon snacks beside the pool on hot summer afternoons.

Patriarch (Pedar Salar), Akbar Khajoe, 1993. It is a TV series about an extended family who used to live together, but by the end each family wants its own house. It shows how extended family culture has changed. It shows how family members still gather in the courtyard

and talk to each other and share their personal life issues, yet they feel too much of their lifestyle is exposed. This seems not to be acceptable to a new generation that wants to behave differently from its parents.

Heartbroken (Sooteh Delan), Ali Hatami, 1975. It is about an old family in Tehran in which the older brother is responsible for the whole family. Traditional Iranian houses' architecture, street styles and communication between family members and neighbours are nicely shown in this movie.

Pigeon (Toghi), Ali Hatami, 1970. It is a drama with two main points: a secret love and the fanaticism of a group. It was shot in traditional houses in Kashan. Considering the geographical location of Kashan, this film is a good example of Iranian traditional houses built in arid regions with hot summers and cold winters.

Under Ground (Zire Zamin), Ali Reza Afkhami, 2006. A TV series about several families who live together in a traditional house. It shows their relations in an important religious month (Ramadan). An interesting difference between this TV series and the aforementioned movies is that, nowadays, living in a traditional house along with other people, who are not related to each other, is a sign of financial difficulty. It shows some lower-income parts of society that have to live in one place despite their differences and interests.

2.5.1 Socialising practices

As the picture shows, it was common to sit on the floor. Men and women sat separately (Figure 70) the picture shows there were limitations for men and women as, while talking, they are in two different rooms and can only hear each other (Fig. 70). But as Fariba Adelhah,¹¹⁵ an Iranian anthropologist, said: “*The relation between genders now is different and women can wear a hijab and communicate with men. Women work outside the home with men. The difference is in clothes and the way they wear the hijab.*”



Figure 70: Men and women talking without looking at each other.
Source: Still from Akol the brother movie.

¹¹⁵ The author had an informal interview with Fariba Adelhah, it is in Appendix 1.



Figure 71: Men sit in a separate room during special events.
Source: Still from Patriarch TV show.

2.5.2 Interior decoration

It was not common to have lots of furniture in spaces. The walls had decorations and were not empty and flat; even in houses belonging to poor people, there were niches and simple decoration on the wall. But the whole area of the space was free (Figure 71, Figure 72).



Figure 72: Inside the hall.
Source: Still from Pigeon movie.



Figure 73: Inside the main living room.
Source: Still from Pigeon movie.

2.5.3 Cooking

It was common to cook for whole extended family in one kitchen and also cook for special events in the court yard (Figure 73–Figure 76).



Figure 74: An old kitchen where the grandmother is cooking rice for the whole extended family.
Source: Still from Patriarch TV show.



Figure 75: Several family gathered in the courtyard, cooking for a special religious event.
Source: Still from Under Ground TV show.



Figure 76 : Women gathered in a courtyard, making sauce.
Source: Still from Patriarch TV show.

2.5.4 Eating

The whole extended family used to eat together (Figure 77) and people used to eat sitting on the floor. In different seasons, they had different places for eating. It was common to eat dinner in the courtyard in summer (Figure 78). In winter, a special heating system would be used as a dining table, known as korseh (Figure 77).

Shahram Vaziritabar, an Iranian architect, mentions in his research that people who lived in traditional houses preferred to eat in the sitting room rather than the kitchen because of the size, lighting and location. But in contemporary buildings people eat in the kitchen.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Shahram Vaziritabar, 'Design and Privacy in Modern and Traditional Housing in Iran' (PhD, Oxford Polytechnic, 1990), <http://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.258725>. P.195.



Figure 77: The whole extended family in a house used to eat together, often in a dining room that had no chairs or table but was still decorated (as seen in the picture).

Source: Still from Patriarch TV show.



Figure 78: Eating over a heating system known as “koresee” in winter.

Source: Still from Heartbroken movie.



Figure 79: Eating in the courtyard in summer.

Source: Still from Under Ground TV show.

2.5.5 Using courtyards

People used to spend time in open or semi-open spaces. They would do some housework outside if possible. Having a wedding party was a common occurrence. People used to sit in the courtyard in the afternoon during summer, not just the residents of the house, their guests would sit there too (Figure 79–Figure 86).



Figure 80: Doing chores in the courtyard.

Source: Still from Pigeon movie.



Figure 81: Doing chores on the veranda (semi-open space).
Source: Still from Pigeon movie.



Figure 82: Sitting on a day bed by a small pool in the courtyard.
Source: Still from Mother Movie.



Figure 83: Having a wedding party in the courtyard.
Source: Still from Patriarch TV show.



Figure 84: Sitting on the veranda.
Source: Still from Patriarch TV show.



Figure 85: Sitting on a day bed, smoking and drinking tea.
Source: Still from Patriarch TV show.



Figure 86: Using a small pool in the courtyard for different purposes.

Source: Still from Patriarch TV show.

2.5.6 Sleeping practices

It was common to sleep on the floor, and people used to pack stuff and put it in the corner of the room or in a storeroom. Sometimes, it could be used as back rest too (Figure 87– Figure 90).



Figure 87: Sleeping on the floor in traditional houses.

Source: Still from Heartbroken movie.



Figure 88: A patient who has visitors in a traditional house.

Source: Still from Akol the brother movie.



Figure 89: Using sleeping stuff as a backrest.

Source: Still from Underground TV show.



Figure 90: It is still common to sleep on the floor.

Source: Still from Patriarch TV show.

2.5.7 Roof

People used to use roofs for different activities, including sleeping there on summer nights (Figure 92). Also, the roofs were connected to other houses. Sometimes people used to walk on the roof to see their neighbours (Figure 91).



Figure 91: Socializing on the roof.

Source: Still from Pigeon Movie



Figure 92: Sleeping on the roof.

Source: Still from Pigeon Movie.

2.5.8 Etiquette

There was always a semi-open area (roof space) before closed spaces (rooms). People used to take their shoes off there. And shoes were safe from sunlight and rain and also easily washable (Fig. 93).



Figure 93: A semi-open space in traditional houses where people used to take off their shoes.
Source: Still from Patriarch TV show.

2.6 Discussion

The various Iranian practices and values discussed above have been changing in the contemporary context for different reasons, as discussed in Chapter I. Another interesting perspective on summarising these changes is provided by Iranian social scientist and anthropologist Fariba Adelkhah as part of an informal interview session conducted for this research. Adelkhah's viewpoint suggests that Iranian families can be divided into two distinct types: traditional and modern ones based on the newer spatial practices of urban living, instead of the usual religious and secular based on religious practices. In the contemporary Iranian context, religious beliefs are present in almost all Iranian families, but on a wide continuum with varying levels of religious belief and interests.¹¹⁷

Previous Iranian domestic architecture has been divided into two main periods, Early and Traditional Iranian houses. According to the analyses and studies in this chapter, there are several similarities between the houses in these two periods.

In early and traditional houses, there was a fireplace in the middle of the house, which was improved and decorated across centuries.

There were several niches in the walls in both early and traditional houses. There was always a storeroom or a box-room to store things in the houses of both periods. As the evidence shows, rooms were not on the same level, some of them were elevated by one or two steps. This is seen in early as well as traditional houses. The rooms

¹¹⁷ A transcript of the interview with her can be seen in Appendix 1.

were connected to each other with small spaces like vestibules that had roof spaces in both different periods. The courtyards in early houses and traditional houses were introverted and had high walls.

The rooms shapes were rectangular and of different sizes. Room shapes developed over the centuries and became more geometric and rectangular. Houses in the same region had the same orientation, from early to traditional houses. All the similarities which were mentioned before show that there is a continuity in the development of Iranian architecture. The same situation applies to their ways of living over the centuries.

According to Vaziritabar, an Iranian architect, changes in urban societies, in the Middle East, have been connected with disruption to the continuity of the historical tradition in architectural and urban design in the region.¹¹⁸

Mirmoghtadaee argues that intervening in the physical features of the environment is much easier than changing social and cultural rules. Housing units have been changed by modern style, but modern ideology has not made serious social changes within society. So, people were not able to follow their usual patterns of life in the new houses. For instance, in many Muslim societies, there was an extended family, including different generations living in traditional houses which were designed to provide accommodation for such families. According to those houses spatial characteristics, each generation had its own life and a mutual relationship. This way of living has almost disappeared now, although it gave the society continuity and accretion.¹¹⁹

Mirmoghtadaee argues that ways of living did not change significantly during the process of urbanization. The government made major changes to dwellers' culture by transforming their physical environment, but it was not successful. "Habitats should be physically harmonious with traditions and lifestyles; otherwise, residents will react by changing the environment according to their wishes. When the environment itself is not changeable, residents have to adapt themselves to the new conditions; consequently, some valuable traditions will be lost forever."¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Vaziritabar, 'Design and Privacy in Modern and Traditional Housing in Iran.' P.8.

¹¹⁹ Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, 'Process of Housing Transformation in Iran', *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No 2009): 69–80. Pp71–2.

¹²⁰ Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, 'Process of Housing Transformation in Iran', *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No 2009): 69–80. P.79.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has explained the significance of the various interlinking concepts of house, home and dwelling, which is an important premise of this research. It has elaborated two Iranian house designs and presented analyses of various spaces and practices, examining various issues affecting people's ways of living related to traditional houses. The chapter has analysed spaces and practices based on a number of Iranian films. Studying dwelling practices using films offers interesting visual insights into the relationship between residents and spaces. The various illustrations of different architectural spaces and various elements captures the richness and complexity of Iranian architecture and people's ways of living and practice.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research methodology, including the strategies and methods for data collection and analysis. It discusses in detail the process of the workshop run with research participants. The structure of the workshop is elaborated to show the various types of data gathered in each stage of the workshop. The chapter explains the researcher's positionality in relation to this research project and how it impacts on the study. The various steps taken to address the issues of validity and reliability are also presented

3.2 Research Methodology

3.2.1 Research by design

This research addresses the research question via a design methodology. Architectural research, though perhaps not always done methodologically, has been practised throughout the history of architecture. In other words, trial-and-error experimentation and applying sets of principles learned from previous projects to new designs and buildings has been practised for centuries.¹²¹ But architectural research and structural analysis have not always been conducted systematically for and has been limited to specific projects in relation to particular buildings with important social and cultural roles, e.g. churches. Despite this long, it is only in recent decades, namely from the 1970s onwards, that the role of research in architecture, and the different methods that can be deployed for this purpose, has been

¹²¹ Linda N. Groat and David Wang, *Architectural Research Methods*, 2nd edition (Amsterdam, Boston: John Wiley & Sons, 2013). P 6.

highlighted. One of these methods is research by design, which is a dynamic and evolving concept in an academic context.¹²²

In research by design, as Johan Verbeke suggests, experience gained from practice and the process of designing are the pillars of research. In other words, the input, methods and results of research are based on design.¹²³ Research by design is a major tool to gain new understandings and knowledge, and thus valuable exploration can have a tangible impact on daily life and living conditions.¹²⁴ It requires considering a number of concepts and strategies in ways that can be applied to different conditions.

While research by design essentially aims to understand the spatial arrangements and design from an architectural perspective, the interdisciplinary nature of this approach should not be neglected. In fact, as Crouch and Pearce explain, this methodology benefits from other technical, social and scientific disciplines and often resonates with the strategies used by them, regardless of whose practice the examiner is studying (their own or others).¹²⁵ Every design has an impact on the world; sometimes this effect is planned in advance and purposeful, and sometimes it is incidental; nonetheless, both the structured man-made world and the natural world are affected. This transformative feature of design requires the researcher to have a good understanding of how design interacts with the ambient and social environment, and how it affects or is affected by them. Design research is an approach that empowers the researcher to derive this knowledge from information provided by research participants. The process of research is itself sometimes considered more important than the product. Practice as research generates knowledge that can be applied to a number of different contexts. Moreover, it potentially reveals or provides a better understanding of information collected and

¹²² Linda N. Groat and David Wang, *Architectural Research Methods*, 2nd edition (Amsterdam, Boston: John Wiley & Sons, 2013). P 7.

¹²³ Johan Verbeke, "Research by Design Is up and Running", *Architecture & Education Journal*, 2011, 110–19. P 111.

¹²⁴ Murray Fraser, *Design Research in Architecture*, New edition (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013). P 137.

¹²⁵ Christopher Crouch and Jane Pearce, *Doing Research in Design* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2012). P ix.

transforms it into knowledge better acquired and expressed, as mentioned by Barrett and Bolt.¹²⁶

In research by design, the practitioner becomes a practitioner-researcher, as Robin Nelson suggests.¹²⁷ He further explores this idea and its academic role. From his perspective, modern higher education institutions' learning requirements, especially at PhD level, and discussions about how knowledge in research is acquired guide artists in this direction. In this context, such projects, operationalised as multi-mode research, are usually more labour-intensive and require a greater range of skills, compared to traditional research process, despite some sceptical views. Practical knowledge is gained through practice as research, which is inherently a matter of doing and sometimes challenging if articulated in words alone. Nelson, as an analogy, refers to the practical knowledge of riding a bicycle. "I know how to ride a bicycle, but I cannot say how I balance because I have no method. I may know that certain muscles are involved, but that factual knowledge comes later, if at all, and it could hardly be used in instructions." This statement clearly indicates how challenging practice as research is. It may seem that this is only applicable to a specific and limited type of research, but he clarifies that, rather than just being a name, these characteristics do in fact concern a category of "knowing-doing" practice that forms the heart of enquiry and evidence, regardless of the terminology.¹²⁸

This research, by following the research by design methodology, also addresses the absence of such an approach in the context of examining Iranian architectural issues.

3.2.2 Qualitative research

The domain of this research revolves around rich and complex overlapping layers of peoples' experiences and practices in their homes. It employs a qualitative research methodology, as this enables the study of complex social and spatial practices of people from various perspectives. Denzin and Lincoln define qualitative research as 'multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings,

¹²⁶ Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt, *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (I B Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2010). P129-130

¹²⁷ Robin Nelson, ed., *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). P23.

¹²⁸ Ibid. P40.

attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.¹²⁹ Qualitative enquiry's ability to unravel the complexities of context and subject is also cited by Joseph A. Maxwell as a key reason why it is particularly useful.¹³⁰ These various qualities can be summarised as allowing or promoting:

- Understanding the meaning, for the participants in a study, of the events, situations and actions they are involved with and of the accounts they give of their lives and experiences.
- Understanding the particular context within which participants act, and the influence of this context on their actions.
- Identifying unanticipated phenomena and influences and generating new theories about the latter.
- Understanding the processes by which events and actions occur.

Adopting a qualitative research methodology is clearly advantageous for addressing the complexity of people's social, spatial and cultural practices. Also to test a hypothesis of need for that from an architectural point of view, in that new housing in Iran does not often meet residents' expectations and preferences, it is crucial to conduct qualitative research, and specifically research by design.

3.2.3 Participatory Research

Michel De Certeau's 'The Practice of Everyday Life' presents one of the early but fundamental views about the importance of studying how people live and do things. He indicates that people's everyday lives are not simply an obscure background of social activity. If these practices are examined properly in a methodical approach, e.g. using a set of questions, these activities will not remain obscure any longer but can be articulated and pave the way for further research and a better understanding of how people interact with their environment. This kind of information can only be gathered if people, the residents in this research context, actively participate in researching the problems and suggest potential solutions.

¹²⁹ Norman K Denzin and Yvonna S Lincoln, "Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research", in *Handbook of qualitative research* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2000), 1–28, p.2.

¹³⁰ Joseph A. Maxwell, "Designing a Qualitative Study", in *Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods*, eds Leonard Bickman and Debra J. Rog (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998), 69–100, p.75.

This highlights the importance of participatory research methods in research design, especially when revealing how people feel about their residences is the aim.¹³¹

While in this thesis participatory research is considered from an architectural perspective and as part of research by design, nevertheless, as Alice McIntyre explains, participatory research, regardless of the discipline it is used for, has the following principles:¹³²

- 1 – A problem or issue is investigated through a collective commitment.
- 2 – Self- or collective reflection is part of the process in order to gain more clarity about the issue being investigated.
- 3 – Individual and/or collective action leads to better solutions and outcomes so that the people involved will benefit from them.
- 4 – Participants and researcher need to cooperate closely in different aspects of the process, including planning, implementation and the dissemination of output.

This research is no exception, and the above principles are embedded in a systematic manner to shape reliable research through design. The aims of this research, with its strong descriptive and explanatory aspects and the necessity for conversing with people, cannot be achieved without methods based on participatory research and rich data-collection methods

3.2.4 Data Collection

The thesis adopts a narrative workshop method involving in-depth interviews, photo elicitation and sketching for data collection.

In simple terms, the backbone of the methods used in this research is to answer two fundamental questions: What has happened/ is going on? And why? Answers to these key questions can describe and explain how the participants in this research (interviewees) view their houses and if they feel some changes are necessary. The interaction between researcher and participants can only achieve its aims if the participants understand that they have shared goals. It is a task that, essentially, due to the participatory and qualitative nature of the research, relies on interviews.

¹³¹ Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 3rd revised edition (University of California Press, 2011). P xi.

¹³² Alice McIntyre, *Participatory Action Research*, 2008. P 1.

While having access to information is an essential part of any decision-making process, nevertheless, this input, if not analysed properly (i.e. critically), cannot add much value or create much knowledge. Reliable data when studied correctly can be very effective and make an invisible solution visible. Within this context, a prerequisite for analysis is how a problem is recognized and framed. This first step is a critical part of the process and helps to choose a compatible and effective data-collection approach.

3.2.4.1 In-depth interviews

When the number of participants is limited to a small group, their perspective on a specific subject, in this case home design, can be studied through intensive individual interviews, also known as in-depth interviews.¹³³ This type of interviewing elicits detailed descriptions of people's perceptions and experiences and can help to study a new issue in depth. It provides context and allows the researcher to elaborate on why a particular behaviour/ experience occurs. Clearly, the participants in in-depth interviews need to feel comfortable if they are to talk openly about their experiences. This is a challenging issue, especially when the target group is a conservative society. During this study, a major barrier was to convince participants, Iranian families that culturally have a broad range of reservations, to talk about how they feel about their homes and such issues as the importance of privacy in home design.

This technique stands out compared to other methods, e.g. surveys, as it provides more detailed and specific information. In addition, as conversation occurs between two sides in interviews, the process is often more convenient (e.g. in comparison to completing a questionnaire). It is worth mentioning that, in this research there is no intention to prove or disprove a hypothesis. Information extracted from in-depth interviews is prone to bias, as researchers may have a stake in approving/ disapproving of a project. This method is a time-intensive technique. Designing the interview structure and conducting and recording interviews requires a significant amount of time. The process of in-depth interviews in general is not different to other research methods: planning, developing the tools required to collect data (e.g. workshops), data collection and data analysis. As mentioned earlier, with respect to the research hypothesis, *What?* and *Why?* are the two keywords that define

¹³³ Kathleen M. DeWalt and Billie R. Dewalt, *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*, second edition (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2010). P 127-128.

the direction of the research. During planning, having workshops in mind, stakeholders were identified. In this context, the stakeholders were residents. Finding out what residents feel about their home designs and why they feel that way, what changes they suggest and why they propose them are the cornerstones of this participatory research.

Though the number of participants who agreed to participate in the workshops (to conduct in-depth interviews) was limited, nonetheless, special care was taken to ensure that the interviews were consistent. To this end, an interview protocol was developed. Following a protocol does not imply that the atmosphere of interviews will not be friendly or flexible (which is counterintuitive), it simply means that all interviews were to be conducted within a framework aiming to maximize the consistency and reliability of interviews, and therefore the findings. For example, a generally similar questionnaire (some alterations were made to make the questions more relevant and comprehensible for each participant) was given to all participants, and no information was provided by the researcher that could have affected the independent judgement and opinions of the interviewees. The interview structure and workshops are explained in detail in a workshop as a method section. This research and in-depth interviews were conducted by one researcher, therefore developing a detailed standard protocol to be used by different interviewers was not necessary. During the setting up, beginning and concluding parts of the workshops, all the participants received similar guidelines and a consistent methodology was used for transcribing information to minimize other factors/ variables that might affect the output.

- **Semi-structured interviews**

As described before, special care was taken to keep the entire data-collection process (workshops) consistent and reliable; nevertheless, a degree of flexibility was adopted to address each participant's interests and property. This flexibility was incorporated into the structure of the interview in such a way that, although they were being guided by the researcher's questions, they had complete freedom to use their own terminology to address issues and formulate their answers. This interview framework resonates well with what is considered to be a semi-structured interview.¹³⁴ This type of categorizing and referring to how an interview

¹³⁴ Kathleen M. DeWalt and Billie R. Dewalt, *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*, second edition (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2010). P139.

protocol is used during the research process is crucial if the interviews and data-collection process are to be conducted by a number of different researchers. In this study, the whole time-intensive and culturally (with respect to the preferences of Iranian society) challenging process was performed by one researcher. In the formal semi-structured interviews that were conducted, questions were posed by the researcher, sometimes being asked in a different order and often followed up by probes. A key step was to make sure that respondents addressed the issues and that follow-up questions were recycling the same words that the interviewees used to give their answers. A semi-structured interviewing method is able to generate reliable qualitative data and is a particularly fruitful approach when the participants are reluctant to be interviewed more than once.¹³⁵

In this type of research, open-ended questions help to elicit better and more comprehensive descriptions of participants' experiences. In contrast to closed-ended questions, a participant cannot simply answer a question with a single word or phrase (which would not produce much additional information).¹³⁶ For example, instead of asking if a participant feels that modern Iranian housing design provides the level of privacy expected by residents, the interviewee is asked to describe their expectations of homes with respect to privacy. Though descriptions are very important, nevertheless, the focus of questions should be to gain factual answers rather than personal opinions. For instance, the question: What do you think about courtyards in traditional Iranian homes? Needs to be accompanied by asking what activities took or take place in the courtyards of traditional Iranian homes (including examples, elaborations and explanations). This type of open-ended question gives the informant a high degree of freedom to respond (i.e. to formulate answers their own way), and creates opportunities to identify and understand the topic at hand from different perspectives. Responses to open-ended questions can be compared to telling a short story that inherently has detailed descriptions about issues of interest to the researcher. Such answers can even form a base for additional probing questions that use the participants' words/ views to further investigate an issue. e.g.: You mentioned family members

¹³⁵ H. Russell Bernard, *Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology* (Newbury Park, Calif: SAGE Publications Inc., 1988). P 4-5.

¹³⁶ Kathleen M. DeWalt and Billie R. Dewalt, *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*, second edition (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2010). P 139.

would gather in the courtyard to have an afternoon snack together, can you remember a specific example?

Using the interviewees' words to formulate follow-up questions has distinct advantages over asking new questions merely based on the researcher's understanding. When the interviewer formulates questions based on a respondent's answers, she may introduce new terms (understandings) that the interviewee themselves might not use, which could affect the outcome of the interview. As mentioned before, in-depth interviewing is prone to bias. In this research, topics were sufficiently specific and clear to the interviewees so that they had no great difficulty in answering the open-ended questions that they were asked in the workshops.

A prerequisite for such interviews is often an informal discussion between interviewer and participants to better understand each other's interests and shared goals, which is essential to identify meaningful questions for semi-structured interviews. This is an advantage as it allows the researcher to prepare their questions in advance and, moreover, the participants do not feel that they are confined to a limited number of options for their answers; instead, they have freedom to express and describe their views in their own terms. In this study, the interviews were performed with distinct individuals, which allowed the researcher to delve deeply into the personal experiences and preferences of the participants and explore their complex motivations and opinions. The interviewees were aware that their views and values were respected and they were on the same side as the researcher in aiming to better understand the residents' expectations and create new practical knowledge with a positive impact on end-users.

3.2.4.2 Photo elicitation

Visual research methods allow the researcher to penetrate more deeply into phenomena pertaining to people's experiences. Within the domain of the social sciences and particularly when studying place meanings, Stedman et al. point out that visual approaches have been 'under-utilized, relative to their potential contribution'.¹³⁷ Bolton et al. in their work *Picture This: Researching Child Workers* state that photographs offer an opportunity to gain not just more but different insights into a social phenomenon, which

¹³⁷ Stedman, R., Beckley, T., Wallace, S., & Ambard, M. (2004). A picture and 1000 words: Using resident-employed photography to understand attachment to high amenity places. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 36, 580–606.

research methods relying on oral, aural or written data cannot provide.¹³⁸ Combining photos with interviews gives detailed information about how informants see their world and it allows the interviewees to reflect on things they do not usually think about.¹³⁹ This was extremely useful for recording data with implicit meanings, which is imperative for developing discussions in the later stage of the study. Photos were also used as a tool to prompt participants' responses and elaborate meanings of their relationship with the environment.

3.2.5 Participant sampling

The participants in this research, though, were chosen to represent a balanced group of Iranian middle-class society, but they all had their own concerns when they were initially informed about these workshops. The sampling method for this research was challenging as it was difficult to find participants who were willing to take part in various workshop sessions. Most of the people who were approached to participate in the research were reluctant due to the conservative nature of Iranian lives in terms of sharing personal experiences about home and family. Five participants who were willing to participate in the research were identified through the researcher's personal contacts and network. Although the sampling size was small, five participants of in-depth interviews, who discussed personal experiences pertaining to the research had considerable potential for developing rich and complex data for further analysis and synthesis.¹⁴⁰

3.3 Process of Study and Narrative Workshop

While teaching architecture in Iran's academic institutions has a relatively long history, nevertheless, most of the reference/ teaching materials are

¹³⁸ Angela Bolton, Christopher Pole, and Phillip Mizen, "Picture This: Researching Child Workers", *Sociology* 35, No. 2. (1 May 2001): 501–18, doi:10.1177/S0038038501000244.

¹³⁹ Patricia C. Albers and William R. James, "Private and Public Images: A Study of Photographic Contrasts in Postcard Pictures of Great Basin Indians, 1898–1919", *Visual Anthropology* 3, Nos 2–3 (1990): 343–66, doi:10.1080/08949468.1990.9966538.

¹⁴⁰ Creswell, John W. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2013. P 39.

translations of well-known international textbooks. Not many academic books have considered different aspects of housing design in Iran. Here four reference materials are chosen which are used as the basis for developing a framework for the study of Iranian house. They are written by Iranian academics and authors who have an excellent understanding of Persian culture, Iranian society, and cultural and historical developments.

These books provide perspective on contemporary Iranian architectural design and discuss cultural analysis and propositions, as well as relevant international standards and measurements.

Haeri Mazandarni's book *House Culture Nature – Architecture Survey in Historical and Contemporary Houses* and a relatively old UN report *Habitat bill of rights: presented by Iran* emphasize the cultural aspects of design. Mosavian's book *Foundations in architectural and urban design* and *A handbook for dwelling design*, a study prepared by Zista Consultants, focus on more international aspects, e.g. structure, fire protection, materials and standards, in other words themes that though relevant are not unique to Iranian housing design.

A report called *Habitat bill of rights: presented by Iran* was prepared for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in 1976. The following criteria are based on Georges Candilis and Nader Ardalan's thoughts. In this report, they recommend ten qualities that Iranian contemporary houses should include, these can be summarized as:

1. **Sense of place:** A fundamental Persian sense of place based upon the concept of the container and contained should be incorporated in all urban developments at the scale of precinct, cluster and dwelling.
2. **Climate:** Water, the use of shade and the channelling of cooling breezes are used as prime elements to create a comfortable microclimate in the Iranian house and city. In hot, arid regions the dictum is minimum exterior surface to maximum internal volume.
3. **Orientation:** To minimize the effects of hot sun and maximize the effects of cooling breezes, houses should have a compact cubic volume with their openings oriented principally in southeasterly and northwesterly directions.
4. **Gateway:** As an essential element of Persian architecture and city planning, the gateway should be used to give a sense of arrival and territoriality and to divide hidden contained spaces from the exterior.

5. **Paths:** A network of paths, the pedestrian movement system of the community, should be formed by buildings and the walls enclosing buildings.
6. **Garden:** A garden, on both dwelling and community scales, should provide a sense of oasis, or paradise, and offer shelter from the oppressive climate.
7. **Crossing:** The crossing of paths or streets should be designed as a space where activities are intensified in accordance with the traditional symbolic attributes of Persian architecture.
8. **Platform:** The use of a platform, traditional in many cultures, should be adapted to the contemporary need to vertically separate differing functions and maintain the compactness of new developments.
9. **Porch:** The porch, a three-dimensional method of modulating the penetration of light into a building, should be used to intensify the usefulness of a semi-outdoor space.
10. **Landmark:** Landmark structures should be located in new developments as orientating devices and territorial markers.

Haeri Mazandarani is an architect who has investigated Iranian dwellings for more than 30 years. He published his studies in the book *House Culture Nature – Architecture Survey in Historical and Contemporary Houses* in 2010. According to Haeri, 'dwelling' means having a safe and secure dwelling, and creating inner and outer calm and comfort in home surroundings. He introduced some guidelines for architects when designing Iranian architecture.

The criteria for design which he introduced in his book are: *House in the city, House as a building and Details and elements*.

The table below shows my interpretation of Haeri Mazandarani's three steps proposed for housing design (Figure 94).

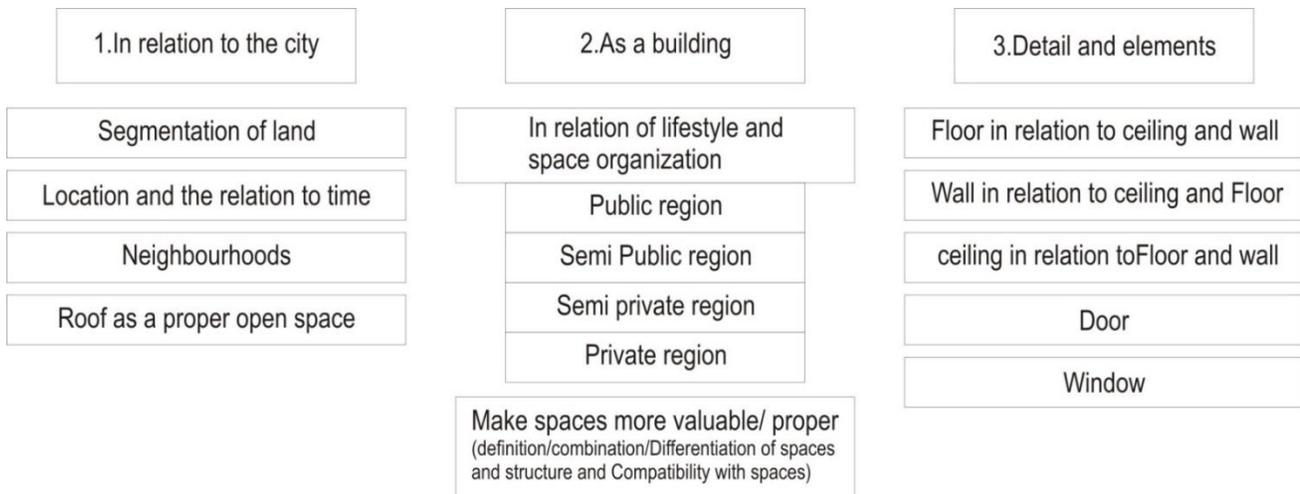


Figure 94: Interpretation of Heri Mazandarani's steps for housing design.

Source: Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه، فرهنگ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010).

(Details and elements) Relation and interconnection between Floor, Wall and Ceiling.

This research resonates with the third column (Details and elements) and attempts to elicit residents' views about these details and what makes them feel more connected with their place of living; it explores their preferences and how these are rooted in their lifestyle, as well as society and cultural values.

The table below shows the researcher's interpretation of the spaces that Haeri Mazandarani proposes, which can be put into three different categories, as shown below (Figure 94):

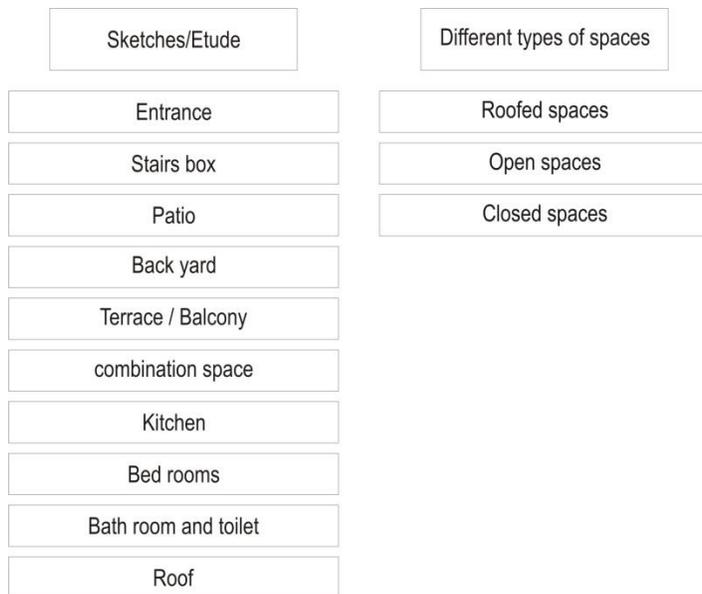


Figure 95: The researcher's interpretation of the spaces according to Haeri Mazandarani.

Source: Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010).

Mosavian, an architect, published a book, *Foundation of architectural and urban design*, in 1984, about the criteria for architectural and urban design. There is a chapter about dwellings in which he mentions that before designing a building, a designer should consider the environmental and geographical aspects of the land, access, orientation and structure. According to Mosavian, the formation of a residential building, considering its functions, will be divided into three parts: living area, sleeping area, kitchen and hygienic area. The area and number of bedrooms are different according to the number of residents. He introduces four diagrams for four different family types: one or two (without children), two (without children), three (a couple and one child), four (a couple and two children). Also, he suggests several example plans for houses and standards for spaces according to international ones.¹⁴¹

The table below is the researcher's interpretation, with relevance to this thesis, of Mosavian's book about designing a house (Figure 95):

¹⁴¹ Seied Mohamad Reza Mosavian. *Foundations of architectural and urban design*, اصول و مبانی در طراحی معماری و شهرسازی، Delarang, Tehran, 2012. Pp.82–90.

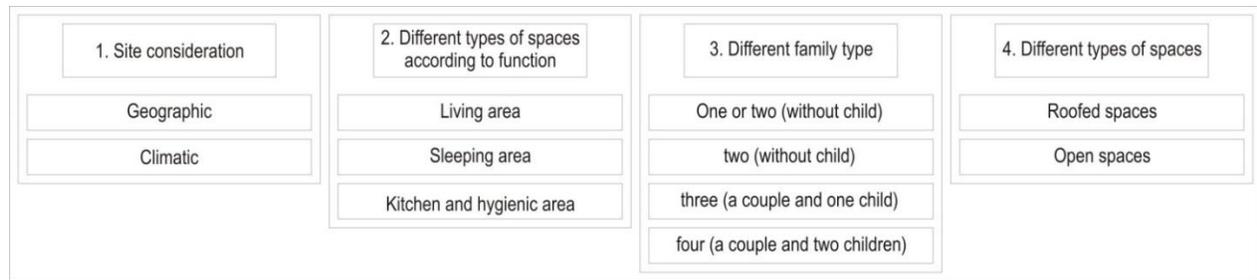


Figure 96: The author's interpretation of Mosavian's book about designing a house.

Source: Seied Mohamad Reza Mosavian, *Foundations of architectural and urban design*, اصول و مبانی در طراحی معماری و شهرسازی, Delarang, Tehran, 2012.

Recently, the Centre for Architectural and Urban Studies and Research (Iran) published a book called *A handbook for dwelling design*, which is a study by Zista Consultants, an architecture, urban planning and structure organization based in Tehran, Iran. The list below shows the fields which they consider in housing design:

- Residential site planning
- Interior spaces of a dwelling
- Today's houses (types of houses)
- Environmental challenges
- Electrical and mechanical services
- Climatic design
- Climatic design in traditional architecture
- Structural aspects ¹⁴²

This study is similar to *Time-Saver Standards for Residential Development* (edited by Joseph de Chiara), a book which is an American standard for housing design. The list below shows the main subjects covered in this book (Reference book No. 4):

- General planning and neighbourhood organization
- Site consideration and site planning
- Subdivisions and land planning
- Community facilities
- Types of single-family houses
- Types of apartment buildings
- Types of apartments
- Special types of housing
- Mobile homes and parks

¹⁴² Zista Consultants is an architecture, urban planning and structure organization, *A handbook for dwelling design*, راهنمای عمومی طراحی مسکن و محیط مسکونی, Centre for Architectural and Urban studies and research, Tehran, 2010.

- Elements of dwelling units
- Apartment building amenities
- Rehabilitation, conversions and historic presentation
- Housing control

The four aforementioned reference books are all about dwelling design. Both Haeri's and Ardalan's emphasis is on Iranian culture and they see Iranian housing design through this lens. The differences between them hinge on their inclinations towards traditionally religious and/or secular families. Based on participant narrative analysis, which reflects changing sociocultural needs and values, it can be said that Iranian families can be better described by considering traditional or modern, instead of religious or secular.

Based on such references, the thesis employs a framework that guides the discussion with participants. They describe essential qualities and features that a house should include, in particular within Iranian society, to provide a comfortable place for living for residents.

In this context, a home is a building that has these different areas: entrance, courtyard, living room, bedrooms, guest area, kitchen, dining room, bathroom and toilet, storeroom. There is a certain relation between spaces, how they are connected to each other and what functions they have. Also, there are spaces that have flexible (multi) functions. The following framework illustrates the process of design study for Iran houses.

In this diagram, the process of design study is drawn by the author (Figure 97).

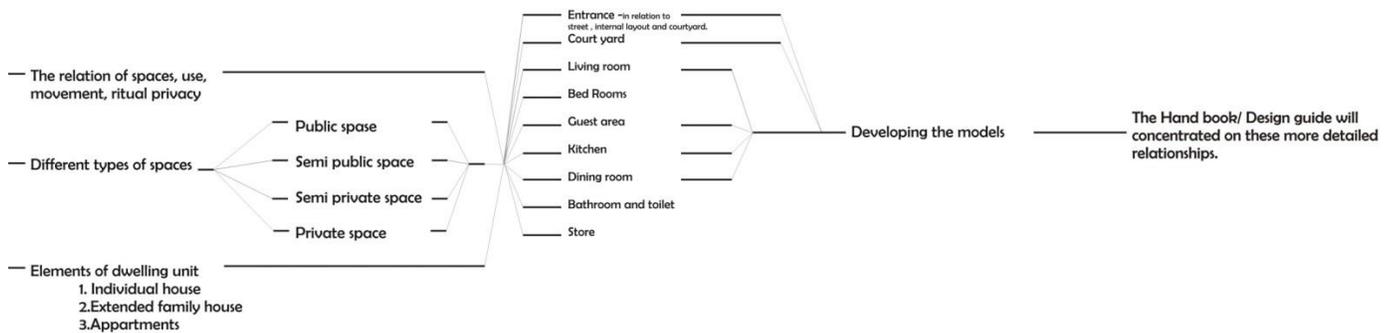


Figure 97: Process of design study.

Source: The author.

The early analytical drawings for a house, where the entrance is from a public highway, are shown in Part 6 of the portfolio.

A workshop method was employed to understand the participants' narratives on the meanings of home and experiences and practices related to their social and cultural values. The workshop process involved three main stages

Stage one: Discussion

Short story about the house/ apartment in which the participants grew up and lived. Their needs, desires and ideas about living and how the participants wanted to live were discussed.

A brief history of Iranian domestic architecture and an explanation of the study approach. In this phase, depending on the participants, the method varied to some extent, but drawing on their ideas as well as talking about them was suggested to them during the workshops. The act of drawing was an approach to visualize participants' ideas and desires. At the end of this session, the needs and desires of the participants for an appropriate home were delineated.

Stage two: Proposal development

The material gathered in the first section was then analysed. The narratives of the participants' lifestyles and desires vis-à-vis the home were extracted in this step, which led on to the second part about designing alternatives desired by the participants.

Different alternatives were drawn and prepared to represent and resonate with the participants' desires. Visual materials were presented to the participants for discussion. The information provided to the participants comprised sketches, models, images and plans. It was possible to make changes during the discussions.

Data at various stages were recorded using smart-pen technology. This also facilitated the transcription and synchronisation of data sets.

Stage three: Presentation

A number of relevant research materials, including photos, drawings etc. that show the process of design, were presented to the interviewees as well as alternatives that were designed by the researcher; these were then discussed with the participants. The films, models, drawings and so on will be collated and combined to introduce the aims and process.

Developing a new design paradigm for Iranian houses that considers wider cultural values and owners' social, cultural and other practical needs will be the end result of this process.

3.3.1 Structure of the Workshop

Essentially the workshop was structured in four parts to facilitate the coherence of data collection, analysis and synthesis.

- **Workshop part I**

The participants discuss the houses in which they live or that they remember from childhood until now. The participants talk about what they liked or did not like about the house they grew up in and the one they live in now. The participants were asked to bring images that related to their memories, as well as music, paintings etc. This facilitated becoming familiar with the participants' ideas and lifestyles.

- **Workshop part II**

In part II, there was discussion of the participants' everyday activities, practices and preferences. Participants' needs, desires and ideas about living and how they want to live were also explored.

Narratives included family and the relationships between different family members of at home, managing the home, details of various activities: sleeping, eating, storing, entertainment, bathing (washing), cleaning, wearing clothes, parties, chatting, relaxing. Participants were also asked to explain their everyday life (wake up at ... and then .../ when I come home from work .../ when I have guests... / when I want to go out.../ when I want to do ...) and to give a brief narrative about how they spend their day and what is important to them.

- **Workshop part III**

In part III of the workshop, discussions were framed to examine participants' perceptions and the relevance of traditional Iranian and contemporary architecture.

A brief history of Iranian domestic architecture and an explanation of the study approach were shown to the participants. This allowed them to have an understanding of how Iranian architecture has been affected by historical, cultural and social events, and how such a transition in architecture, e.g. from traditional Iranian houses to current apartments, has occurred over past decades.

•

Workshop part IV

In the final part of the workshop, a co-creation process of participants' desirable house designs was conducted. The final outcome was based on the participants' drawings + analysis + plans + models and film (mainly part of the movies showing traditional Iranian houses).

The material collected in the first session was analysed and compared. The narratives of the participants' lifestyles and desires vis-à-vis the home provided initial information for the researcher to lead the second part, and design alternatives and draw desires with the participants.

Different alternatives were drawn and made by the researcher, aiming to match the participants' desires. Combined with the researcher's interpretation of the data gathered, new forms and materials were presented to the participants for further discussion. The information provided for the participants to work with was in the form of images, sketches and suggested parts of plans. As some of participants were not able to translate their ideas and thoughts into drawings, an architectural assistant was used to help the participants with their drawings. Care was taken to make sure the participants were not influenced by the assistant. The role of the assistant was only to help the participants with drawing. A model of the home agreed on was then prepared.

3.4 Positionality

The qualitative nature of the research, delving into personal, spatial and social practices, and also the values of people, meant it was very important to be conscious about my own positionality throughout the research process.

At the very outset of this research, being an Iranian studying Iranian participants' experiences, my own role as a researcher was more emic – as an insider, regardless of my specific economic and social background. The author's emic stance enabled to have an empathetic understanding of the participants' experiences, and this helped her particularly when probing for responses from the participants in the interview sessions, which resulted in the rich data collected during this research. Further, to

reiterate Nelson, in research by design, the practitioner becomes a practitioner-researcher.¹⁴³ So, in this research, it was crucial to constantly reflect on my influence on the process and the results. In this thesis, I have consistently addressed thoughts related to such self-reflection by explaining the implications of research decisions made at various stages in Section 6.6 While interpreting narrative interviews, efforts were made constantly to be aware of my own role as an architect and researcher in the process of the interpretation of data and drawing inferences from them.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability in research are achieved through the following steps

Having a detailed description of the various methods used in this research.

Elaborating on the various steps of the narrative workshops conducted and various aspects of research that the data acquired relate to.

Analysis is made as transparent as possible by presenting the assumptions made and the process of interpreting the social and spatial aspects of participants' narratives.

The following illustration explains the research methodology adopted for this project (Figure 98).

¹⁴³ Robin Nelson, ed., *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (Basingstoke, Houndmills; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). P 25.

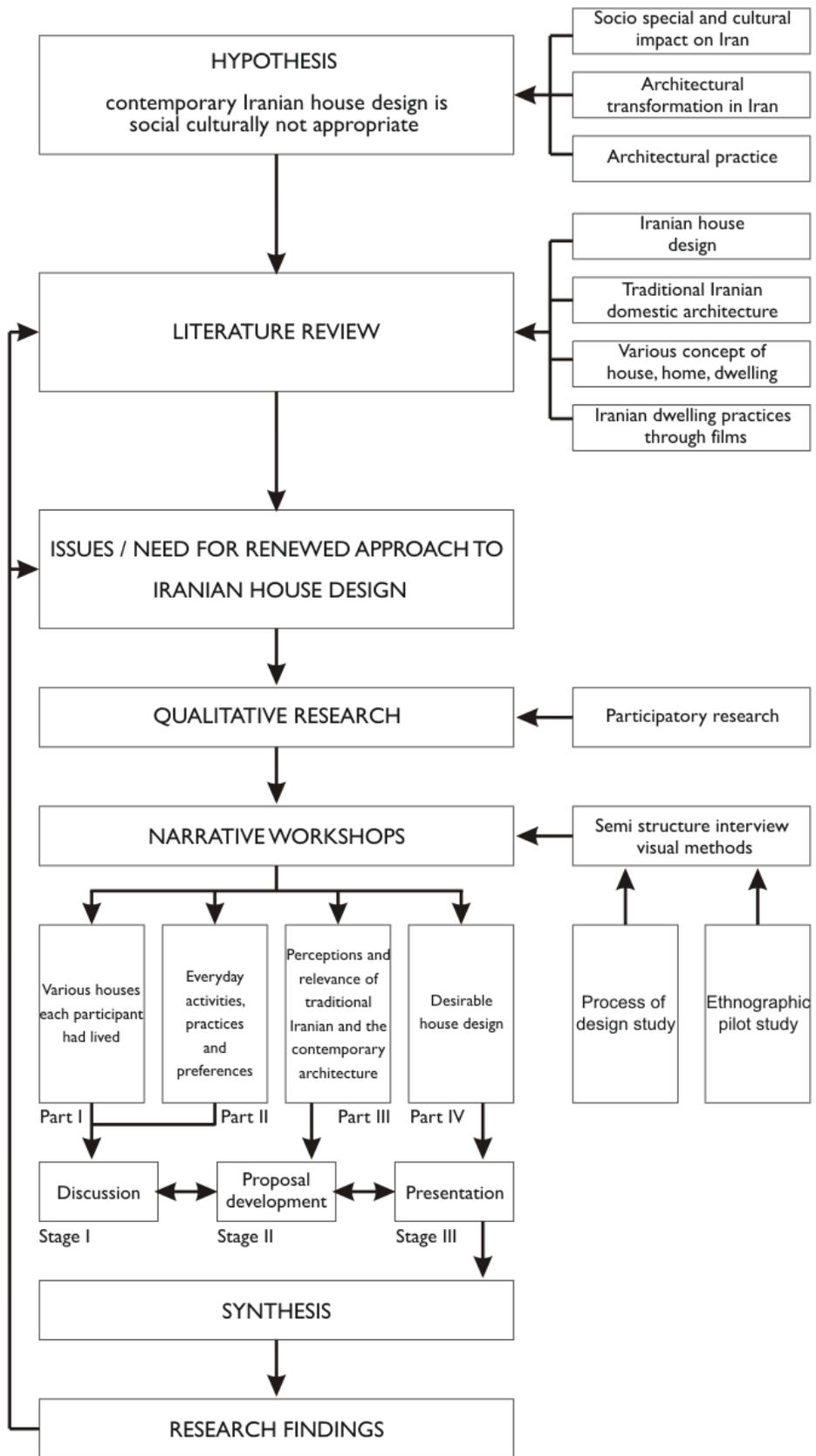


Figure 98 : Research Methodology.
Source: the author

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explained the methodology employed in this research. The first section of the chapter discussed the research by design paradigm adopted to address the research questions. A detailed description of the research methodology was provided to increase the transparency of the research. The methods adopted for this study were explained for their appropriateness for this research, which addresses the challenges of ensuring rigour in qualitative research. As the question of validity is always debated in qualitative research, the chapter has demonstrated how validity was sought by providing an overview of the research methods and the entire process of the research. The final section of the chapter addressed the issues of positionality and validity, which orients the reader towards understanding this research within the framework constructed by the researcher.

Chapter 4

Context and Pilot Study

4.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the context of the city for this research, i.e. Kerman. The case study was chosen for the interesting characteristics of the city, which include both traditional and modern representations of Iran. Kerman being the hometown of the researcher, it immediately offers several means for recruiting and interviewing subjects in this research, along with the advantage of informing the research with the rich local knowledge of the researcher. The first part of the chapter explains the physical and sociocultural context of Kerman in detail. In the second part, the chapter discusses the contemporary Iranian house, explaining its transformation in the present day. A pilot study of Iranian houses in Kerman is presented to understand, in depth, the various activities and practices of residents in the present-day context.

4.2 Kerman – Physical geography

The central plateau of Iran is a region of steppes and deserts. This region has long cold winters and long hot summers, with short, variable spring and autumn (Figure 98). A key difficulty for agriculture in Kerman is the low rainfall.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ Paul Ward English, *City and Village in Iran: Settlement and Economy in the Kirman Basin* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1966). P.7.

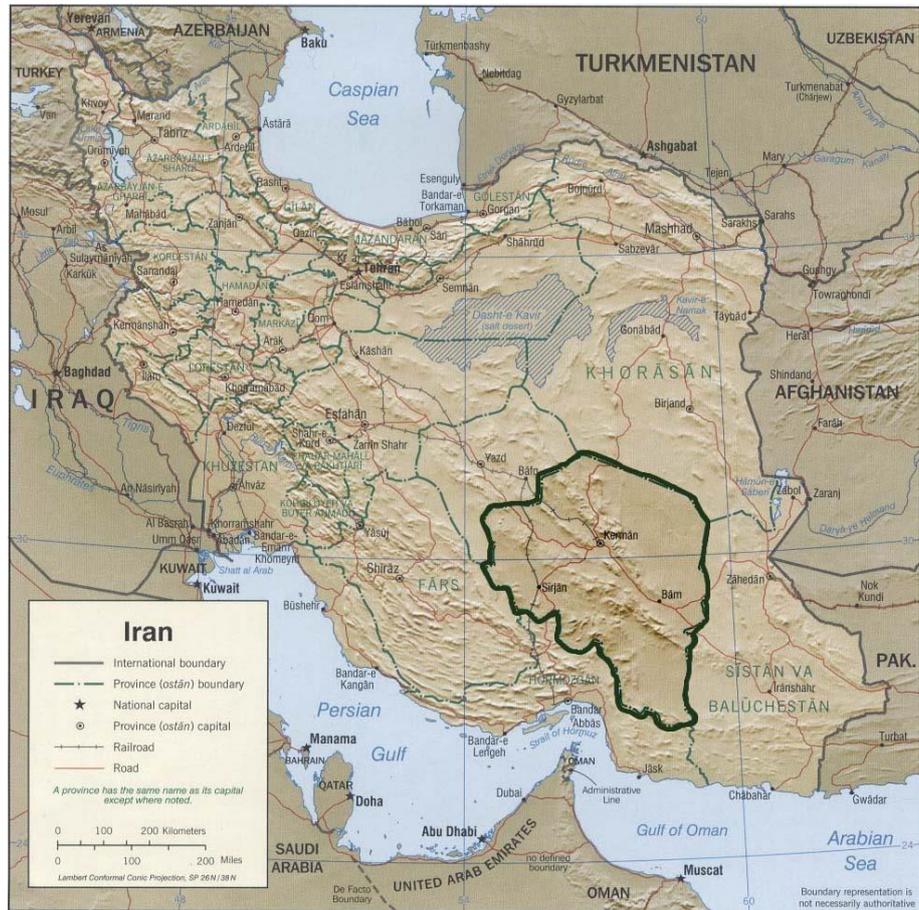


Figure 99: Map showing Kerman state.

Source: "GlobalSecurity.org - Reliable Security Information"; accessed 17 October 2016, http://www.globalsecurity.org/jhtml/jframe.html#http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iran/limages/iran_rel01.jpg|||.

Since all crops must be watered, settlements are located where water can be brought to the surface. The low rainfall presents more problems than temperature to sedentary agriculture in Kerman.¹⁴⁵

The annual range of temperatures is about 30°F; the absolute maximum and minimum temperatures differ by as much as 100°F. The diurnal temperature range is also high, and variations of more than 40°F between day and night are common.¹⁴⁶

The vegetation of Kerman is scant. In this region, only bushes grow in the wild, although at higher levels one occasionally finds groves of stunted trees in isolated mountain basins. Except for oasis-like patches of fertile land near villages, barren sand, grit and stone cover large

¹⁴⁵ Paul Ward English, *City and Village in Iran: Settlement and Economy in the Kirman Basin* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1966). P.10.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p.11.

areas. Dryness, summer droughts and high summers temperature limit the native vegetation to hardy xerophytes species.¹⁴⁷

According to Paul Ward English, “Kerman’s physical environment presents many problems to permanent settlers in the region. Modern Iranians must combat drought, variable rainfall, extreme temperatures, scant vegetation, rugged terrain, blowing sand, and poor soils, with a limited technology operating within the framework of a feudal society. Even under the best of conditions, this environment would be classified as marginal. Yet the Iranians have occupied it for centuries and during these centuries have adjusted their technology and in some cases found new solutions to the problems of permanent settlement in Kerman.”

¹⁴⁸

4.3 Historical development of settlement in Kerman

Settlements in Kerman province have existed since the fifth millennium B.C. During the Sasanian dynasty (224–641 A.D.) major changes occurred in Iran, one of which was increasing urbanization. Kerman was one of the new cities in the Sasanian era. It was established by order of Ardashir the First in 240 A.D. The site of Kerman was chosen for defensive reasons. The city was built on the northern edge of the Kerman plain, where lightly sloping land was available for agriculture and wells supplied water to the city. Most significantly, two small crags (Qal’ehi Ardashir and Qal’ehi Dukhtar; Figure 99) rose at this point to elevations a thousand feet above the plain. Castles were constructed on both these heights. The heart of the city lay on the eastern edge of the modern city, between these castles.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Paul Ward English, *City and Village in Iran: Settlement and Economy in the Kirman Basin* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1966). P.12.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. p.17.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. p.22.

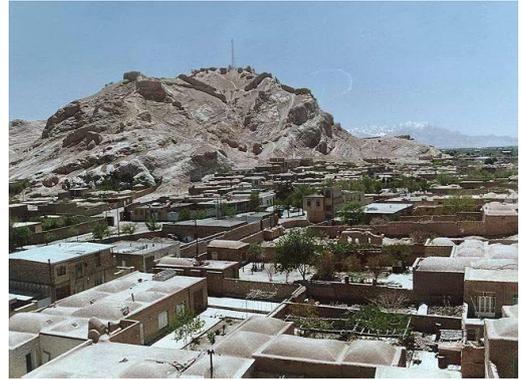


Figure 100: Qal'ehi Dukhtar.

Source: Nadiyeh Imani , 'Design Recommendations to Renovate the Historical Part of Kerman' (The organization of reconstruction and improvement of Kerman city, 2005).

The Arabs controlled the Persian Empire in the seventh century, but about 200 years after the Arab conquest the Zoroastrian ministry still had riding retainers and controlled territory near Kerman city.

Kerman became the capital of Kerman province in the tenth century. Afterwards, Kerman became the main cultural, economic and administrative centre of southern Iran. The Arab geographer Mugaddasi describes Kerman city as a small but seriously protected town at this time. Three major citadels watched over the city.¹⁵⁰

In the eleventh century, Kerman province came under the control of the Seljuq Turks and remained so until attacked by the Ghuzz Turks in the twelfth century. Kerman was bypassed by the Mongols but occupied by Timur's Persian campaign at the end of the fourteenth century.¹⁵¹

The Safavid dynasty (1502–1732) was a time of development and wealth for Kerman. The city became a significant commercial centre on the Indo-Iranian highway. The city developed a transit point for European goods and became an important link in the chain of trading centres joining Iran and India. However, in the eighteenth century, this commercial growth came to an end due to a series of tragedies.¹⁵²

In 1720, and again two years later, Kerman was attacked by Ghalzai tribesmen from Afghanistan. In 1747, Afghans conquered Kerman and destroyed the northern segment of the city, the old Zoroastrian neighbourhood. Again, in 1794, the city was taken by Qajar troops.

¹⁵⁰ Paul Ward English, *City and Village in Iran: Settlement and Economy in the Kirman Basin* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1966). P.25.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. p.26.

¹⁵² Ibid. p.26.

Twenty thousand men were blinded and equal numbers were sold into slavery.¹⁵³

Until the first half of the nineteenth century, this cruelty continued. The Qajar frequently sent the harshest rulers to Kerman province. During this period, villages were abandoned, Qantas fell into disrepair and the population declined.¹⁵⁴

Conditions in Kerman improved with the development of Indo-Iranian trade after 1850, encouraged by native Zoroastrian as well as British and Indian merchants. Kerman's location on the Indo-Iranian highway, its connections with the coastal port of Bandar Abbas and insecurity along other routes, because of the Indian-Afghan wars, contributed to major economic changes in the city.¹⁵⁵

By this time, Kerman city had expanded to a mile across, north to south, and three-quarters of a mile wide. The city walls, a dependable index of wealth, were in good condition and traversed by six gates. (Figure 100). The population of Kerman in 1865 was estimated at thirty to forty thousand.¹⁵⁶

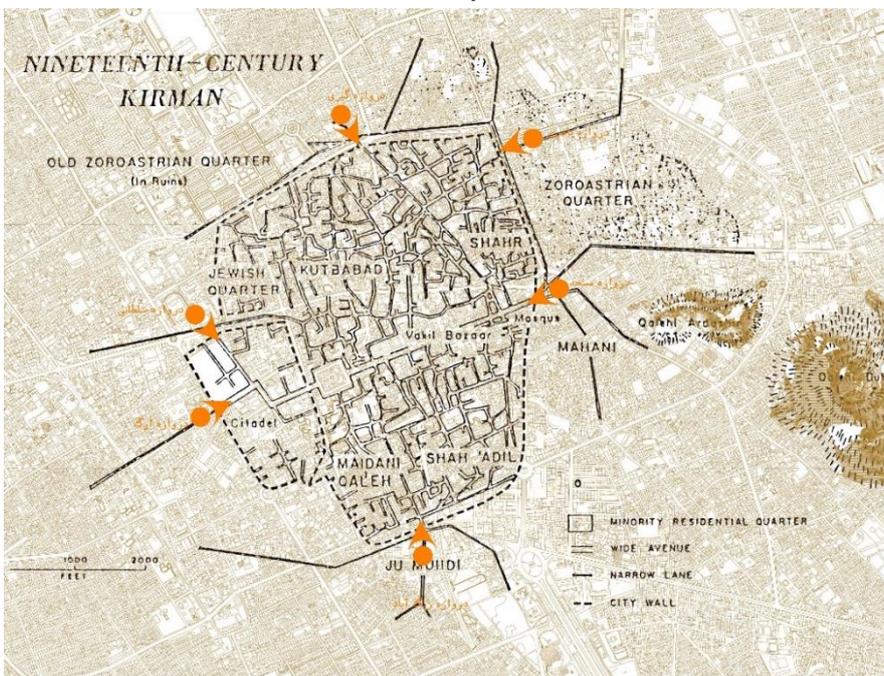


Figure 101: Kerman and its gates in the nineteenth century.

Source: Nadiyah Imani, 'Design Recommendations to Renovate the Historical Part of Kerman' (The organization of reconstruction and improvement of Kerman city, 2005).

The main skill in Kerman in the nineteenth century was the production of shawls from the down of the Kashmiri goat. There were only six

¹⁵³ Paul Ward English, *City and Village in Iran: Settlement and Economy in the Kirman Basin* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1966). P.27.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. p.27.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. p.27.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. p.28.

carpet-weaving establishments and fewer than thirty looms in the city in 1871. Sykes found over one thousand looms in Kerman city in 1900. In the twentieth century, the decline in shawl manufacture coincided with rapid growth in carpet-weaving. In the 1920s, carpet-weaving peaked as the major activity in the city with, by that time, an estimated five thousand looms in operation.¹⁵⁷

4.4 Transformation of the city after the constitutional revolution

In the nineteenth century, the structure of society in Kerman was based on a clear separation of the upper class from the commoners. The large extended family was the basic unit of social organization and was usually most clearly realized in the upper levels of Kerman society. The urban poor were rarely able to support such large households and had limited extended families. Religion was the fundamental extra-familial unifying force.¹⁵⁸ Since the nineteenth century, new cultural values have troubled and weakened the power of the family and mosques in modern Kerman. Economic opportunities, the possibility of migration to other cities, shifting residential patterns, and increased social mobility have all conspired to undermine the traditional patrilocal extended family.

In Kerman, population growth after the nineteenth century was slower than in other parts of Iran, since the region was still recovering from the devastation of the eighteenth century. Before the demolition of the city walls, the population was almost fixed. In the mid-nineteenth century, the population was approximately 40,000 residents. In the first formal population survey, in 1938, the population of Kerman was c. 50,000 inhabitants. By 1956, the population had risen to 62,000, and

¹⁵⁷ Paul Ward English, *City and Village in Iran: Settlement and Economy in the Kirman Basin* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1966). p28

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. pp.99–100.

in 1966 the population was at 85,000.¹⁵⁹ In 2011, the population of Kerman was 621,374.¹⁶⁰

During the 1930s, the city's wide streets were established. In 1928, the city walls were demolished and the first street, Shahpoor Street, was laid out. The next streets were built in 1929, 1931 and 1938¹⁶¹ (Figure 101).

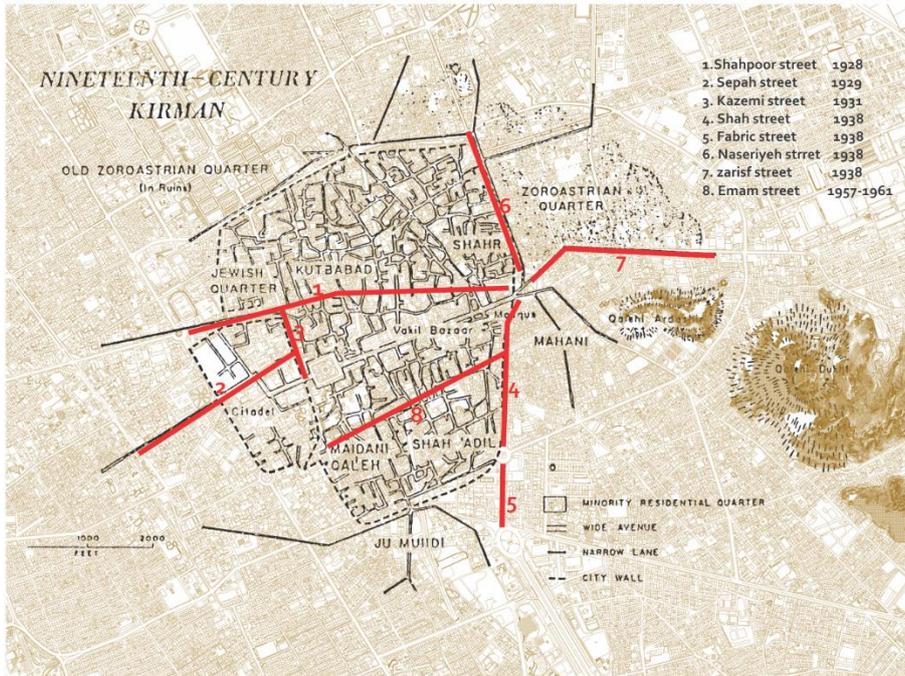


Figure 102: The first streets in Kerman.

Source: Nadiyeh Imani, 'Design Recommendations to Renovate the Historical Part of Kerman' (The organization of reconstruction and improvement of Kerman city, 2005).

¹⁵⁹ Paul Ward English, *City and Village in Iran: Settlement and Economy in the Kirman Basin* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1966).

¹⁶⁰ 'گزیده نتایج سرشماری 1390' (Statistical Center of Iran, 2011), [http://iran.unfpa.org/Documents/Census2011/census-90-results\(3\).pdf](http://iran.unfpa.org/Documents/Census2011/census-90-results(3).pdf).

¹⁶¹ Nadiyeh Imani, 'Design Recommendations to Renovate the Historical Part of Kerman' (The organization of reconstruction and improvement of Kerman city, 2005). P.17.

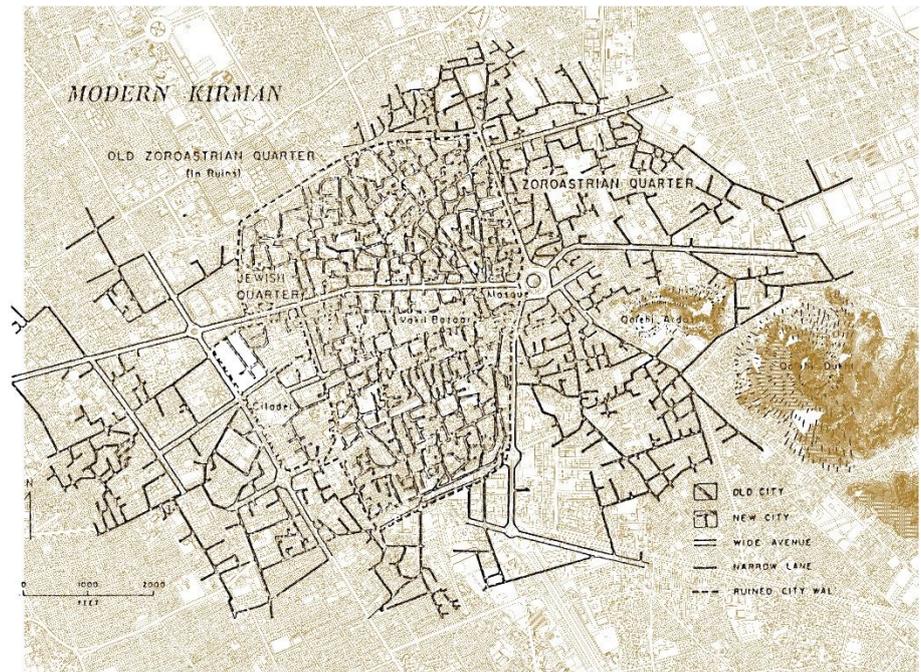


Figure 103: Kerman in 1961.

Source: Nadiyeh Imani , 'Design Recommendations to Renovate the Historical Part of Kerman' (The organization of reconstruction and improvement of Kerman city, 2005).

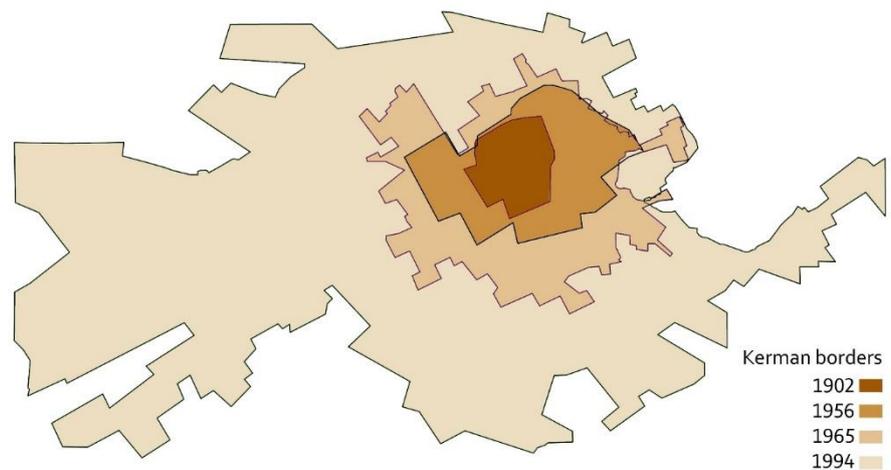


Figure 104: The expansion of Kerman.

Source: Nadiyeh Imani , 'Design Recommendations to Renovate the Historical Part of Kerman' (The organization of reconstruction and improvement of Kerman city, 2005).

Although the city was expanding and there were now a lot of commercial businesses beyond it, the bazaar retained its importance (Figure 102, Figure 103).

4.5 Kerman today

At first glance, the city has two different types of urban planning, traditional and modern. There are several aspects in the traditional part, such as social and cultural traditions, which cannot be seen in the new part of the city. These parts have not yet adapted to the requirements of modern life. For instance, although vehicles are allowed in these areas, the street's width is still not adequate to accommodate the volume of traffic (Figure 104). As the city expanded to the west, several streets on an east-west axis were established. The first one cut the main bazaar into two. Other streets bisect the traditional part. The lack of service areas here is a problem and these new streets make the traditional alleys redundant. As commercial buildings moved from the middle of the parish and the bazaar to the new, wide streets, the price of land around these streets increased. This has had an influence on the domestic spaces of the city, too, as people desired to build houses quickly and cheaply¹⁶² (Figure 105–Figure 107)

Aligning the most important streets on a north-south axis in the new part of the city, using materials in the wrong way, and not maintaining the correct proportions in terms of dividing urban as well as domestic spaces, shows that the key factor, the climate, was overlooked and consequently brought chaos to the city.¹⁶³



Figure 105: Historical sector of Kerman city.

Source: Ahmad Poorahmad, *Geography of Kerman* (Academic Centre for Education, 1992).

¹⁶² Nadiyah Imani, 'Design Recommendations to Renovate the Historical Part of Kerman' (The organization of reconstruction and improvement of Kerman city, 2005). P.164.

¹⁶³ Ahmad Poorahmad, *Geography of Kerman* (Academic Center for Education, 1992). P.51.

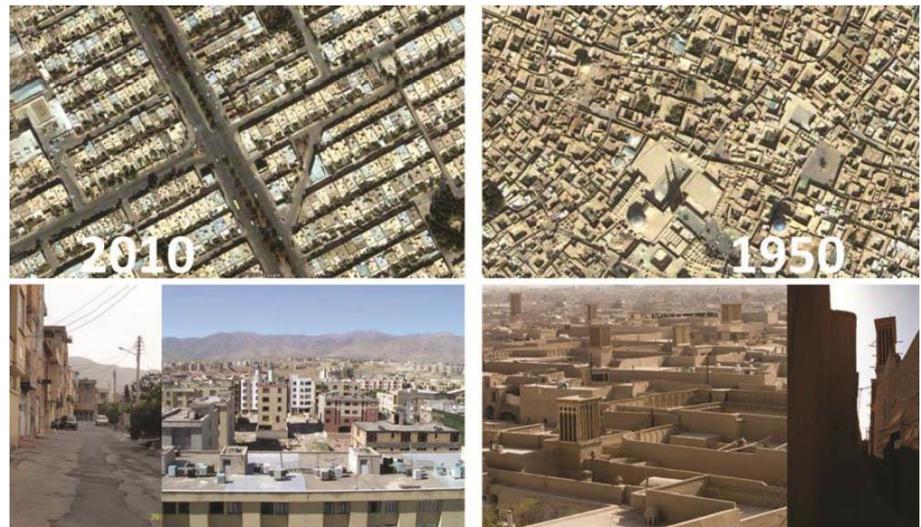


Figure 106: A comparison between old and new Kerman.

Source: Paria Sajadpour, 'Re-Designing Contemporary City Blocks : Designing In Favour Of Energy Conservation For A City In The Desert: Kerman, Iran' (Ryerson University, 2011).



Figure 107: City of Kerman



Figure 108: Various residential complexes in a street with different facades in Kerman.

According to Imani, the evidence shows that the influence of modernization in the Middle East has changed social patterns more than economic organization. There is consistency in the feudal economy in Iran; the higher levels of society continue to control the

economy. The most important event to disturb this consistency has the Islamic Revolution in 1979, and after that the eight-years war of 1980–8. There have been many social and cultural changes following the revolution in Iran. The social economy based on feudalism has completely changed. Furthermore, because of the war and the Revolution, the modernisation trend was disrupted. In Western countries, many cities have developed gradually, but in the third world, as well as in Iran, and specifically in Kerman, because of such problems, evolution/ modernization was peremptory and imposed from outside (by the government, in the capital) rather than driven from within. Additionally, the infrastructure of city has been funded without due attention to the social and cultural needs of its citizens. In traditional cities such as Kerman, the traditional foundations have been completely ruined without necessarily being replaced with modern organization.¹⁶⁴

In the next section, the chapter begins by examining and understanding the contemporary Iranian house. Following that is the presentation of a pilot study on a contemporary Iranian house in Kerman to understand residents' behaviours and how activities and practices are performed in the various spaces in their houses.

4.6 Contemporary Iranian House: Transformation of spaces and associated practices

Although the main functions of different spaces in a house have remained unchanged, there are some real changes in the way that those roles are performed. Perhaps kitchen, toilets and bathrooms are the spaces that have been affected most by changes in lifestyle and technology during the 20th century. As mentioned in previous sections, Iranian society fits into a broad spectrum of tradition to modernity. In almost every house there are elements of modernity and some traditional features. Perhaps an aspect of house that residents want to use to express their interest in modernisation is design and the appliances they use, the kitchen is a prime example for this purpose. Also, a significant transition, in terms of development, occurred during

¹⁶⁴ Nadiyah Imani , 'Design Recommendations to Renovate the Historical Part of Kerman' (The organization of reconstruction and improvement of Kerman city, 2005). Pp.158–161.

the 20th century in Iran. For example, the water supply network was expanded in cities and gradually every house had access to clean water for cooking or hygiene.

4.6.1 Kitchen transition between 1921 and now:

In historical houses the kitchen was a place in the basement and a corner of the courtyard. There was a trap in the ceiling for light and ventilation. As a consequence of having electrical and mechanical systems, the kitchen expected to profit from new hygienic services and could be situated closer to the main living area.¹⁶⁵ According to Haeri Mazandarani, this move was really important for the convenience and welfare of a contemporary lifestyle. When it moved to the closed part of the house, near the living area, it became better equipped. Kitchens found different locations. One of them was being located near the entrance in order to have easier access for goods. Another became in the middle of the house, where there was a patio for light and ventilation. But the most important aim was to try to put it near the place provided for eating. At first, they put a window between the kitchen and the dining room then replaced it with a door. Then, as houses became smaller, instead of a door there was an open space between those areas. In several houses, especially in the past, they put carpet on the floor like in other spaces and sat on it. In some others, they put a small table and several chairs in the kitchen.¹⁶⁶

4.6.2 Toilet transition between 1921 and now:

Study and observation show that toilet was a space far from the building, depending on the house. In garden houses, it was located at the back of the garden and in courtyards it was usually in a basement. Toilets in those days were not pleasant spaces, having a deep hole in the middle. People used to take water in a jar to the toilet. Also, there was no space for washing hands and they used to wash their hands in a small pool in the courtyard. As a consequence of having electrical and mechanical systems, service areas expected to profit from new hygienic services and were able to be situated closer to the main living area.¹⁶⁷ In the 20th century, the toilet was gradually situated closer to the rest of the building. Also, a sink was added near the toilet. But it was still outside the building. Then, in the middle of 20th century, the

¹⁶⁵ Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, 'Process of Housing Transformation in Iran', *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No. 2009): 69–80. Pp.74–5.

¹⁶⁶ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه، فرهنگ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 156.

¹⁶⁷ Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, 'Process of Housing Transformation in Iran', *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No. 2009): 69–80. Pp.74–5.

toilet was put inside buildings, but it was in a separate corridor separated from all other spaces. But there was still another toilet outside. There were lots of families that did not use the inside toilet because of the smell and so ignored it. There was a separate space for a toilet and another for a sink. But gradually outside toilet was removed from new houses. And it was hard in winter to use an outside toilet. An inside one was more convenient. After a while, the separated toilet and sink became one space, which was more comfortable. People believed that the toilet was a very dirty space and so it was a completely separate one. As they were two small spaces with their own doors, making them joint was better. Gradually the shame about toilets went and the hidden toilet came closer to other spaces. And depending on the number of rooms in a house, the number of toilets varied. Now people have a toilet connected to their bedroom, which is private.

The traditional toilet that people used was difficult to combine with a shower. But recently, it has become more common to have a Western-style toilet in bathrooms.

4.6.3 Bathroom transition between 1921 and now:

Before the 20th century, people used to go to public bathrooms, except very rich families that had a bathroom in their house. When a toilet added to the inside of the house, a modern bathroom was added too. At first, the bathroom was divide into two spaces, one of them was a wet area, the other was a dressing room. There is some regulation in religion about making clothes wet and I believe this was an important reason why they wanted to have a separate space.

Gradually, as washrooms became better equipped, the toilet, sink and shower became one space. Also, it is common to have more than one bathroom if there is enough space in a house.

4.6.4 Living area and reception

The study suggest that it was common to have a specific space in the house to receive guests in traditional houses as well as modern ones until almost the 1980s. Shahram Vaziritabar, an Iranian architect, mentions in his research that in both traditional and newly-built houses before 1990 there were two different spaces, a sitting room for family uses and a reception space for their guests, which was always tidy.¹⁶⁸ In those periods, people had a special area for living which was a sitting room for the whole family. Gradually, these two spaces became one

¹⁶⁸ Shahram Vaziritabar, 'Design and Privacy in Modern and Traditional Housing in Iran' (PhD, Oxford Polytechnic, 1990); <http://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.258725>. P.195.

large space. Now, the reception and living areas are not separated by physical elements though they may be separated with different furniture in the same space.

Mirmoghtadaee believes although the size of houses has become smaller than in the past and it is not possible to have semi-public and private spaces physically separated, people still the traditional rules. The private areas were often hidden from sight and very simple, in contrast to the guests' area which was decorated with Persian rugs and other luxury items to receive guests respectfully.¹⁶⁹

4.6.5 Bedrooms

Traditionally people did not have a specific space for bedrooms and so this is new in this culture and comes from modern countries. People used to sleep in the same space, which was their living area. Also, the whole family would sleep in one room. But it is now a fixed space in all Iranian houses and everybody is keen to have their own bedroom, according to their availability and income.

According to Mirmoghtadaee, this was a big change as the multifunctional character of rooms changed to a single function, here just a bedroom.

4.7 Contemporary Iranian house in Kerman – An ethnographic pilot study

In order to have a clearer understanding of actual spatial behaviour and peoples' activities in a contemporary Iranian house, an ethnographic pilot study was conducted. A pilot study is particularly significant as it informs the main case-study workshops conducted in the next stage by throwing light on the relationship between spatial organization and the activities of residents in Iranian houses in Kerman

Due to cultural and social aspects, it is especially difficult to gain access to houses in Iran unless the residents know/trust you, e.g. family and friends. Traditionally Iranians prefer not to talk about their personal life with others, because of the religious, political and social situation in Iran today. In order to explore domesticity in more detail, the

¹⁶⁹ Mahta Mirmoghtadaee, 'Process of Housing Transformation in Iran', *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries* 14 (No. 2009): 69–80. Pp.76–7.

residents of particular home examples were selected from families with whom the researcher had a trusting relationship. Two important aspects in selecting a pilot-study case was that, first, subjects have a middle-class income, they being the major segment of the Iranian population, and their house plan and design is representative of the common contemporary planning found in Iranian housing in Kerman.

Some of the analysis is in the following pages and more analysis can be seen in the portfolio, part 4.

4.7.1 Analysis and Discussion

The observation from the pilot study indicated that the organization of spaces in houses in Iran is simple. Most houses in Iran have a similar general plan and share the same principles, the differences are usually in the minor details, e.g. the design of spaces; nevertheless, the functions remain the same.

As the researcher is well connected to the residents, most of them being family friends, based on personal experience, observation and study it can be stated that the house plan is one of the most common plans now used in Iran. This house contains three homes over three floors. The owner and his family live on the ground floor, the grandmother lives in the basement, and a tenant lives on the first floor. The ground floor was selected for study in detail because the family had been known for several years.

This family includes mother, father and two children.

Father was born in 1969, Civil Engineer: F

Mother was born in 1974, Teacher: M

Boy was born in 1999: B

Girl was born in 2003: G

The residents of this house have been living in it since 2000, there have been some changes during that time. Also, during this study, they renovated their house by the end of 2013.

The study in the following pages and the part in part 4 of the portfolio was done in 2012.

One of the residents of this house (mother) was also one of the participants in the main case-study workshops of this thesis. So, more details are provided in Chapter 5 of this thesis about this house.

The changes made during renovation were discussed with the resident and are visualised in Chapter 5 of the portfolio, part 5.

The house was visited on weekdays and at the weekend and their ways of living in different times were observed. Twelve tables were prepared to describe their ways of living (Tables 1–12). The information recorded was constantly checked with the subjects to make sure it was correct.

Table 1: The family's daily life: Schedule of school times

Source: The author.

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Night
Mother	Wake up 6:00 am Bath Make breakfast Get dressed Go out at 7:00 am	Come back 2:00 pm Lunch (grandma, house) Rest (sleep)	Make dinner Do housework Dinner 8:00 pm	Watch TV Talk Read/Internet
Father	Wake up 6:00 am Bath Breakfast Get dressed Go out at 7:00 am	Come back 3:00 pm Lunch (grandma house) Rest (sleep)	Come back from work Dinner 8:00 pm	Watch TV Talk Read/ Internet
Son	Wake up 6:00 am Bath Breakfast Get dressed Go out at 7:00 am	Come back 1:00 pm Lunch (grandma house) Rest Play/ watch TV	Homework Watch TV Dinner 8:00 pm	Sleep
Daughter	Wake up 6:00 am Bath Breakfast Get dressed Go out at 7:00 am	Come back 1:00 pm Lunch (grandma house) Rest Play/ watch TV	Homework Watch TV Dinner 8:00 pm	Sleep

On weekdays they were not at home until the afternoon, they had their lunch at their grandmother's house, which is in the same building. But they have their siesta in their house.

Table 2 : Family daily life: Schedule for Holidays

Source: the author

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Night
Mother	Wake up 9:00 am Bath Make breakfast Do housework	Lunch 1:00 pm Rest (sleep)	Go out for fun Have dinner out Sometimes have guests	Watch TV Talk Reading/ Net
Father	Wake up 9:00 am Bath Breakfast	Lunch 1:00 pm Rest (sleep)	Go out for fun Have dout Sometimes have guests	Watch TV Talk Read/ Internet
Son	Wake up 9:00 am Bath Breakfast	Lunch 1:00 pm Rest (sleep) Play/ watch TV	Go out for fun Have dinner out Sometimes have guests	Sleep
Daughter	Wake up 9:00 am Bath Breakfast	Lunch 1:00 pm Rest (sleep) Play/ watch TV	Go out for fun Have dinner out Sometimes have guests	Sleep

They wake up later on holidays and at weekends. They have their lunch at home and often go out for dinner.

Table 3 : Family daily life: Morning

Source: The author.

	Morning School times	Morning Holidays
Mother	Wake up 6:00 am Bath, Make breakfast, Get dressed Go out at 7:00 am	Wake up 9:00 am Bath, Make breakfast, Do housework
Father	Wake up 6:00 am Bath, Make breakfast, Get dressed Go out at 7:00 am	Wake up 9:00 am Bath, Breakfast
Son	Wake up 6:00 am Bath, Make breakfast, Get dressed Go out at 7:00 am	Wake up 9:00 am Bath, Breakfast
Daughter	Wake up 6:00 am Bath, Make breakfast, Get dressed Go out at 7:00 am	Wake up 9:00 am Bath, Breakfast

Table 4: Family daily life: Afternoon

Source: The author.

	Afternoon School times	Afternoon Holidays
Mother	Come back 2:00pm Lunch, Rest (sleep)	Lunch 1:00 pm, Rest (sleep) Watch TV
Father	Go out to work Dinner 8:00 pm	Lunch 1:00 pm, Rest (sleep) Watch TV
Son	Homework, Watch TV Dinner 8:00 pm	Lunch 1:00 pm, Rest (sleep) Watch TV
Daughter	Homework, Watch TV Dinner 8:00 pm	Lunch 1:00 pm, Rest (sleep) Watch TV

Table 5 : The family daily life Evening

Source: the author

	Evening School times	Evening Holidays
Mother	Make dinner, Do housework Dinner 8:00 pm	Go out for fun, Have dinner out Sometimes have guests
Father	Go out to work Dinner 8:00 pm	Go out for fun, Have dinner out Sometimes have guests
Son	Homework, Watch TV Dinner 8:00 pm	Go out for fun, Have dinner out Sometimes have guests
Daughter	Homework, Watch TV Dinner 8:00 pm	Go out for fun, Have dinner out Sometimes have guests

Table 6: Family daily life Night

Source: the author

	Night School times	Night Holidays
Mother	Watch TV Talking Read/ Internet	Watch TV Talking Read/ Internet
Father	Watch TV Talking Read/ Internet	Watch TV Talking Read/ Internet
Son	Sleep	Sleep
Daughter	Sleep	Sleep

Table 7: Functions of each space
Source: The author.

	Eat	Rest	Sleep	Cleaning / washing	Entertainment	Studying	Sitting	Talking	Cooking	Dressing	Storing	Other
Entrance												*
Living room	*	*			*		*	*				
Bedroom		*	*			*	*			*	*	
Kitchen	*			*			*	*	*		*	
WC												*
Bathroom				*								
Storage											*	
Stair												*
Corridor												*
Roof												
Courtyard					*							
Reception	*				*		*	*				
Dining area	*							*				
Balcony				*	*							

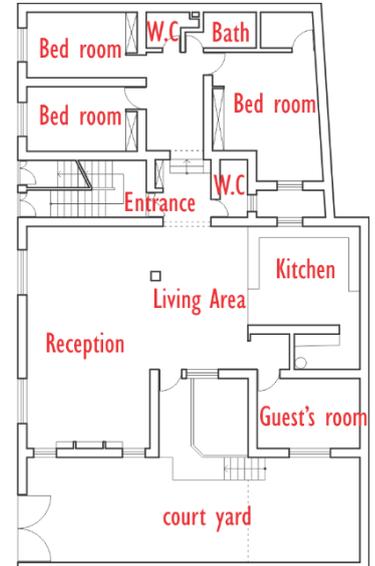


Table 8: People's access to spaces
Source: the author

	Mother	Father	Girl	Boy	Guests	Friends	Strangers	Close family
Entrance	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Living room	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Bedroom	*	*	*	*				
Kitchen	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
WC	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Bathroom	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Storage	*	*	*	*				
Stair	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Corridor	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Roof								
Courtyard	*	*	*	*				
Reception	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Dining area	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Balcony	*	*	*	*				*

People's access to different parts of a house is to some extent predictable and not surprising. Perhaps access to the balcony is interesting as only close family members can have access, which in the

eyes of residents seems to be a less private section of the building compared to the courtyard.

Table 9: Furniture in each space

Source: The author.

	Table	Chair	Bed	Carpet	Tv	Dresser	Mirror	Pc	Other
Entrance						*	*		
Living room	*	*		*	*				
Bedroom	*	*	*	*		*	*		
Kitchen	*	*							*
WC							*		*
Bathroom							*		*
Storage						*			
Stair									
Corridor				*					
Roof									
Courtyard		*							
Reception	*	*		*					*
Dining area	*	*		*					
Balcony	*	*							

Table 10: Area of each space

Source: the author

	Total
Entrance	6.2
Living room	20
Bedroom	62.5
Kitchen	26.4
WC and bathroom	10
Storage	7.25
Staircase	14
Corridor	14.5
Roof	275
Courtyard	64
Reception	50
Dining area	12
Balcony	9
Other	3.5
Walls	43.15
Constructed	278.5
Land	370

Table 11: Light in each space

Source: The author.

	Natural	Electric
Entrance		*
Living room	*	*
Bedroom	*	*
Kitchen	*	*
WC		*
Bathroom		*
Storage		*
Stair	*	*
Corridor		*
Roof		
Courtyard	*	*
Reception	*	*
Dining area	*	*
Balcony	*	*

Table 12: How much time each one spends in each space

Source: The author/

	Mother	Father	Girl	Boy	Guests	friends	Stranger	Close family
Entrance	30 m	30 m	15m	15m	10m	15m	5m	15m
Living room	5 h	4 h	4 h	4 h	2-4 h	3-5h	0	3-5h
Bedrooms	7 h	7 h	12 h	12 h	0	0	0	0
Kitchen	3 h	20 m	30 m	1 h	0	1h	0	1h
WC	15 m	15 m	15 m	15 m	5m	5m	0	5m
Bathroom	20 m	20 m	20 m	20 m	0	0	0	0
Storage	2 m	2 m	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stair	2 m	2 m	2m	2m	2m	2m	2m	2m
Corridor	2 m	2 m	2 m	2 m	2m	2m	0	2m
Roof	0	10 m	0	0	0	0	0	0
Courtyard	1h	1h	30 m	30 m	0	0	0	0
Reception	0	0	0	0	2-4 h	2-4 h	0	0
Dining area	0	0	0	0	30 m	30 m	0	30 m
Balcony	30m	0	20 m	20 m	0	0	0	0

On normal days, when the family does not serve guests, they will not spend any time in the reception and dining areas. As seen above, the living room is the part of the house where residents and guests spend most of their time. It is not surprising that this part most often forms the largest part of the house (apart from the courtyard). It is often equipped with entertainment devices, e.g. large-screen TV. Residents often pay quite a lot of attention to decorating the living room.

Through the mapping of residents' movement patterns, it was observed that while the largest area in the house is the living area, it played a relatively minor role in everyday activity and movement patterns (Figure 110).

A complete study is included in the portfolio, part 4.

The study explains how houses were being designed which did not reflect or cater to the socio-spatial practices of residents. For instance, it is very common for Iranians to sit on the floor while chatting, eating and so on, but in new designs each space has only specific activities that are dependent on the furniture.

As shown in the plans, the kitchen, living and dining areas are only separated by furniture and are almost shared spaces. This is now common in contemporary houses. Although it makes spaces bigger, there is no privacy and conflicts between different functions (Figure 108).

Public area

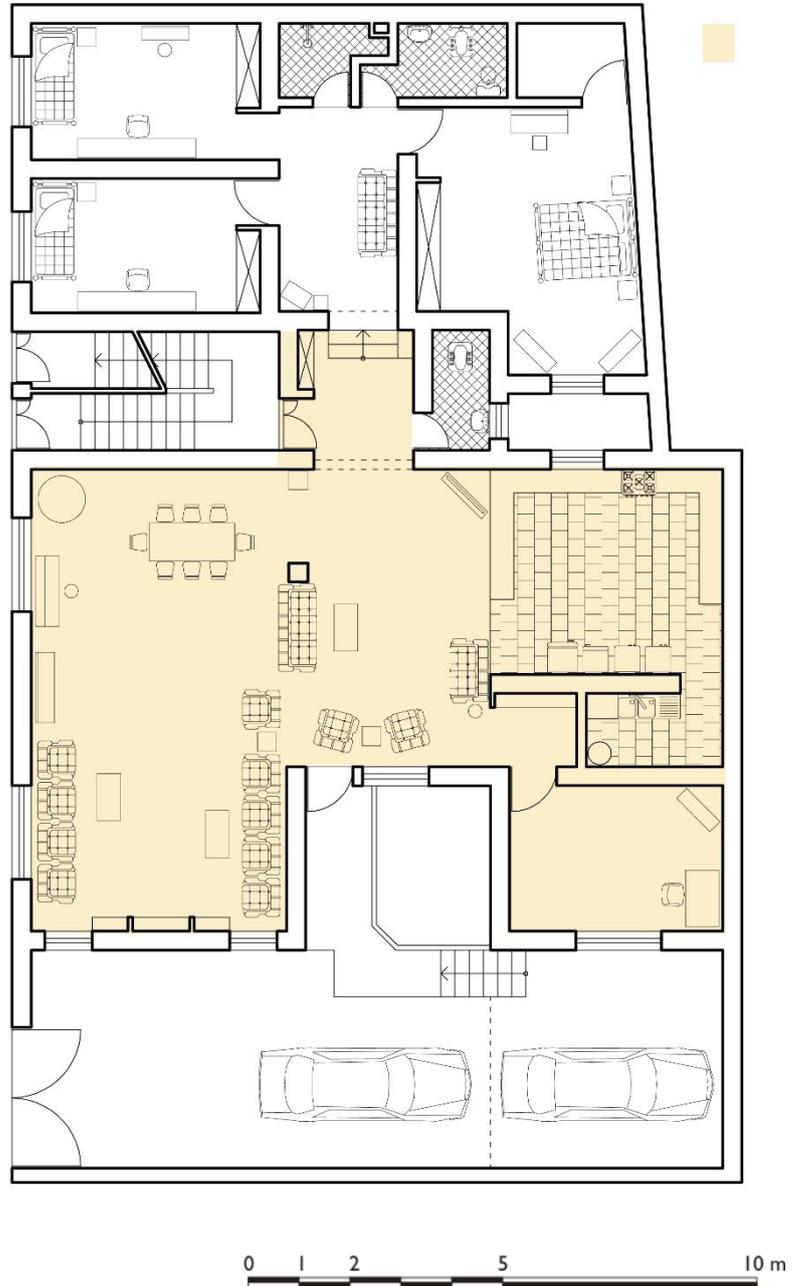


Figure 109: Plan of the house showing the public area which is in a different colour and has been divided with furniture.
Source: The author.

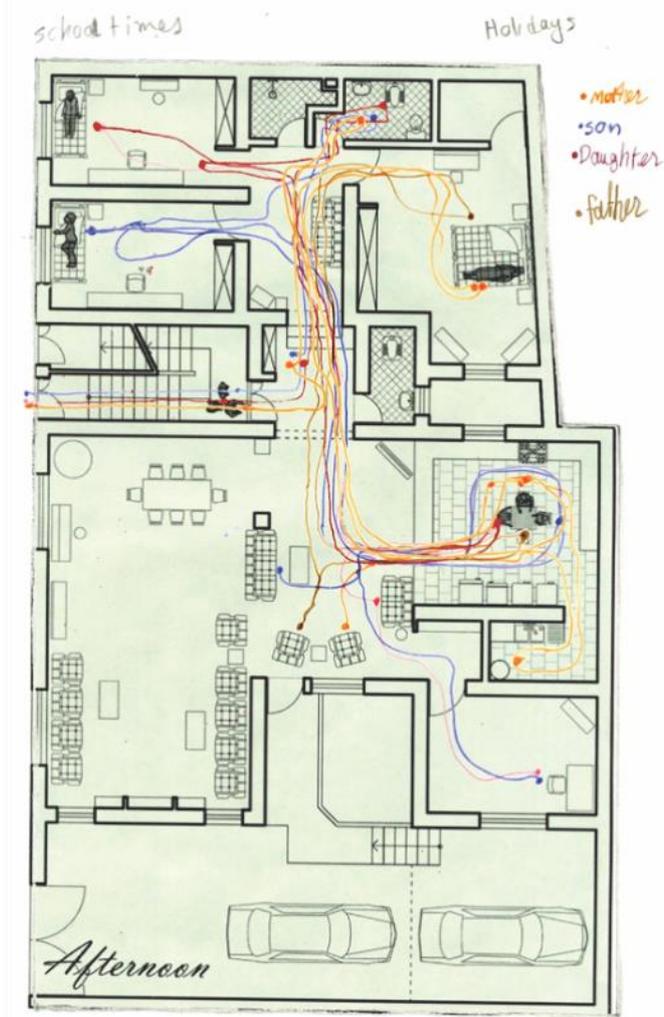


Figure 110 : Sample of a plan drawn for family movement.
Source: The author.

Today, as building apartment blocks is more common, another apartment block example is also explored. All units have the same plans and five units with different residents were studied in order to show how different residents adopt the same plans according to their needs.

This study can be seen in the portfolio, part 3.

4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, the geographical and cultural context of the main case study has been explained. Following that, the chapter first examined in general terms the various spatial transformations and practices in contemporary Iranian houses. To understand in more detail how the house functions and residents' behaviours in contemporary Iranian houses in Kerman, an ethnographic pilot study was presented. The pilot study offered significant insights into residents' spatial behaviours and how the spaces were compatible and incompatible in several instances. The pilot study highlights several issues that are emergent in contemporary Iranian house design. The inferences of the pilot study reinforce the need for developing a renewed approach to Iranian house design which is sympathetic to the socio-spatial needs of residents.

Chapter 5

Main Study: Workshop Narratives

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the main study for this research, conducted in the form of a workshop with selected native subjects in Kerman. The chapter begins by discussing the challenges encountered in the participant recruitment process. It then explains in detail the various sessions conducted as part of the workshop, and then the narratives of the research participants are discussed.

5.2 Workshop participants: Sampling and Challenges

As described earlier in Chapter 3, qualitative research is an inherently difficult process, participant recruitment becomes even more challenging when research topic deals with people's lifestyles, particularly in a conservative society like Iran. The criteria for selection for group workshop participants were an acceptable level of education/knowledge about lifestyle, a willingness to collaborate and be familiar with modern life, belonging to the middle-income group. Based on these criteria, a number of people with whom the researcher was in contact were shortlisted. Some of the researchers' friends were also contacted to identify potential participants. It was important that the interviewees had an adequate understanding of Iranian traditional houses. Although the initial list was relatively long, in the end, after initial phone calls were made, only a limited number of people agreed to further discussion with the researcher.

In the end, five participants agreed to be part of the research. The interviews were carried out in a semi-structured format. In other words, although the questions were generally similar for all the interviewees, they were slightly different according to each person's needs and requirements. The participants had freedom to explain their answers to open-ended questions using their own terms and were not restricted to predetermined answers. Such an approach could

effectively engage with the participants and develop more interesting narratives on the topics for discussion.

The workshops were for five different participants, but the preparation of questions, initial discussions, interviews and drawing conclusions took place in a number of meetings, which in total were more than 15. Throughout the interview sessions a friendly and informal ambience was maintained so that the participants would feel comfortable and able to freely discussing various aspects of their daily activities and practices in their house.

Each interview session lasted for at least one and a half hour, and in some cases the interviews were more than two hours, with a few minutes' break in the middle. All interviews were both video- and audio-recorded.

Following are the five participants' narratives from the workshop. The five participants are referred to as Participants H, S, A, M, SH.

All narratives follow the same structure, explained in detail in the methodology chapter. Each workshop was conducted in four parts. An overview of the structure of how the narratives are presented is given below to facilitate the reading and understanding of the participants' narratives. Each participant narrative has:

1. Participant introduction and background
2. Workshop part I – Discussion of the various houses each participant had lived in.
3. Workshop part II – Discussion of participant's everyday activities, practices and preferences.
4. Workshop part III – Discussion of the perceptions and relevance of traditional Iranian and contemporary architecture
5. Workshop part IV – Co-creation process for participant's desirable house design.

All transcripts are included in the Appendix for reference.

5.3 Participant H's narrative

5.3.1 Background and introduction

Age	Gender	Occupation	Native	No. of years known to the researcher	No. of sessions	Interview duration in mins	Additional information
40	Male	Electronics Engineer	Kerman	15	5	80 to 120	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moved to Bandar Abbas for employment reasons - The participant has been building a residential complex in Kerman with his brothers, hence his input could be particularly relevant and useful for this research

Table 13: General information about participant H.

Source: The author.

After the interview, the images of some recently built buildings that were contemporary yet sympathetic to some features, such as the importance of privacy and thus closer to Iranian architecture, were recorded tabular form. I arranged one more session with participant H to show him these examples and illicit his ideas about these newly built buildings as he was not “interested” in traditional architecture. Participant H stated that there is no such thing as traditional architecture any more, he thinks there have been immense transformations in Iranian architecture and much less Iranian tradition and identity can be seen in the contemporary context.

5.3.2 Workshop part I – Various houses inhabited

In this part, H was asked to talk about the houses he has lived in. He talked about three houses he has lived in in Kerman with his parents. He felt more at home there, rather than in the small apartment in which he is now living in Bandar Abbas.

a. First house – In Khayam Alley

The participant talked about his childhood house very briefly, as he only lived there until age 12 so he did not remember a lot about that house. They lived there in the 1970s and '80s. He mentioned the parish and the location of the house, alley and access. The spaces he

mentioned were the reception, garage, small living area, kitchen and bathroom. Also, he added that there were three bedrooms. He also mentioned a staircase to the roof which they used as a bolt-hole during the war. He believed that neighbours were more connected in those days, he remembered times when he spent time with their neighbours' children, who were the same age, and overall he had good memories about them and the interaction they had together.

Another important point according to him was some spaces in the alley where they used to play football and other games.

The participant mentioned the house being 'a nice home' but they left there because that the area was riddled with canals and suddenly a hole appeared in the courtyard of a neighbour's house and another time it happened at the junction of two alleys. It was likely to happen in their house too, so they left the house. He drew a plan of the house as he remembered it (Figure 111).

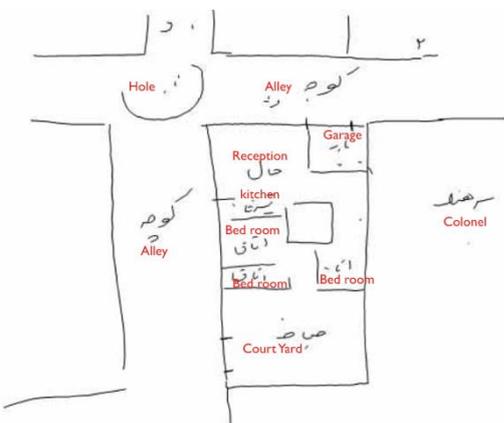


Figure 111: The first house that H drew.

Source: The author.

b. Second house – In Hezaro Yekshab parish

The second house, he explained, was his house during his teenage years. The house had two different units on two floors. The spaces were three bedrooms, kitchen, reception area, living area and washroom. The units were a duplex, built by his father. It was a well-planned house as it was designed by an architect who had graduated in the United States (it was common then to build a house designed/planned by non-architects, e.g. civil or structural engineers). The house had a basement, used as a garage and storeroom. The staircase to the upper level was located by the entrance and the next floor had a plan exactly like the first one. He used to live in the first-floor house with his parents while his older brothers were living upstairs before getting married. After his older brothers left, he and his twin brother moved to the upper floor, until an older brother got married and moved into that unit. Then the entrances to the two units were separated. He mentioned the staircase as a bad point, because it was too high and uncomfortable.

He mentioned that those spaces that were connected to the courtyard directly were used more than other spaces (because of access to fresh air, a better view and better daylight).

He also mentioned that they used to meet their friends on the upper floor, not in their parents' part of the house. The important occasions he remembered in that house were his brothers' and uncle's wedding

parties when they went to the house at midnight and sang and danced for several hours.

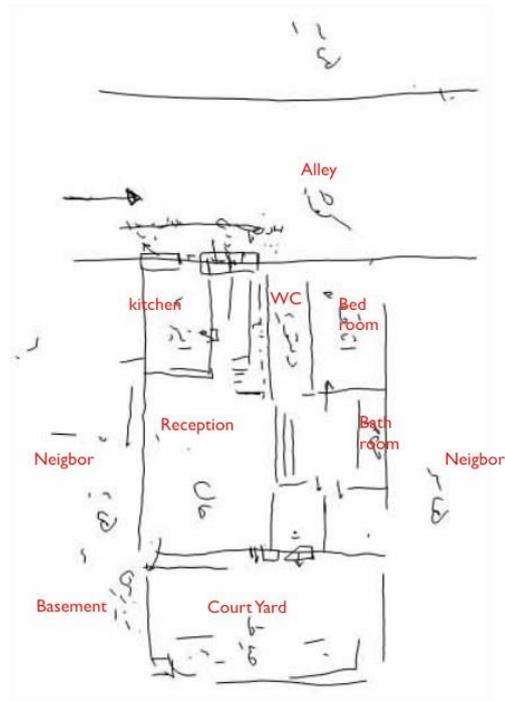
H remembered that when they moved to this house there was an abandoned site beside and in front of it. The site beside their house was built on later and it was a building in the middle of some land. The owner bought several plots which were combined into one large plot. He built a “fashionable” contemporary house, which he wanted to live in. It was a house that looked outward. A second owner surrounded the house with high walls, changing “a palace into a jail and ruining the house”.

They played basketball and football in the yard. He used to stay on the upper floor when his brother’s family were not in the city.

He also mentioned that all guests were served in the living and reception areas, except those who wanted to drink or smoke, they went to the room beside the yard.

The house had good sunlight before the neighbours built an apartment in front of their house, but the second floor was always good in terms of lighting.

Figure 112: The second house that H drew.
Source: The author.



The house had two storerooms: one in the basement and another one under the kitchen, whose door was located by the entrance. His father used to plant trees and flowers in front of the house. Also, he mentioned two flowerbeds in the yard, with a nice fig tree there; and they used to plant vegetables there, too.

There was a toilet outside, in the corner of the yard. It was common to have a toilet in the courtyard in the past but people rarely have this now.

Figure 111 shows his drawing with some translation added.

c. Third house – In Bahonar Parish

They moved to this house in 1993, when he started university. This house was built by his father. It was a one-storey building when they moved there. It was connected to the street on two sides. The spaces in the house which he mentioned were the kitchen, a corridor through the yard and two bedrooms next to that. Also, there was a special bedroom beside the alley which was on an upper level, away from the rest of the house. A garage was located under this bedroom. There was a staircase above the bathroom to the second floor. These stairs

were changed several times and they always had problems because of the height. It was a four-bedroom house. His favourite bedroom was the one that was separated by several steps from the other spaces.

They made several changes to the house. At first, there was a completely separate reception area in the house for guests, but after a while his dad made changes and connected the reception area to the living area. The reception and living areas had different levels in order to separate them.

The kitchen was a completely separate space. They opened up the wall beside the reception to the kitchen. Also, there was a greenhouse, which was replaced by a bathroom (Figure 113).

Then, his father built another unit on the second floor. The upper level was exactly like the first one, but instead of a bedroom, through the yard it had a balcony.

The house had two storage rooms: one was under the staircase by the entrance and the other was a basement storage room that had access from the yard. They used to keep bedding, dishes, copper dishes, books etc. in them.

The house had a yard, and a flowerbed too. The yard was separated into two different parts by one step.

He mentioned that they used to sleep in the open air until a murderer attacked people in several houses in the city.

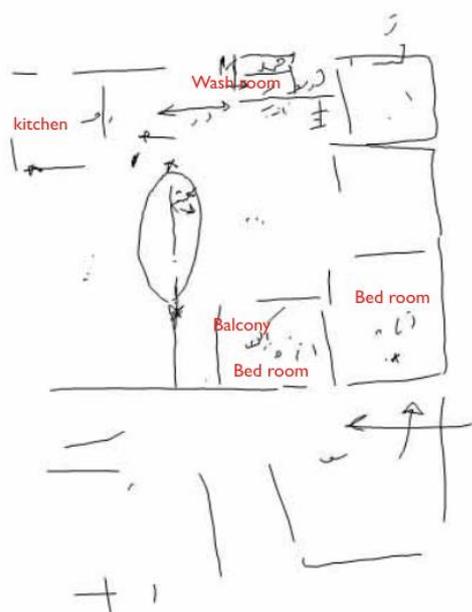
Guests who stayed over there used to sleep in the reception area, on the floor.

Figure 113: The third house that H drew.
Source: The author.

His father used a builder, with many years of experience, who undertook the construction of the house. There was also a young engineer to oversee the process, but most of the time his father listened to the builder's advice rather than that of the engineer.

There was no staircase from the yard to the second floor, and for a while the tenant on the second floor used to park his car in the yard, so he put a wooden ladder in the yard and once, when it was raining, he fell down the ladder.

The house was knocked down and replaced with an apartment, which is now co-housing, and the other owners are his siblings.



5.3.3 Workshop, part II – Everyday activities, practices and preferences

a. Sleeping and Resting

The participant said he sleeps in his bedroom at night and prefers a dark silent space. But he has his siesta in front of the TV in the living area because he prefers to be in a larger space. Also, he mentioned that he spends most of his time in the living area when he is alone.

Figure 114: Similar types of sleeping and siesta areas from a book called Iranian living room.¹⁷⁰



Figure 114: Different types of siesta and sleeping areas in Iran today.

Source: Farhad Babaei, Manyong Am, Marco Pavan Enrico Bossan, *Iranian Living Room* (Catena di Villorba, Italy, 2013).

b. Bathing

A calm space where no one will disturb you.

Having the shower in a space separate from the toilet (Figure 114).

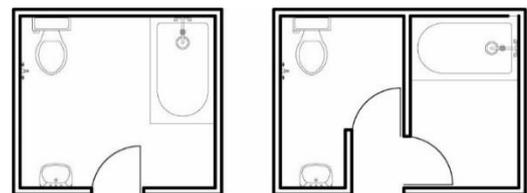


Figure 115: (a completely separated bathroom and toilet) A common bathroom arrangement today and the one H desires.

Source: The author.

Prefers using a Western toilet rather than a traditional Iranian one. (Figure 116)



Figure 116: Western and traditional toilets in Iran.

¹⁷⁰ Farhad Babaei, Manyong Am, Marco Pavan Enrico Bossan, *Iranian Living Room* (Catena di Villorba, Italy, 2013).

In terms of colour, he likes bright colours.

A special bathroom, for a bedroom, with a tub, the other one has a shower (Fig. 117). It is not common in Iran to have a tub in the bathroom and most houses have a shower without a tub. Recently, people are more interested in having a tub or whirlpool in their bath. Houses that were built in the 1960s and '70s had a tub in the bathroom. Later, people rarely had that, but it is becoming more common again. Because of religious ideas, people used to take a shower after washing their body and it became a habit. This was explained in more detail in the previous part about Iranian ways of living.



Figure 117 : Tub with shower.

He thinks a washroom does not need sunlight. He usually takes a bath late at night, rather than in the morning.

c. Cooking

He explained that he does not like cooking and he used to bring frozen food from Kerman, but recently he had started to cook. He cooks for a couple of days each time he cooks. He has a small fridge and keeps food for only a short time. He explained that when they have guests they go out for a meal or the guests cook for them and him in his kitchen.

d. Dinning

Although he used to have meals in the kitchen, with his family, he prefers to have them in the living area now. He sits on the floor to eat when he is alone, but he prefers to be at a table with guests as it is cleaner and more comfortable. He also mentioned that, usually, in young, they will have meals at the table, and in the houses of old families on the floor.

Figure 118 shows common examples of how the dinner table is set for guests in Iran these days, to some extent it is similar to a buffet when different types of salads and foods are provided and guests help themselves.



Figure 118: Common ways of serving food today.

Source: Farhad Babaei, Manyoung Am, Marco Pavan Enrico Bossan, *Iranian Living Room* (Catena di Villorba, Italy, 2013).

He prefers to have a dining area which can be changed, rather than a fixed one. He likes to watch TV while eating his meal.

e. Entering and leaving the house

The participant puts daily shoes beside the entrance door and the rest in the wardrobe, clothes and bags go in the wardrobe in the bedroom.

The participant prefers to have a door which can be opened with a code or fob rather than a key, also a garage door which is operated by remote control. It is better to have a space for clothes, at least for guests who come to visit. Coats should go in the entrance hall and other clothes in the bedroom. It would be good to have a cupboard beside the front door for putting in things like shoe polish etc.

He described an entrance which he liked: *“I have seen a very chic entrance. It had a very fashionable façade. The façade is very important for me. It had several steps at the front. Then there was a fashionable lobby upstairs. There were flowers beside the steps. A very nice wooden door. The stairs were white.”*

f. Washing and Drying

Washing machine and drying washing. The participant prefers to use sunlight for drying clothes. He suggested that the washing machine can go in the bathroom or the kitchen. He explained that he ironed some of his clothes at home, but as there is no space for an ironing board it must be set up and taken down each time it is needed. He prefers to wash dishes in the dishwasher when there is a lot and mentioned that it would be good to have a special place for ironing and a washing machine.

g. Storage

The participant stated that each room should have cupboards so that everybody has their own space for their things, e.g. bedding in cupboards in the bedroom and the living room; clothes in a wardrobe in the bedroom; daily-use dishes in the kitchen, above the sink; non-daily-use dishes in other cupboards in the kitchen.

It is common to have a cupboard above the sink and to put dishes there to dry, as it is like a basket (Fig. 119).

Figure 119: Cupboard above the sink
Source: The author.



He said that it would be good to have a storeroom outside the house for bicycles and other things, such as a vacuum cleaner, although in his present house he puts them all in the living area.

h. Display

Cupboards should be a mixture of transparent ones and covered ones. Attractive things should be on display, such as things which he buys on trips. In the past, he used to put images of actors on the walls, now it is other images and statues, and some things for decoration.

i. Privacy

The participant was asked if he would let people who come to his house go into all the spaces?

He said it does not matter for him in his house as it is small, but generally, if it was a permanent house and a bigger one, he would definitely have a private room with a TV. He mentioned that when he lived in his parents' house he was not obsessed about people who came to his room, but he did have a cupboard that was locked for his personal and private things.

j. Other activities

There was a list of some activities which he likes to do: Entertainment: watching TV, listening to music; Social: Having coffee, talking, playing cards; Spiritual: Praying, singing hymns; Spontaneous: Going out to dinner, visiting friends; Work-related: Making notes, typing, fixing something. And an important thing for him was TV, which he stated that he prefers to watch lying down on the floor, and watching TV during meals. And listening to music while working. He prefers to have a semi-open space to spend his free time in, alone or with friends during the good season.



Figure 120: TV and its important part in life today.

Source: Farhad Babaei, Manyong Am, Marco Pavan Enrico Bossan, Iranian Living Room (Catena di Villorba, Italy, 2013).

Figure 119 shows that TV is now a very important part of each house. This picture is not a generic one, it aims to highlight that, these days, TV is an important part of people's lives, irrespective of their age, culture or social status.

5.3.4 Workshop, part III – Perceptions of traditional Iranian vs contemporary architecture

5.3.4.1 Traditional Iranian architectural elements

b. Windows

When he saw the traditional windows he said their shape was nice and also the different colours were beautiful (Figure 120). Two types of windows were shown to him and he said he preferred curved forms, rather than rectangular ones.

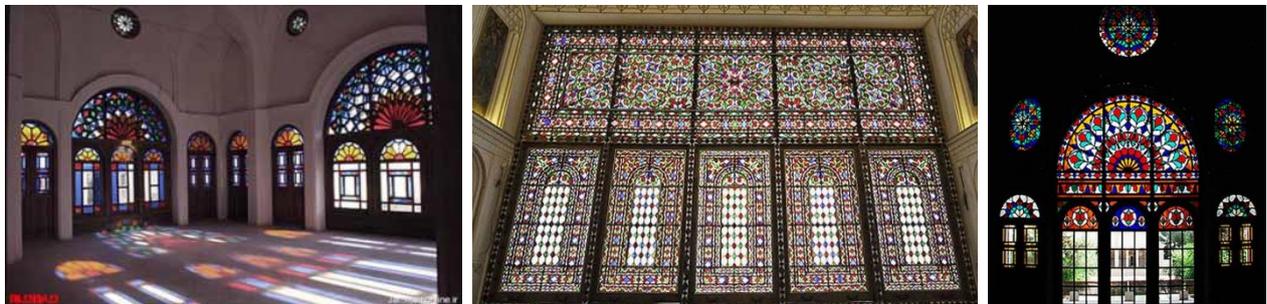


Figure 121: Traditional sash windows and colourful light in houses.

Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi, *Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان* Shahid Beheshti University, 2004

Source: Kambiz Hajjghasemi, *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه* Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.

c. Ceiling

It was common to get sunlight from the ceiling in traditional houses, but he thinks it is not possible today because almost all residential buildings are apartments and it is impossible to get sunlight from the ceiling in them.

d. Central courtyard

H did not like the courtyard space as he preferred more outward-looking ones. But in terms of physical setting, he liked this image as there is always a small pool with trees and flowerbeds in central courtyards, and he considered it a lovely space to have in a desert (Figure 121, Figure 122).



Figure 122: Courtyards from different perspectives.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi, *Houses of Kashan – Ganjnameh/ Khanehaye Kashan/ خانه های کاشان* Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.



Figure 123: Courtyards from different perspectives.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi, *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه* Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.

e. Decoration

H found the images attractive, but he thought these kind of buildings do not fit today's lifestyle; for instance, these days, families do not usually have more than two children, and even if that were possible, living in such big houses would not be very appealing. Also, new decorative materials, such as wallpaper, would, he felt, be more convenient. Yet the traditional buildings seemed more attractive (Figure 124).

After looking at the images and considering the visual aspect and beauty/ details of the designs, H agreed that it might be good to have a mixture of traditional and modern architecture.

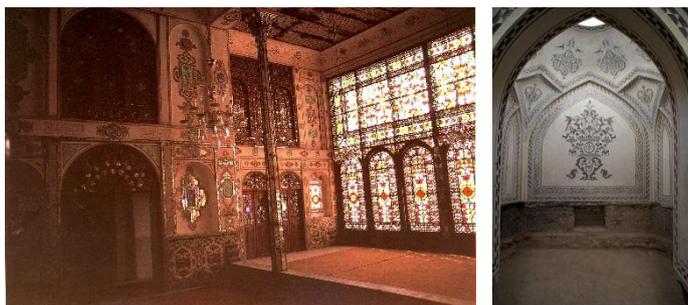


Figure 124: Some of the pictures H selected relating to traditional Interior decoration.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi, *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan/ خانه های اصفهان* Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.

Also, he believed that these features are not essential or relevant to architecture and housing design; rather, they are interior design aspects that could be deployed in contemporary Iranian houses with some modifications and small changes.

f. Different levels for different spaces

It was explained to him that despite all spaces in a house now having the same height, it was common in the past to have different heights for different spaces, due to their size and function. He agreed it is a good aspect.

g. Small pool

He was interested in having a small pool inside the house, as there was in the past in upper-middle-class houses.

Figure 125: Small pool room.

Source: Kambiz Hajjhasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه* Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.



In some traditional houses, there was a room with a small pool in the centre, and this place was called a small pool room (Figure 125).

The main changes to domestic architecture in the 20th century were explained to him and he said he liked these points: Outward-looking buildings, windows knocked through walls to the outside (Figure 126), decorating the outside facade and balconies added overlooking the street (Figure 127). All these changes were made to public and private buildings.



Figure 126: Outward-looking building from the Pahlavi era.

Source: <http://tehrannama.blogfa.com/?p=2>



Figure 127: Balconies facing the street in the Pahlavi era.

Source: Mohammad Yusef Kiani. *Architecture of First Period of Pahlavi / Memari Dorehe Pahlavi Avall* معماری دوره پهلوی اول Tehran: Iranian Institute for studies of Contemporary History, 2004.

5.3.4.2 Contemporary buildings with traditional themes

Due to social and cultural changes as well as the high price of land, one cannot easily have something like a traditional house any more, hence some newly built houses were shown to him.

a. *Shoshtar*¹⁷¹

He thought it was nice but we do not have these kinds of buildings any more. Also, it does not work for tall buildings (Figure 128).

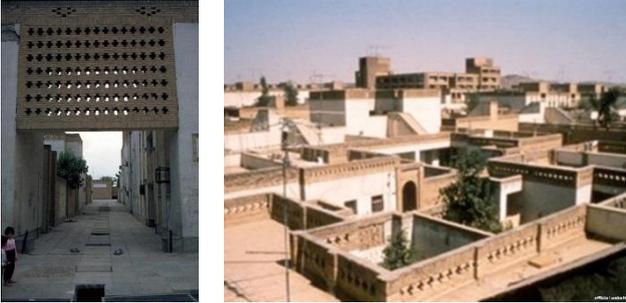


Figure 128: *Shoshtar Residential complex designed by Iranian architect Kamran Diba.*
Source: Me; Mar. Iranian Biomimicry on Architecture and Urban Design. معمار, Vol. 38 (Thought of Art and Architecture, 2006).

b. *Javaherian's house*¹⁷²

He found this part of the house interesting but he also said that, although it is nice, it is not functional and so it is useless and a waste of space. Also, he mentioned that it does not appear to be traditional, either. He thought this was completely modern, except for the arches (Figure 129).



Figure 129 : A house designed by Iranian architect Faryar Javaherian
Source: Still from Persian carpet movie.

Residential complex in Niavaran by Mohammad Reza Nikbakht, 2012



As he was interested in outward-looking buildings and believed today we cannot implement the idea of a central courtyard, this residential complex was shown to him as a new way of having a green central courtyard, and he liked that because of having trees and water inside the building in a new way (Figure 130).

Figure 130: Residential complex in Niavaran
Source: Architecture and culture. Vol. 48, 2012.

¹⁷¹ A residential complex designed by Kamran Diba in the 1970s.

¹⁷² This house was designed and built by the architect Faryar Javaherian.

Central courtyard:

He believed that because of the current style of architecture, people's lifestyles and property prices, it is not necessary or even feasible in most cases to have a central courtyard like in the past, but a combination could be okay. In his opinion, in traditional central courtyards, all the spaces were connected to each other through the courtyard, and it was necessary to go into the open air to reach another space, which he found annoying. But actually, the spaces were all related to the courtyard and they were connected to their side spaces as well. So it was not necessary to go outside to reach other spaces, as they were interconnected.

He believes that, in the past, people used all the spaces but they had large areas and also lots of gardens.

House

Another house which he saw and liked is shown in Figure 131. These images are of a new house in Tehran, and he found them very nice. The yard is good as well. This is a new building with several Iranian elements and he was interested in the open space on the roof.



Figure 131: A newly built open space in a house.

Source: 'House No. 7 / Ayeneh Office | Iranian Architect', 7, accessed 6 April 2017, <http://iranian-architect.ir/project-0040>.

5.3.5 Workshop, part IV: Co-creation process

"I want a detached house, with a play court. I'd like to play tennis or badminton or even football with my friends. There should be a garden in front of my house with a swimming pool, also greenery inside and outside. It would be difficult to maintain it if it is too big, so I'd rather have a convenient size house. It should have a very nice design. If I have to live in an apartment I'd prefer upper levels, so I have a good view. I like the building to have a really nice façade, it is very important for me. I'd love to live in a bright house, I'd like to have as much sunlight as possible" – H

Approximately 80 minutes of discussion took place, based on the various images of houses presented to the participant. There was a creative engagement process of talking, drawing and collaging in order to co-create a design that reflected his interests/ the features that he thinks are desirable. He was not interested in making a model.

He started drawing and talking about different parts of the house. in the following section, the participant's thoughts are conceptualised and illustrated.

a. Spatial Organisation

The participant started by drawing the site and the relation between the building and the courtyard. Then, he drew the entrance from the street. He explained what he wants to have in the open air. Also, he talked about a semi-open space between the building and the courtyard. Then he talked about the entrance to the building from the courtyard. After that, he tried to envisage a traditional semi-private living area. The participant explained further about what he wants in the reception and living areas. He mentioned that the bedrooms need to be upstairs. And the kitchen should be near the living area. And he said he wants a TV room, too. He divided the spaces in the house into: public, semi-public and private areas, and the spaces included in these three areas were:

Public area: living area, entrance

Semi-public: kitchen, traditional living area

Private area: bedrooms

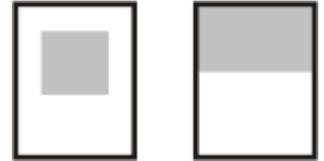
He thinks each person should have a private space of their own. Close friends can come into the kitchen and the private living area. The kitchen should be connected to both the private and public parts of the house. It would be good to be able to come from the private part into the kitchen without being seen by people who are in the living area.

The entrance lobby should have two different access locations: one to the private part and the other to the public part.

b. Relation to physical context

The participant desired a detached house. However, while he was drawing his ideal house, he drew a typical site and a kind of terraced house (Figure 132). Obviously, this involves entering from the street into the courtyard and then into the building.

Figure 132: Diagram of a detached house and a terraced house.
Source: The author.



Another point which he mentioned was that he wants to live near his brothers' houses, but in his own house. I believe this is the new version of extended family.

c. Entrance outside the house:

An entrance designed by the author was shown to him and he said it was good but the stone bench was not needed, and it is better to have a sitting space inside the building with a sofa.

The participant's list of priorities regarding the entrance were: landscape elements (greenery and trees; flowers; water features under the stairs); entrance in the middle; recessed entrance.

d. Entrance inside the house:

The participant suggested cupboards for different things, such as clothes and shoes. According to him, it should be arranged in such a way that people who are going to the private parts and those who are going to the public parts do not see each other.

e. Outside, in the courtyard:

Before reaching the building, there is a roofed space which acts as a porch and a space for sitting. The porch is located beside the pool (Figure 133).

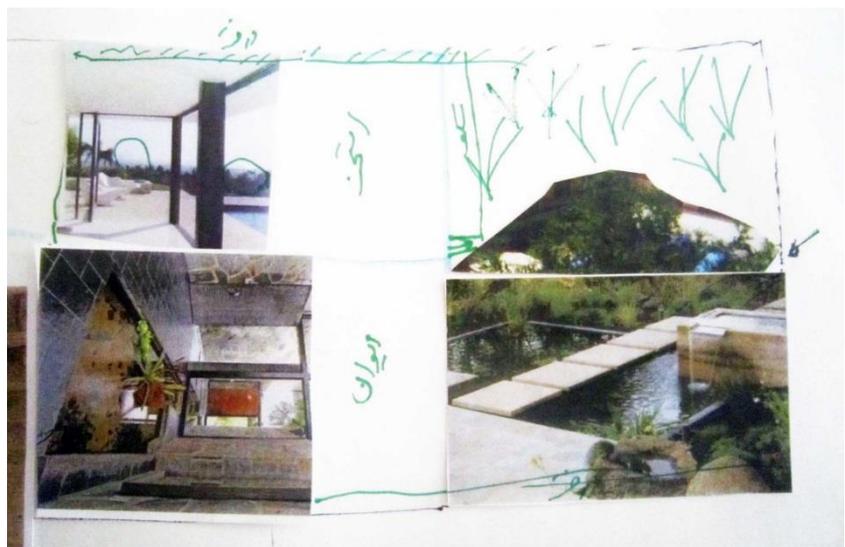
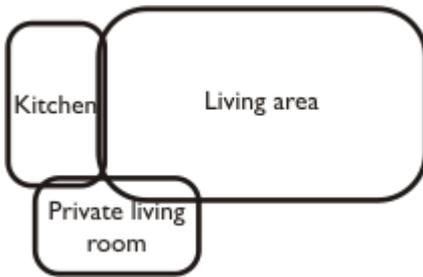


Figure 133 : The collage the participant H made.
Source: The author.

f. Living and reception areas



The participant wanted a joint reception and living room as he prefers one large living area rather two small ones. When he is at home, he spends most of his time in the living area. Watching TV, seeing visitors and so on is all done in the living room, and he spends less time in the bedroom.

The living area must be connected to the kitchen directly (Figure 134).

Figure 134: Diagram of the relationship between the living area, reception area and kitchen, according to Participant H.

Source: The author.

He explained that he wants to have a specific reception area to spend time with his close friends, he called this a private living area (private reception area). He said adding another formal reception area for all other guests would be good. The private one should have a TV and a traditional backrest to sit on the floor. But the formal one should have modern furniture.

Participant H generally likes to have guests in his house all the time. He spends most of his time at home in the living area, so he prefers to have a large living area which contains the reception area as well. Also, having the kitchen connected to these two parts is preferable.

When he was asked what for him is an example of a desirable private reception, he referred to the private living room in his uncle's house, which he would like to have in his house. He explained that space as a room on an upper level separate from other spaces and from where it was possible to see the whole house. There were flowers around the stairs. And it was a specific space to meet friends and have fun.

He wants to have a space similar to the one his uncle has. And the important features according to him for this space are:

Planning a traditional living room

The following are the participant's priorities when designing a private living area:

It should be on an upper level.

Persepolis, literally meaning "city of Persians", was the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire, such symbols can be included there. It could be closed on one side but the other sides could be open and visible. It could have a wall to close off the sides, or perhaps screened by glass. It would be great if the outside could be seen as well. But it should be possible to screen it off with blinds.

The stairs in the middle are surrounded with flowers and water (Figure 135).

Have hidden storage there, for wine and other things which he wants for himself in private, or have a cupboard.
It was discussed that this traditional space is now very modern but he mentioned he would make it feel traditional with backrests and sitting on the floor.



Figure 135: The collage the participant H made
Source: The author.

g. Kitchen

The kitchen, participant H thought, should be directly connected to the living area.

He mentioned it would be better if the kitchen was not in direct sight because it might be cluttered.

The kitchen should be connected to both the private and public parts of the house. He was interested in these images (Figure 136), but the matter of privacy was discussed and he decided to ensure that anyone who wanted to go to the private living area would not be seen by the people in the reception area, and when there were guests and someone who did not want to be seen they could go to the private part without being seen.



Figure 136: Different images of kitchens that H liked.

He would like to have the kitchen in the centre, in such a way that every other space can access it easily (Figure 137).

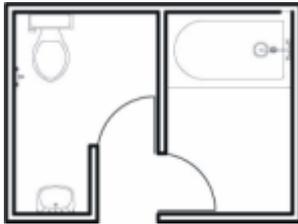


The beauty of the kitchen is important for him.

He wanted to have a connection from the kitchen to the TV area, also to have it close to the stairs which lead to the upstairs rooms.

Figure 137: The relationship between kitchen and other spaces according to participant H.
Source: The author.

Although it must also be an independent space in itself, it could be closed or open. He prefers an open one. (Although he mentioned it would be better if the kitchen was not be in view for everybody.)



h. Toilet and bathroom

Have the toilet and bath in two different spaces and a bathroom only for the master bedroom (Figure 138).

Figure 138: The relationship between bathroom and toilet that H wanted.
Source: The author.

i. Bedrooms

Each bedroom should have a cupboard so that everybody has their own space for their things.

The rooms must be upstairs (Figure 139).

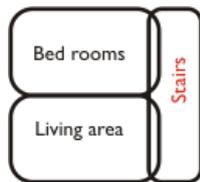


Figure 139: Diagram showing the relationship between bedrooms and living area according to H.
Source: The author.

It is good to have a storeroom outside the house (**Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.**).



Figure 140: Diagram showing the relationship between storeroom and other spaces according to H.
Source: The author.

j. Open and semi-open spaces

He mentioned he wants to have a pergola in the courtyard and to spend time in the open air during the good season. It can be replaced by a large balcony in an apartment.

The living area should be connected to the open air.

Have a swimming pool in the open air, beside the porch and alcove, and chairs in the porch for sitting.

Have trees in the courtyard as a small garden.

He likes to cover part of the inside of the house with stone, for instance part of a wall (Figure 141). Include brick and thatch, which reminded him of a memory from the past. Stone does not remind him of Iranian houses but brick does. In other words, bricks represent the authentic material/ nature, of traditional Iranian houses (Figure 142).

Figure 141: Participant H liked this material inside the house.



Figure 142: The house desired by H. This picture was taken by the participant.

Source: Participant H.

k. Participant H's general comments and observations

Participant H stated that: “Maybe there needs to be a new construction system and a new way of design”. He stated that it would be good to have a mix of traditional Iranian and modern house design. He felt such a design would be compatible with modern lifestyles, connecting people with the past and modern ways of living. He noted that there should be a sense of authenticity rather than a completely Westernised style.

Participant H believes construction is international and one cannot divide it according to location. And we do not have an ‘Iranian house’ due to Westernised ways of urban living in Iran today.

5.4 Participant S Narrative

5.4.1 Background and Introduction

Age	Gender	Occupation	Native	No. of years known to the researcher	No. of sessions	Interview duration in mins	Additional information
39	Female	Teacher	Kerman	15	4	100 to 110	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She is married and has 2 children, an 11-year-old daughter and a 16-year-old son - The participant's house was studied in detail in the first year of this research as a pilot case study.

Table 14: General information about participant S
Source: The author.

5.4.2 Workshop part I – Various houses inhabited

The participant talked about her parents' house in Rabor in detail, and she explained that she lived in three houses after marriage only for short times, so she did not talk about them. She talked briefly about the house she has been living in since 2000.

a. First House – in Rabor

It was a detached house located in the middle of a large garden. She described the outside of the house in great detail as she had more good memories of the outside of the building. She talked a lot about different trees and flowers and how they were memorable. She also mentioned that there was another house in that garden that was simpler but they did not live there. She stated that her uncle lived there for a while, and after that it had been vacant.

She talked about a corridor from the entrance that was surrounded by different trees on both sides. She explained that this pathway was special in the town, as the trees on both sides reached together and made that corridor shady. This was one of her favourite parts of that house and she said she would like to have that corridor and garden now. There was a terrace at the end of the corridor, in front of the building. The terrace was elevated and three steps higher than the garden, and the building was two steps higher than the terrace and led to the main living area. The main living area had three large windows, which made it possible to see the whole garden from the living room. At the back, there were several rooms with windows onto the open space at the back (Figure 143).

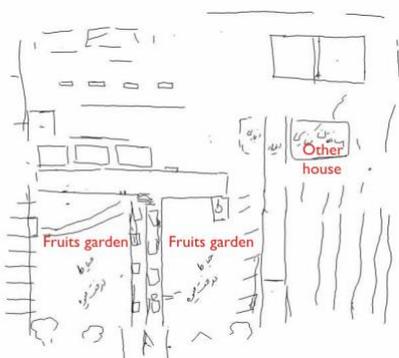


Figure 143: Garden of the house drawn by participant S.
Source: The author.

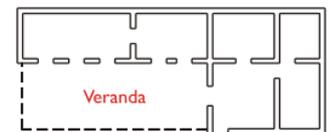
When she was asked to talk about the inside of the building, she started with the living area, as they spent most of their time there and had lots of memories there. There was one large living area with a wide door, and beside that a smaller one. Both living areas connected to the open air. She explained the small living room was beside the kitchen and storeroom; her mum was always there and they use to eat meals there. At the back of the living area there were two spaces: one called the two-door room was the reception area and the other one was the dining room. These two rooms were connected by a door. She mentioned there were some changes around 1980 to the house as the children grew up. A reception area was built beside the main living area. She explained the reception area was a large room with two large windows at the back and a separate door from outside. A door connected the reception area to the living area (Figure 144) before the changes, the washroom was in the garden, and after that it was built at the back of the building, which did not have access from inside.



Figure 144: Inside the house drawn by participant S.
Source: The author.

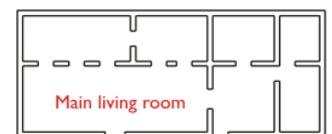
She also mentioned that although their house was far from the river, they could hear the river's sound in spring, which she liked. She talked about different trees and what they used to do around them. For example, she said they used to have lunch below the plum tree in the summer, and in the afternoon they used to sleep under the eglantine after lunch.

Figure 145: Plan of the house before the first changes.
Source: The author.



She explained that there were some changes, some of which she could not remember, but one of them was that the living area used to be a roofed space like a veranda, but it was changed to a closed space and became a living area (Figure 145, Figure 146).

Figure 146: Plan of the house after the first changes, drawn by the author.
Source: The author.



When asked where they used to sleep she answered that her parents usually slept in the small living area, but she and her sisters did not have allocated bedrooms, they usually slept in the two rooms beside the main living area, the dining room and the two-door room. They used to keep their cupboards in the two-door room, which was bigger. Sometimes they slept in front of the TV in the living area.

She said that, as the entrance of the garden was far from the building and there was no intercom, there was a rope there for others to open the door from outside the garden. It was common in the past that people did not use to lock their doors during the day, but today it is not common any more. Safety issues are perceived to be more serious today than in the past.

She remembered they used to go up onto the roof very often, but she never goes there now. There was no staircase and they had to go up there on a ladder. There was a walnut tree which reached to the roof. It was possible to sit under its shade in summer.

She talked about the relations between people and said they had more free time and spent evenings together. Also, children and adults used to play family games together, whereas now children are in another room during gatherings. They used to spend time with the rest of the family, such as aunts and uncles, not only at meal times but also for snacks. They used to have evening snacks in the yard, in a large group.

She explained that, as her father was well-known in that area, they used to have religious rituals in Muharram¹⁷³ for two days.

When she was asked what she would like to take from that house now, she said, *“Actually, everything. I’d like to have that house exactly the same as the past. I do not like it any more. Everything has been changed. The walls have been demolished. The building is still there but there is not that atmosphere any more. Because of the city planning, lots of trees have been cut down. We siblings do not go there anymore because a new street runs all around the building.”*

b. Second House – in Kerman

The participant was talked about the other houses she lived in after marriage. She explained that she spent short periods of time in three different houses and did not want to talk about them as she did not have good memories of them or it was very short-term. However, she said they have been living in their house now since 2000 and it had lots of good memories, such as her children’s birthday parties every year, her sister’s engagement party, which was in her house, and their 10th wedding anniversary party.

The participant was further asked to explain about the house and what she liked most and least about it. She said it is good because it has a large area. At first, as they were just three and the house was large, it

¹⁷³ Muharram: First month of the Islamic calendar.

was hard to keep it clean. She thought then that two of the rooms were useless. It was good for a time, but after a while it became boring. They made some changes though, and now they think that everything is good. With these changes they tried to make some functional improvement and make useless spaces more useful, for instance they changed one of the rooms into a study.

She added that it would be great if they had a courtyard or a house surrounded by a garden. This house's courtyard is very small. Perhaps if it was one of those houses where you enter the house from the yard, it would be better. Overall it is good and they do not have problems there. She explained that when they felt bored they just made some changes; they have made major changes to the house three times.

At first, the floor was covered with green rugs and the curtains were green. Then, the walls were painted and the floor was changed. The second time, the kitchen was painted again and the windows became black. The last one was more fundamental, and they made some functional changes too.

I asked her opinion about staying for a long time in one house. She answered that although she likes change and to move, now, when she thinks about leaving, she thinks she will miss it too much. She then added that as they are not moving the changes will help them like this place more. It would be boring if they had to live there without changing some minor aspects of the design and the decoration for a long time.

5.4.3 Workshop part II – Everyday activities, practices and preferences

There was a difference between talking with this participant and the others about daily ways of living. When we had this conversation they had just had their house renovated and had tried to make changes according to their needs, so she talked about their ways of living by explaining their problems and solutions for them in their house. For instance, she talked about storage space and how and why they added more storage areas.

a. Sleeping and Resting

The participant said she usually sleeps in a bed and takes a nap in the living area on the sofa. As for sleeping in the open air, she said she likes it and she did this in the past easily, but now she does not feel safe as she thinks everybody is watching her. She agreed she would sleep in the open air if there could be a safe and secure space, for example on top of the roof. She said she really likes sitting in the open air, too.

b. Bathroom and toilet

There are three washrooms in their house and she said they usually do not use the one that is located by the entrance as that is for guests only. She mentioned that as they added a bathroom to their bedroom, they keep their own stuff like toothbrushes and so on in their own bathroom, and the children keep theirs in the other washroom.

c. Storage

When she was asked for her ideas about storerooms, cupboards and wardrobes, she said they are very important. Without them, stuff would be on display, which makes the house messy. Today, storerooms have been removed from the planning stage and this creates difficulties. Extra sleeping things are always a problem. Each family needs them sometimes. She explained that she keeps things in the kitchen for two months, not like in the past when people kept things like cans, tissues, washing stuff etc. for an entire year.

She also mentioned that they added more cupboards in the kitchen so they have more space for storage now. Also, they have a walk-in wardrobe in the bedroom where sleeping stuff is kept on the lower level, and there is a space on the upper level for clothes. Suitcases will be kept in the cupboards newly added to the bedroom, and these are very spacious. The suitcases will go on the upper level. These changes have been made to suit their needs.

She explained that there was an extra bedroom in the corner of the living area that was designed as a guests' room, but it has never had been used as guests' room because there were some annoying noises. After a while, the room changed into an unorganized storeroom. During renovation, this room was changed into a study with a proper bookcase. Also, they may put a pool table in this room in the future.

She mentioned that she has always had problems with shoes and bags – where and how to keep them organized. There was a bookcase beside the study and they moved some books inside that room, covered the bookcase with doors and changed it into a storage place for extra shoes and bags that were not for daily usage. She said she would rather have this shoe storage near the entrance, but as long as it is not next to the bedrooms it is good enough.

Also, she added that, as they needed a storeroom outside the house for some stuff like tools, an old fridge etc., they changed the garage into an organized storeroom. During renovation, spaces for keeping clothes were added in each room, such as drawers and wardrobes for

long dresses. Another aspect which she mentioned was a large pot which she used to keep under her son's bed, and now that they have changed the kitchen's cupboards to bigger ones it can be put there. Also, she moved the dishes for guests to a cupboard in the dining area.

d. Cleaning and washing

The participant said that the living area is cleaned every 2–3 days, but a maid comes to clean the whole house every week. While the participant was talking about cleaning she mentioned that she believes the best way to clean is to wash directly with water. She washes the kitchen with a hose every week. There is no water outlet on the staircase but she washes it with a hose every couple of months, although it is hard to remove the water after that. Nothing else can do the same job.

When it was explained to her that in many Western countries there is usually no water outlet in washrooms, she was surprised and said she could not bear that at all. Washrooms need to be completely cleaned very often (including the floors and walls, which are almost always tiled).

She mentioned that they have a dish-washing sink in a separate room at the back of the kitchen. The washing machine and dishwasher are located in the kitchen and she is happy with both of them. She did not have a problem with moving the sink to another part of the kitchen but she said having the sink in a hidden place could be good as the mess when washing up could be hidden, and splashes from the sink too. She said each member of the family had their own laundry basket in their room to put their dirty clothes in.

e. Eating

Before renovation they had a dining table in the kitchen, but the children preferred to watch TV while eating, so they moved their plates in front of the TV. Now they have moved the TV and made a kind of table in the kitchen in front of the TV. She added that with TV they can all be together. In the past, the children ate in front of the TV and she ate alone. Now they all eat together.

When the participant was asked about sitting on the floor to eat meals, she said this happens sometimes but she prefers to use a table as it is easier and cleaner.

f. Cooking

They have a separate small room at the back of the kitchen, but it is not used for cooking. I told her that some people believe that cooking should be done in a small separate part of the kitchen, because of the smell and so on. I asked her to explain why her stove is in the main part of the kitchen. She said she thinks it is not good for the stove as it is very small, so you may feel depressed. It would be good to watch TV while cooking. Washing the dishes takes less time than cooking. Also, she said she is ok with having some between the sink and the stove.

g. Entertainment

The participant said that they enjoy some leisure and entertaining activities, include drinking tea or coffee after a nap, watching TV in the evening after the children have done their homework. She mentioned that they play cards when their friends are there with their families, but depending on how many people there are, they might be sitting in one space or two spaces with the men and women sitting separately. Also, she said she used to do some reading and writing at the dining table, which will be done in the study now.

h. Display

The participant mentioned she likes to keep some drinking stuff on display, but as some of their guests do not like to drink they have to keep them in a cupboard and not on display.

Also, she put her own family's pictures in the living area. At first, she used to remove pictures when some special people came to their house, but she does not do that anymore.¹⁷⁴ She usually puts the pictures that are more attractive in the living area. There are also some pictures that she likes but they are not of good quality, so she keeps them in the bedroom.

i. Privacy

She said people want to hide inside their house. She also mentioned that in her parents' house the curtains were almost transparent and the whole inside of the house could be seen. This could to some extent be attributed to historical events and political changes. Some aspects of social life that were publicly allowed are nowadays against the law, e.g. drinking alcohol. They used to sleep in the living area but there was nothing to hide at that time. Their house door was always open.

¹⁷⁴ As women should wear a scarf and have pictures with scarves, some people will not put their pictures without scarves on public view.

The windows were large. Now the windows are smaller and curtains have different layers in order to avoid being seen. Now, most of the time when they are at home, the curtains are closed.

When asked if she would like to see outside if there was a nice view, she answered that if their house was on the 20th floor and she was sure no one could see inside their house, then she would love to have glass all round her house. She said it would be great but impossible.

j. Entrance

As the participant said they do not use the toilet by the entrance normally, she was asked to give her opinion about having a toilet near the entrance. She answered that she believes the only problem with this house is the toilet being by the entrance, but as it was necessary to have a washroom in the public part of the house they had to keep it.

The participant said that the things needed at the entrance were: a mirror, shoe storage and clothes hangers. Guests normally take their shoes off outside the door, but she does not mind if a guest comes into her house with their shoes on.

Furthermore, the participant was asked to provide her comments on semi-open spaces in the past and if they would work today. She answered that she would probably use them.

*Figure 147: A central courtyard.
Source: Still from Mother movie.*



She was interested in a picture (Figure 147) and explained that she liked the small pool in the middle and the geraniums. This picture was shown because it represents a typical social gathering/ event, which used to be common in traditional houses with courtyards.

She said it is good to have the kitchen next to an open space or to make it flexible so it can be open or closed.

She did not like the relations between rooms like in the past, where they were located side by side and connected with doors to each other. She did not like that for any space.

The participant mentioned that, perhaps, as the windows were small, people want in general to be in large spaces. She did not want to separate the reception and living areas with anything. The participant also added that having a roofed space in the courtyard was good because it kept shoes from getting hot or wet and they did not need to bring shoes inside.

5.4.4 Workshop part III – Perceptions on traditional vs contemporary architecture

a. Courtyard

The participant mentioned she would rather have a building above the courtyard so that it would be possible to see the courtyard from the house. It would not matter if it was from all sides or just one side.

b. Balcony

The participant liked the balconies that were added during the Pahlavi era. Although she liked such balconies, because of her personal preferences or socially imposed boundaries she would prefer privacy.

The participant was asked, if she had the chance to choose between two kinds of balconies – one towards the street and a private one which could not be seen by others – which she would prefer. She answered that she would prefer the private one, but she likes those kinds of balconies beside the street too. It is good if you can see outside, but being seen/feeling exposed is not good. Her conclusion was that now, with this situation in our society, e.g. restricted social rules and obligatory dress codes for women, this kind of outward-looking balcony is not a solution and could not be used as intended.

She explained the current situation, whereby it is not common in Iran for a woman to sit on a balcony without wearing a hijab; everybody will look at her. She said that if she goes to the yard for a couple of minutes, she can see the neighbours are watching her. It is harder if the balcony faces the street and she agreed that this kind of balcony is not going to be used. They are just used for drying washing in many cases, and sometimes people cover those balconies with different materials and change them into storerooms. The conclusion drawn from this discussion was that, in our culture, the balcony should be in a more private place that cannot be seen by everyone. Then it would be more useful.

c. Facade

Later in the session, the importance of façades in the past was discussed. She was indirectly suggesting that façades these days receive a lot of attention. She further clarified by explaining that she was implying or agreed that most of the influence now is on the façade, rather than the quality of the inside of the house. She said the outside façade is just for show, not for residents.

Also, she mentioned that now finance is the most important aspect – how to make money. When it is possible to build an apartment block

with several units on a site, why should someone build a house with a garden? The apartments can be sold to make money. People think more like this now, which shows that generating profit determines the direction of decisions in this context.

She said it would be nice to have fire and water as elements in the house, but they would need maintenance and they are hard to take care of, so she is not interested in having these things inside the house.

A discussion about traditional houses that had different heights for different spaces was explored. She said although almost all spaces have the same height, it would be good if they had different heights, similar to what was often the case in traditional Iranian houses, e.g. high ceilings in the guest and dining rooms. She also added that she prefers a building on two equal floors, rather than a duplex.

She said niches in walls have been replaced by cupboards. Also, she mentioned that, for a while, there were no wardrobes built into walls and people used to buy separate cupboards to keep their stuff in, but now it is common to have them again.

The decoration inside the house – walls and ceilings – in the past and now was discussed, and she said people now are not as patient to spend time and money on these. However, she added that recently people are more interested in decorating walls and ceilings and changing blank surfaces.

She said she loves traditional windows, but they can be in another form with coloured-glass panels, which is nice. She agreed that traditional windows – "orsi" – (Figure 148) could be better than curtains, as this controls visualization too. She prefers having a nicely designed window rather than adding nice curtains.

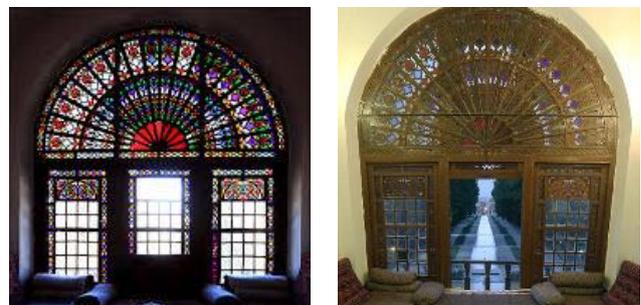


Figure 148: Traditional window from a garden around Kerman which S mentioned she liked.
Source: Ahmad Poorahmad. *Geography of Kerman*. Academic centre for education, 1992.

5.4.5 Workshop part IV: Co-creation process

“It would be great if we had a courtyard or a house which was surrounded with a garden. I’d rather have this modern style, a detached house. The living and reception areas should be related to open space. Relating bedrooms to

open space is not necessary, as they are just used for sleeping, so the darker the better” (S).

In this part, before starting drawing the participant was asked about the main aspects for a new Iranian house. She said she thinks the most important aspect of the house is to be resistant to earthquake.¹⁷⁵

Several pictures were shown to her in order to choose her desired images for design and she said some of these pictures evoked memories of the past, but they are not common now and are kind of old-fashioned, and in some cases not very appealing. Also, we do not have as much land as they had in the past, and making money is now very important.

When asked her if it was important for her to have a house with Iranian characteristics, she said it was not very important. She added that having large spaces and a large yard reminds her of Iranian spaces, as houses had large spaces in the past.

She was asked which spaces should be related to open space. She answered that the living and reception areas should be, but relating bedrooms to open space is not necessary, as they are just used for sleeping, so the darker the better.

a. Site

Several images from modern central courtyards were shown to her and she said although they are nice she does not like central courtyards and prefers to reach the courtyard before the building.

b. Spatial organisation

The participant suggested that it would be good to have the kitchen and living and reception areas related to open space.

She would have the kitchen, one washroom, and reception, living and dining areas on the ground floor, and the bedrooms on the first floor.

The two different floors would be connected by a luxurious open staircase in the centre. The staircase should be decorative.

When she was asked about the relation between the kitchen, reception and living areas, she said the kitchen and living area should be beside each other. Also, she explained that the reception area is

¹⁷⁵ Because of several earthquakes in Iran, this became really important.

part of the living area, which should be used for receiving guests. She suggested separating these three spaces by just a small step.

According to her, the living area is the most important part of the house and bedrooms are just for rest and sleep. This means that the living area should be beside the kitchen but the bedrooms can be far from it. She agreed that having bedrooms connected to an open or a semi-open space is good. She insisted on having a washroom on the ground floor, but not by the entrance.

c. Entrance

She was particular about entering the house from the courtyard, then reaching the building from there. Also, she wanted to have the entrance in the middle, with a recess roofed space. She did not want to have a bench at the entrance but did want to have two flowerboxes on either side of the entrance.

d. Courtyard

She wanted to have water and greenery in the yard, but she prefers canopies instead of trees as trees need cleaning. She wanted to have a large swimming pool in the back yard or to screen it with trees if it was in the front yard. At first, she said she wanted to have a curved pool, but then she changed her mind to an octagonal one.

She mentioned she would like to have greenery, then a row of trees, and then a swimming pool: a row of trees on each side and a pergola covered with flowers.

She also wanted to have a bower near the pool to sit under its shade in the afternoon or with the family. An alcove which is three steps higher than the courtyard is the last space before reaching the building. She wanted the building a few steps higher than the alcove too. She wanted the stairs in the middle.

e. Entrance to the building

She mentioned having a veranda before the entrance. In a discussion about having a semi-closed space as the entrance, she said she prefers to have an open entrance. She also wanted to have two large windows onto the courtyard.

f. Materials

She prefers stone, e.g. marble, as it is easier to keep clean. Concrete and white cement are also good as they can be repainted once in a while. Although brick reminds her of Iranian houses, she does not like

it because it is not easy to keep clean. She again mentioned large, wide windows as her favourite. For the floor, she likes stone and paving.

g. Participant S general comments and observations

Having some degree of flexibility in the design matters, for instance, it is possible that instead of making buildings traditional, equipment and furniture can be made in a traditional style. This would allow making some changes inside the house and making interior design more customized with minor changes, while changing a building is very difficult.

5.5 Participant A's Narrative

5.5.1 Background and introduction

Age	Gender	Occupation	Native	No. of years known to the researcher	No. of sessions	Interview duration in mins	Additional information
40	Male	Agricultural engineer	Kerman	18	4	100–120	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Married and has one son - The participant cares about lifestyle and respects cultural and religious values - likes cooking which is not common among Iranian men

Table 15: General information about participant A
Source: The author.

5.5.2 Workshop part I – Various houses inhabited

The participant discussed four houses, three of which were his parents' houses, while the fourth house he has lived in since getting married.

Also, he mentioned his grandparents' house as one of his childhood houses as he spent lots of time there. Their house was in Kerman. He mentioned that as he was the first grandchild for both families, he spent much time there.

a. First house – in Zarand

The participant lived in a residential complex belonging to a steel factory in Zarand until he was 5 years old. As that was a complex, the houses were not divided with walls on the outside. There was grass in front of the house and a public green area in the middle of the street. The garden of each house was separated from others by hedges. He said although they were not private they were pleasant. And as it was safe outside, children used to spend most of their time outside. He could only remember a vague image of the inside of the house.

b. Second house – in Kerman

He explained that the house was a one-floor building with a courtyard and located on the corner of two alleys. He also mentioned that the house was good in terms of natural lighting.

The only space of the house he mentioned was a small space about 2m x3m beside the roof where he used to play (ilent and without supervision.

Figure 149). He explained that there was a staircase to the roof and between the roof and the staircase there was a space where he kept his toys. Also, he used to ask his friend to go up there and play with him, as it was a cosy space, silent and without supervision.

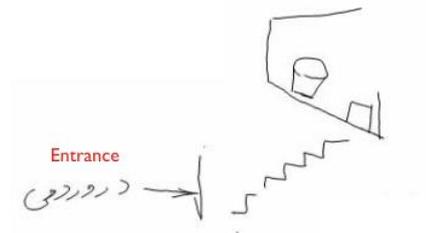
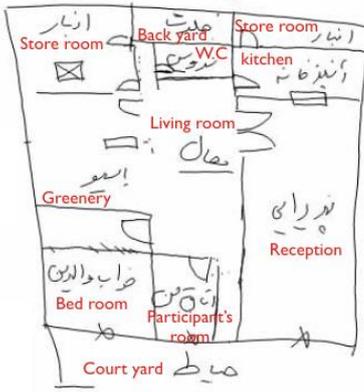


Figure 149: Participant A's drawing of the upper-level play room.
Source: The author.

c. Third house – in Kerman

The house was a one-floor building with an entrance to a courtyard. His dad bought the house about 35 years ago and they still live there. He explained that he would prefer his parents to renovate this house rather than change houses.

The house has three bedrooms. Two bedrooms and the reception area connect to the courtyard directly. The reception area is a separate large space with a wide door to the living area and a small window to the kitchen. He said this reception area is old-fashioned now. He mentioned as he likes to be in different spaces, he lived in all the spaces as well as the reception area for a while. His favourite space is a small storeroom at the back of the house beside the backyard with a window, it is nice and cool. It is a calm and silent space if the door is closed. It has a gentle cool breeze from the window too. This storeroom was always used for food storage because it was cooler than other parts. But he did not live in this room as it was only for food storage. There is a small room between the greenhouse and the food storeroom, light reaches it from the ceiling.



The washrooms are located in a corridor at the back of the house, which he mentioned is a good point because they are located in a separate space and not in everyone's view.

Figure 150: Participant A's drawing of his parents' house.
Source: The author.

The kitchen is in the right corner and there is a storeroom beside it with a window to the backyard and a door to the kitchen. The area of the house is almost 300 m² (Figure 150).

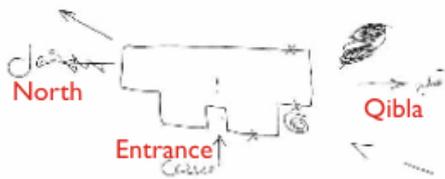
Most of the time he used to live in the bedroom beside the corridor and the courtyard. It had air-conditioning and was accessible. He mentioned that although they did not have a pool in their house, they had a nice flowerbed with vegetables and grapevines in the courtyard.

One aspect which bothered him in childhood was that there was no staircase to the roof. They had to use a ladder and it was not easy; he mentioned that he always thought about building a staircase in his childhood.

d. Fourth house in Kerman

The participant moved to a flat with his wife after their marriage and they are still there. It is a building with eight units on four floors. Their flat is located on the second floor. There are different blocks with three metres' distance between them. All the blocks are located in an area which is limited by fencing around the whole residential complex.

He pointed out the small kitchen is a bad point of the flat. Also, it is a semi-detached apartment and the only shared wall with their neighbour is just a storeroom on the landing; he saw that as a good point.



There is another problem according to him, which is because of the shape of the building. Wind makes noises on the corners of the blocks and it is annoying (Figure 151).

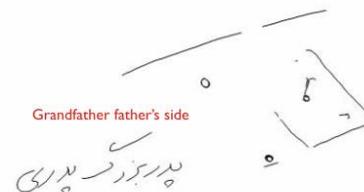
Figure 151: Participant A's drawing of his apartment block and its orientation.
Source: the author

e. Fifth house – Paternal grandparents' house, in Kerman

There is a small pool in the centre of the court yard and two trees: a pine and a pomegranate. Also, the pool has lots of fish in it and a nice stone fountain too (Figure 152) He said playing in the courtyard and around the small pool, beside the trees, and nice cool weather made the house memorable for him. He mentioned that the pomegranate tree was planted when he was born. This house was sold and

demolished a couple of years ago and he was sad that he could not buy it and renovate it instead of it being demolished.

Figure 152: Participant A's drawing of his grandparents' house. He just drew the pool and two trees.
Source: The author.



f. Sixth House: Maternal grandparents' house, in Kerman

There was a basement in their house and he had lots of memories of it. He spent a couple of months there studying for a university entrance exam. It was a nice cool place.

The courtyard was on a lower level and the rooms were on an upper level, by the yard (Figure 153), he liked that. He said the house had two entrances but the one that was used more was the one which led directly into the kitchen, and there was a small door from the kitchen to the courtyard. He did not like this entrance because of the sense of limitation he felt there. The other entrance was from another alley and on the other side of the courtyard, beside the staircase to the roof.¹⁷⁶



Figure 153: Participant A's drawing of his grandparents' house.
Source: The author.

A bad point which bothered him in this house was a five-floor building in front of it that had windows overlooking the courtyard. Also, that tall building made it difficult for direct sunlight to reach the courtyard, and that made it cold in winter.

5.5.3 Workshop part II – Everyday activities, practices and preferences

a. Entering and going out

He explained that in his house there is no space for putting stuff outside the door. He also mentioned the benches in traditional entrances, which are spaces to put stuff or sitting places for residents and pedestrians, which is good. Also, he said there was no space for keeping shoes and clothes in the entrance, so they added a cupboard there.

He mentioned that there are two important things about shoes when entering the house for him. Shoes should not be taken off in a shared area in an apartment, and they also need to be in a specific space. The entrance lobby should be separated into two parts, with one or two

¹⁷⁶ He mentioned that a staircase to the roof was always important and interesting for him.

steps up or down. In the first part, shoes can be taken off while the second part is the clean part of the entrance. In this clean part, people may keep their clean slippers for use inside the house. According to him, there should be a washroom in the entrance as people may want to wash their hands, face or feet before entering the house. Participant A believed the first part should be washable. It needs to have an outlet that can be used with a hose from the washroom. Some people put a rug there to absorb dust, so it is better to not put a rug in the entrance.

He said that another important point is having a place to put some small things while entering the house, such as keys, rings, watches and so on. Having a tall mirror in the entrance is useful as then it is possible to check your appearance before going out and when coming in. It can be in the second part of the entrance or on the back of the door. He mentioned that the entrance does not necessarily need sunlight.

b. Sleeping

He was asked what he needs when he wants to sleep. He replied that he likes to have a phone beside his bed, and a radio and TV. He likes listening to music before sleeping. Having a soft light is good. Peaceful and soothing colours, like blue, light violet and light green, are good. As it is a private space, it needs a place for some personal stuff, a small bookcase to keep several books and CDs to use before sleeping. It should be near the bed and easy to reach. Also a water-cooler and a small fridge beside the bed.

As for sleeping on the ground or in a bed, he said it is no big deal for him. He also needs circulation of fresh air. For example, he mentioned he will open the window while the heating system is on to change the air.

b. Toilet

Some people are embarrassed to go to the washroom while other people are sitting there, so participant A said that having it in the entrance will help in this case too. Also, if possible, having a washroom beside an open space for ventilation is the best. When it is arranged like this, people like him, who believe in religious regulations, will wash their hands and face, and also their feet, and then put slippers on to enter the house.

He said he would definitely link the washroom in the entrance to open space or have a wide shaft for light and ventilation.

d. Cooking

He explained that, traditionally, Iranian cooking takes time, so the one who is cooking will spend a long time in the kitchen. Also, most food needs to be fried or has fried onions in it. He prefers to have a two-part kitchen, one part for cooking with an oven and a powerful exhaust fan. It would be helpful to put this part beside the open space in order to stop the rest of the house smelling of cooking. The shafts in the middle of buildings just spread smell into other flats. This part needs to be linked to open space. It needs to be closed more than hidden in order to keep other spaces from smelling and having other mess in that part. So, it is more pleasant to have a meal in the other part of the kitchen.

e. Eating

He prefers to have meals in the kitchen as when you eat in the kitchen you do not need to clean the living area every day. Also, in the kitchen everything is accessible and easier to reach. If it is possible to have a space for family dining in the kitchen, then the cleaning will be less. If possible he does not mind having 6–8 people in the kitchen for a meal.

He also mentioned some guests are more formal so they have to be served in the reception room. Others may be close friends who can be served in the kitchen, he prefers to have meals with closer people in the kitchen.

He believes there is nothing more pleasant than sitting on the floor or around the table with the whole extended family and having a meal. It is an unconscious social behaviour. The grandfather who was sitting at the top of the table would ask that the others be served first and it was a dedication lesson. He believes it was nice but no longer exists.

He feels more comfortable sitting on the floor. There is more intimacy when sitting on the floor rather than on a chair. When you sit on the floor your feet touch it. All the body is visible. But at the table the feet are hidden beneath it.

When he was asked about sitting on the floor or a sofa he explained that he feels more comfortable sitting on the floor with a backrest.

f. Washing and laundry

When dish-washing, because of our special washing style, we need to be careful. The sink needs to be divided into two parts in order to clean the dishes with dishwashing liquid in one part and then put them in the other part to rinse them with running water. It always takes time

to wash the dishes, so it might be good to have a window onto the courtyard.

According to him, having a washing machine in the kitchen or bathroom is wrong and dangerous. It would be good to put it on the balcony, in a roofed space or in a separate storeroom. As an example, he refers to his house, as there is a storage room outside the flat beside the entrance. There is a window there which helps with ventilation as it is always wet and there may be bacteria. It is cold but not freezing. There is also water and electricity, plus an outlet.

He said that, although there are different types of dryers, he has noted that drying clothes in sunlight cannot be replaced by anything else. So, it is important to have a balcony on the side of the house where direct sunlight can reach.

He said the best place is the bathroom if it has two parts. The clothes can go there and be taken to the laundry from there. As they are not clean it is better not to keep them inside. As they do not have a changing room beside the bathroom, they have to change in the bedroom and they have a laundry basket there to put clothes to be washed. But a changing room beside the bathroom is the best idea.

He said he likes to iron his clothes himself, but as there is no fixed space for that he needs to move things and find a space; he prefers to take his clothes out for dry-cleaning. It would be good to have a space that does not bother others while ironing. He usually hangs clothes up after washing and drying them. And at the weekend he will iron some of them for the next week. The ironing board can be kept in a walk-in wardrobe.

g. Sweeping

He said that although it is common to have a central vacuum cleaner in residential complexes, he does not like it as sometimes he has found things which were lost in the vacuum cleaner, but this is not possible in a central one. Also, because of maintenance, when it is shared it might take more time to be fixed if any problem occurs. As well, he said that in their house they do not use a traditional sweep-up type. He also mentioned that, as all houses have a vacuum cleaner, each house should have a place to keep it, or a storeroom.

h. Dusting

He said that, as his wife does this, he does not have any idea about it.

He organizes his own things and sometimes, when there is heavy stuff that needs moving, he will help. Otherwise, it is his wife who arranges things. It is usually like this in Iranian culture.

i. Cleaning and hygiene

He explained the beliefs about washing with water and that he believes them. When something is dirty it needs to be washed with water. Although anti-bacterial products will kill bacteria, according to religious regulations, ordure will spread while using these products. You may clean the bacteria but not the ordure. In order to clean it you have to pour water. He said their house was covered with rugs and it was possible to take one of those, wash it, dry it and then put it back in its place.

In places where there is water, like the kitchen and washrooms, they should be washed completely once in a while. The floor, ceiling and windows all need to be washed. Recently, in some houses, the builders do not include outlets, which prevents those places from being washed. He completely disagrees with this. Also, a bathroom with a tub needs to have an outlet outside the tub for washing.

j. Storage

He explained that we have two different types of things that need to be stored. First, there are things that are large and not used daily, like suitcases. There are always storage rooms for flats outside them, in the basement or garage, but most of the time builders refuse to build them.

Each bedroom should have a large cupboard in it, but it depends on the house's area. For a studio or a one-bedroom flat it might be hard to have storage, but for flats with more than two bedrooms, they should have two storerooms: one for things which might be dirty, like ladders or car parts, and another one for other stuff near bedrooms. This is storage for the whole family. The storage for a 100m² house needs to be at least 2x2m.

Also, he explained the difference between cupboards and storerooms and why he prefers the latter. When you enter a storeroom you can go through it and see everything, so you can find everything you need. But in cupboards you have to open each door separately and you cannot see everything at the same time. In storage rooms you should be able to see everything well organized and in view.

Also, each house needs to have at least two extra sleeping sets. They must be kept in a storeroom. About shoes and bags, he prefers to put

all shoes in a shoe rack. If there was no space he would put them in a walk-in wardrobe, but he prefers not to put them in the same place as clothes. Bags can be kept in walk-in wardrobes or in a cupboard in the bedroom.

There should be a storage place for special dishes. The stuff which is used daily should be kept in the kitchen. As kitchens are getting smaller and smaller, the rest can be kept in the storage.

k . Privacy

He was asked if he sees his clients at home. He answered no, but in any case clients should not be able to come into private parts of the house.

l. Display

When we were talking about walk-in wardrobes and normal wardrobes, he explained that he prefers the former as they are easier to access. However, they are not fully accepted in Iranian culture because Iranian people like to cover everything. Ladies have hijabs. They put covers on things in order to avoid dust. Our grandmothers used to put table clothes in boxes which were closed, but they needed to be covered as well. In our culture people do not like others knowing what they have. For example, a woman does not like her sister-in-law seeing in her cupboard or maybe in her bedroom. A thinks that, in Iran, people would rather have a walk-in wardrobe with its own door. Also, it is common to keep lots of things. Although there may be luxury things in the living and reception areas, in the cupboard it is always messy.

Books are nice and can be decorative. Also, if you have read a book, when you put it on display someone else may wish to read it too. Other decorative things are related to culture.

It would be good to have 3–4 photos on the walls. But having lots of photos in different situations is ridiculous.

In the past, it was bad, religiously and culturally, to put photos on display. At most would be a picture of their son. They would never put a picture of their daughter on the wall. But it is different now. Also, some old and antique things can be nice.

m. Entertaining and social interaction

He explained that the TV is now an important part of the house. They have two TVs: one in the bedroom and another in the living area. They usually all watch TV in the living room together. Especially during

holidays, he lies down on the floor and watches TV series. Most of the time the TV is under the children's control.

He mentioned that he wants to have greenery first, then water. These things are really peaceful. He has seen how, in some apartments, they make a common open space and sit there and have fun. It would help people to have more interaction. He remembers from childhood that they used to have a common green space but, unfortunately, after the revolution, because of some political points, they were separated.

n. Balconies

Also, according to what A said, there should be two balconies in every flat, one beside the kitchen and the other beside the bedroom for drying clothes.

Usually there is not enough space in the apartment to have flowers, so it makes the flat boring. Having greenery on the balcony would be great. The balcony behind the bedroom can have a small greenhouse.

He explained that they have a small balcony and it is hard to sleep there, but he does that as he likes to see the sky.

He was asked, "Like people used to sit in their room and look at the courtyard, do you use your balcony to do this now?" He said he did so but rarely. This is not just about privacy. Another problem is greenery, which is really ignored these days. In the past, people had trees and small pools in the courtyard. If there is a nice view it will definitely be used. Now we do all our work in enclosed spaces and under artificial light. We lose sunlight and moonlight.

o. Other comments by the participant

He talked about weekly or monthly religious gatherings, which were common in the past in his grandfather's house. These were part of their daily life and nothing special. All families and their children used to be with each other during religious gatherings. There was something in the past which he really loved; the relationships between people were less complicated and more peaceful. He believes that until about 20 years ago, people were closer. He also talked about gathering the whole extended family together in one house, taking a day off, having a meal and socializing. There may have been 40–50 people together, but now gatherings are perhaps 2–3 people and they spend less time together and have fast food. He found the previous culture very friendly and memorable.

5.5.4 Workshop part III – Perceptions of Traditional Iranian vs contemporary architecture

The participant believed that decoration should be considered both inside and outside. He explained it was not common in the past to make things look glamorous. It was more important what was inside, rather than appearance. Women had a black or white mask and it was not obvious what was inside. I know in Yazd, people used to wear very distinguished clothes made from an expensive fabric called termeh.¹⁷⁷ They used to wear a chador over that and no one could see that, except in the house. Now we take care that the outside of the car is clean, but it does not matter how dirty it is inside as no one can see it. And this is something which has deeply and culturally changed, so we cannot go back just by changing a building. It is not just about construction; the whole society needs to make changes. Also, as you see on the street, the girls wear lots of makeup – more than Western girls.

He also added that simple things make him feel calm.

5.5.4.1 Traditional Iranian architectural elements

a. Relationship with nature

The participant was shown images of courtyards and discussed how people were more connected to nature and other natural elements. More questions pertaining to choices of greenery, balcony and pool room were discussed. The participant explained that a pool room was common in desert parts of the country. They usually had a wind catcher in these rooms too, with water in the middle. Sometimes it used to be a washing space. And occasionally there were benches beside the wall and people used to sit there, as it was nice and cool. This is the best way to make a space cool in the desert. But we do not have that anymore.

He also mentioned that the ceilings of traditional houses had openings to get light; he explained that sometimes they were covered by glass, and sometimes they were open. It made the space different as it was related to the outside and had natural ventilation. When someone wants to sleep, he will a look at the ceiling, and it is nice to see the sky rather than a flat box.

b. Traditional windows or orsi

¹⁷⁷ Termeh: an expensive handmade fabric.

The participant said orsi are very good. Different colours and other things are great. All the windows can be like orsi. Also, he likes to have a large orsi in the reception room with traditional forms.

c. Staircase

When he was asked about preferring traditional stairs or modern ones he said he prefers new ones. He noted that, in the past, stairs were narrow and not comfortable, but the new designs are more comfortable. And he explained that the upper level was not as important as the ground level. The upper level was for servants or sometimes storerooms. In Shahzadeh Garden, they built a special space in the upper level for the prince, so you see there is a good staircase there. But usually in the past the basement was more important than the upper level. The stairs to the basement are more comfortable than those to the upper level.

5.5.4.2 Contemporary buildings with traditional themes

a. Houses built by Faryar Javaherian

When the participants saw some images from newly built houses with traditional concepts he said that, in these new buildings, there is a sense of being artificial, not real. You do not feel that these are old. For example, in this picture, there is water, bricks and traditional orientation, but the most important thing, which is a tree, is not there (Figure 154). There are some flowers, but in traditional houses the old tree was more important than water. In some houses, different generations lived there for 100 to 150 years. There were always one or two large trees in those houses, which made the place calm and peaceful. You cannot feel that these houses are old.



Figure 154: A courtyard designed by an Iranian architect, Faryar Javaherian
Source: *Architecture and culture*. Vol. 48. 2012.

He also added that perhaps the materials are more important than having large or small windows or an entrance. He thinks materials and their combination are more influential than shape or having different levels.

Considering all these points, I asked him what his suggestion was. And his answer was that having something from the past will help it to feel better.

He was also asked how important open spaces are. He said they were a good idea, especially for religious people. They can be spaces to keep shoes, for doing some chores, and they can be easily cleaned and washed. This is one of those multi-functional spaces (Figure 155).



Figure 155: A roofed space before entering the house in a house designed by Faryar Javaheriyani
Source: *Architecture and culture*. Vol. 48. 2012.



While looking at the pictures he said wide windows are not part of our culture and there is no privacy with them (Figure 156).

Figure 156: A newly built house with traditional elements.
Source: Me; Mar. Iranian Biomontly on Architecture and Urban Design. معمار, Vol. 38 (Thought of Art and Architecture, 2006).

Shoshtar complex built by Karman Diba:

He said he believes it is an abandoned city, but he added that there is a harmony in the whole complex, which is nice (Figure 128). But now, in the streets, the buildings are not harmonious and it is annoying.

He said that because the culture has changed, people have different ideas about buying houses and explained his experience in the past and compared it to now. He said that when his parents wanted to buy their house more than 30 years ago, they considered peace and safety for their children more than financial benefits. But now, people think more about the financial benefits, rather than peacefulness.

5.5.5 Workshop part IV – Co-creation process

“It is a border which separates outside living from personal living. It helps you to be calm and feel fresh for another start. Home is a place where people are kinder to each other. They are more honest.” – A

a. Entrance from the street

He prefers a house with an entrance in the yard rather than the building, because of the feeling of freedom and ease of escape. Houses with entrances to the building make him feel stifled. He prefers to enter from a large open area.

He wants a recessed entrance which is roofed, with a sitting place. It is not important who will sit there. In traditional houses, they used to have this in the entrance, in the past, and not just for residents. It was also for pedestrians who wanted to have a rest. Also, it was common to put a water tap outside the house for people who passed by in the street.

In his opinion, he prefers to have a stepped back façade, then a corridor which can reach the courtyard via several steps. It is not important how much it goes back. Although it is facing the courtyard, it is not possible for someone who comes to the door, like the postman, to see inside. The most important part is the corridor. It is a semi-open space which is roofed and there should be two stone benches to sit on. The utilities meters can be placed there.¹⁷⁸

Of the two stone benches, one should be a flower box and the other one for sitting. Also, he thinks there must be two separate doors in the courtyard for cars and pedestrians. He does not like having just one door, for two reasons. It would make the home more convenient if it could have a portal in the entrance.

b. Spatial Organisation

It would be good to have the kitchen near the entrance, in order to reach the kitchen without going through the living area and other parts, especially when there are guests. Going to the kitchen without being seen with everything in your hands is important.

He described a house which he saw and which was good from his point of view. The main point in that house was that the bedroom and living area were located in the front of the building and got the best sunshine. There was a corridor between the neighbour's house and the building, it was beside the kitchen and the storeroom. So the storeroom and kitchen were both connected directly to the open air. Also, he added he would like a roofed corridor, while entering, which is not straight. And it would be better if it turns in order to limit the view.

c. Entering and leaving

The participant mentioned having a tall mirror in this corridor and a place for shoe-cleaning. A small cupboard could be there to keep some shoe-cleaning stuff in. The mirror can help guests entering the house to check on their dress, and also residents when going out. He likes to do this in a semi-open space.

d. Greenery

The participant noted that a very important aspect that has been forgotten is trees. It is common now to have grass and some flowers for greenery. He stated that although other alternatives are nice,

¹⁷⁸ In Iran, electricity, water and gas are under governmental control and it is common for someone to come and check the meters every two months. People keep them outside their buildings.

having trees, like a pine tree that is always green, will add a sense of freshness to a place in the desert.

e. Courtyard

In the courtyard, there should be trees and water as symbols that help to make the atmosphere fresh and nice. We do not need a pool, like in the past, but having a small fountain or something that gives the sound of water would be great.

f. Priority of spaces

He said the priority of spaces depends on how many people are there. Also, it depends on what their jobs are. If a woman is a housewife she spends lots of time in the kitchen, so the kitchen will be an important place. In this case, the first priority is the kitchen, then the living and reception areas, then the bedrooms. But when there is a family where both parents are working outside, they will not spend lots of time in the kitchen, so: 1. living room and reception area 2. bedrooms 3. kitchen. Because, in most houses, extra activities that the couple want to do, such as reading or searching on the Internet, will be in the bedroom, it needs to be a calm place, but connected to the other parts of the house too. There will be someone who cooks for them or they will have ready meals, so the kitchen is not very important. He mentioned that the priority is sunlight and the area.

g. Balcony

He said it is very important to have a good balcony in a flat. He wanted two balconies for a flat: one beside the kitchen and the other beside the bedrooms. The priority is sunlight and the area. The balcony behind the kitchen can be small but the one beside the bedrooms needs to be large enough to be used for different purposes. It would be better to be beside the master bedroom, as parents use that more. Also, it would be better to be far from the living and reception areas in order to make it more private. For a large flat with four bedrooms, it is possible to have three balconies. Then, one can be used for guests. But he thinks that, generally, people cannot afford large flats, so this is not needed in normal flats.

f. Furniture design

There was a discussion of whether furniture is important in the design process, and also if it should be fixed. The participant said that when you force someone to do things it makes them sensitive. It is not good to feel you are not free to do what you want, and he said he likes moving beds.

h. Participant A's general comments and observations

The participant stated that it is necessary that designer and resident communicate during the design process. Also, green areas should be given importance. The participant further noted that, in the present day, there are several activities and some work which need to be done from and at home. This means that the bedroom or a study need to be considered carefully in the design process. He thinks materials and their combination are more influential than the shape or having different levels, large or small windows, or the entrance.

The main points according to him for a convenient home are:

A bedroom with its own bathroom and walk-in wardrobe.

A separate room for extra activities, such as studying, praying, practising and so on.

Having a special space for everybody, except a shared bedroom, as he believes having a space of your own is good.

Having a small pool as a symbol from the past.

A veranda and semi-open spaces.

He likes to have a large orsi in the reception with traditional forms.

Another important option for him is having a washroom in the entrance in order to clean up when coming home and to avoid having a washroom door in the living area.

5.6 Participants M and SH's narrative

5.6.1 Background and introduction

Participant M

Age	Gender	Occupation	Native	No. of years known to the researcher	No. of sessions	Interview duration in mins	Additional information
52	Female	Painter	Kerman	12	4	80–100	She has been married to her cousin for more than 20 years. She has one child. She has lived in Kerman most of her life.

Table 16: The general information about participant M
Source: the author

Participant SH

Age	Gender	Occupation	Native	No. of years known to the researcher	No. of sessions	Interview duration in mins	Additional information
55	Male	Pistachios merchant	Kerman	12	4	800-100	He has been married to his cousin for more than 20 years. He has one child. He has always lived in Kerman.

Table 17: The general information about participant SH
Source: the author

5.6.2 Workshop part I – Various houses inhabited

Both participants were asked to talk about their childhood houses. They each added some points to what the other said. They talked about their grandparents' houses as well. Participant M talked about one of their family's houses that she found nice and different.

a. First house (M) – in Manjil

Participant M explained that she was born in a house in Zaboli Street in Kerman. They used to live there until she was two years old, but she cannot remember anything about it. Then they moved to Manjil.¹⁷⁹ She remembers it as they lived there for seven years. Then they moved to Shiraz for one year, and finally went back to Kerman again. The most memories she has from childhood are from Manjil. They used to live

¹⁷⁹ Manjil: A small town in the north of Iran.

in a residential complex that belonged to the government. There were several small terraced houses. The houses were around a circle with a circular pool in the middle and several small pools around that. The pools were not deep. The houses had a yard in front and another at the back (Figure 157). There were no borders between the yards. They used to play in that circle in the middle, which was safe, with all the other children. They used to run on the hill. The children were all friends, as their fathers were co-workers and their mums knew each other too. They were happy there. There were no trees in the middle of the circle, but around the houses there were lots of olive trees.

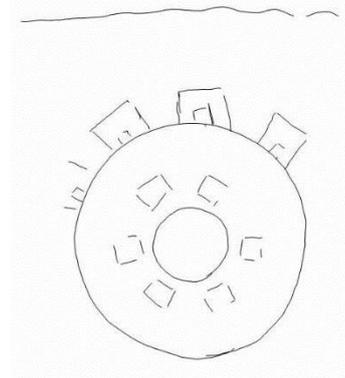


Figure 157: The participant drew the location of the houses.
Source: The author.

About the inside of the house, she said they were small houses with two bedrooms, a reception room, a living room and dining area, and a washroom.

a. First house (SH) Childhood house of Participant SH

He described his childhood house as a house in the middle of a garden, beside his grandfather’s house (Figure 159). It was built in the 1950s. It had a basement and the main floor was on a higher level than the garden. He mentioned that it has been demolished now. Water passed the house. There was a place in the basement that was called “Payab” (Figure 158), a place for washing that used water from underground canals. There was a very nice garden with lots of flowers. There was a veranda with access via two staircases from two sides. The veranda had tall columns. There was a large rose bush in front of it. There were also lots of trees. There was a pergola surrounded by grapevines in the southeast of the garden. In summer, they used to wet the pergola and the ground so that there was a nice smell of clay and cool weather.



Figure 158: An image of a payab (a place to get water from underground)
Source: The author.

In the building, there was a large living room in the middle which had doors on both sides. When those doors were open, it was nicely cool; it did not need a cooling system. He did not remember what they did in the other rooms, as they used to sleep in the living area when he was a child. But when they grew up they had bedrooms. He mentioned they were very happy in that house. He remembered the nice sunshine in winter in the south part of the house. He said that when the house was built there was no bathroom and his wife mentioned that in that period most people used to go to public baths, so it was not common to have a bathroom in the house.

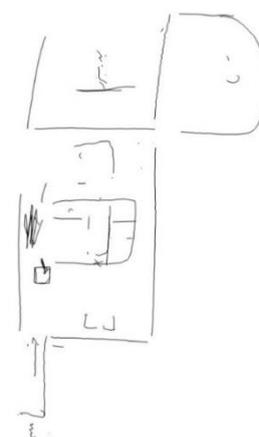


Figure 159: Participant SH’s drawing of his parents’, grandfather’s and uncle’s houses.
Source: The author.

There were two entrances from two different alleys.

They lived there until he was in his first year of high school. They moved to another house for four years and then came back to this one. His dad made some changes to the house. He changed the floors and covered the walls with wallpaper, and also changed the doors and added curtains. He built a bathroom too. At first the kitchen was far from the building and not covered with tiles (Figure 160). But after a while his father built a kitchen besides the building.



Figure 160: An image of an old kitchen.

Source: 'Kashan: Pots and Pans | Aashpaz', accessed 5 April 2017, <http://www.aashpaz.com/newwordpress/kashan-pots-and-pans/>.

At first there was no pool in the garden, but after a while his father built one.

They were asked if the two houses were connected and he explained that the wall between the two houses was low and so his mother used to communicate with her mother over the wall, and for a while there was a door between the two gardens of the houses.

Participant SH's parents' second house

He did not talk about that house much, he just said he did not have good memories there, as he did in the first one. Also, he said that they did not have a staircase to the roof. He mentioned that a staircase to the roof is one of the best parts of a house for children.

The house of Participant SH's maternal grandfather

Participant SH talked about his grandfather's house as a memorable and very special house. He said it was a very nice house with a large veranda (Figure 161). All around the house were boxwood plants. There were two big pine trees in the middle of the house, as well as almond trees. Also, there was a large pool in the house which they used to swim in as teenagers.



Figure 161: An example of a large veranda, as Participant SH described. (Mosavi house Abar Koh).

Source: <http://tourismabarkouh.blogfa.com/post-23.aspx>

Another feature he remembered was the basement where he used to go to find treasure. The basement was really cool. It was used to keep food in.

Also, a special thing which he did not see in other houses, he mentioned that they had a washroom beside the living area. He did not know when it was built.

He mentioned that he mostly remembered the space, that was nice and cool, and the smell of water.

Children used to go on the roof of his grandfather's house.

He said his grandfather built another house beside his house for his uncle, and he wanted to build houses for others as well, but unfortunately he passed away.

The house of their paternal grandmother

Participant M started to talk about that house and mentioned it was rectangular in shape. There was no yard at the back but there was a large pool in the middle, and some trees. They had a living room with other rooms beside it, and behind those rooms were small rooms for storage. The storage rooms were spaces without any windows or light from the outside. When the doors were closed they were completely dark. They used to keep their clothes there as well as change there. Also, they might keep food or some precious objects there. They had large doors and liked to have sunshine in the house. This was very useful in winter. Most houses did not have curtains. People used to just change in the storeroom and wear proper clothes in the house, so they did not need curtains for privacy.

Participant SH talked about the pool in the courtyard and explained that it was not deep; there was a sculpture of a cat made out of stone in it. They had a terrace and a basement.

They were asked if the basement was just for keeping food and Participant M answered that it was not just used for storing food as the basement was cold in summer and so people used to sit or have their siesta there as well. She remembers that in the afternoon people went to the basement for a rest. She also said the kitchen was beside the entrance door. The kitchen was always far from other spaces and the smell of food did not permeate other spaces. She mentioned the fact that the spaces being far from each other was a good point, as they had to walk more and so they were healthier.

Another old house which Participant M described

One of their family had a house which was different to other houses she has seen. There was a central courtyard with a pool in the middle and rooms were located around the courtyard. All the rooms were on a higher level than the courtyard and could be reached by 2–3 steps. The side-by-side rooms were connected to each other. They had a space called “sleep in spring” – *bahar khab*. They used to live in one side in winter and the other side in summer. The family who were

closer used to use the entrance through the kitchen, but the house also had another entrance from an alley, far from the street. This entrance gave access to the yard from a corridor.

She was asked what was it she liked in this house was and she answered that she liked the pool that they used to go around. Also, the rooms were different from other houses; they had little depth and there were no storerooms behind them. They had good sunlight with wooden doors, and an organza curtain behind the doors. The toilet was on a lower level and scary. It also had a basement, which was nice and cool in summer.

Their own house

They moved to this house after their marriage, about 25 years ago. They did not build it; they bought it a few years after it was built.

Participant M said their house is large in terms of area compared to new houses. It has a lovely yard with trees and flowers, but it is not a modern and fashionable house. There is lots of useless space in it. There is also a small backyard behind the building. When the door to the backyard and the front doors are open, the circulation of air makes it feel nice and cool. Although it is a good house, it was built almost 40 years ago and so now it is old.

One of her problems in this house is that the living area, where they used to spend most of the time, does not have direct sunlight, meaning that the lights need to be on during the day. But the bedrooms have direct sunlight. She liked it when the doors and windows were wide and could be opened to change the air, and also have lots of sunlight. There is no garage for the car either.

Participant SH said it has a strong structure. There is a roofed terrace when entering the yard in front of the reception area, which is lovely. The outside façade was built from small tiles, which are still in good shape after all these years. Participant M agreed with this and said it is easier to clean. Bricks' colour changes after a while. Participant SH has several flowers in the yard and waters them in the morning and evening. Also, he sweeps the yard and then splashes water on the walls and ground. This makes for a nice fresh environment.

Participant M said there was a sense of freedom. Children could play without special attention in the past. Now, houses and flats are small and people are always in each other's view, and everybody tries to control others.

Participant M said that in the past people did not hide things from each other as they do now.

Participant SH said that in traditional houses people were simple and there was empathy between them. Now this is no longer true, even between siblings. Participant M continued by saying that they did not have lots of things in the house. There was sleeping stuff, which was in the storeroom. The most they had on the floor was blankets, and backrests to go with them. Now, there is lots of furniture in houses. Children cannot move freely as they may hit a piece of furniture. People need to be careful all the time.

Participant M also said it was not a big deal serving a guest in the past. She remembers that in the afternoon people came to her grandma's house. They might bring a lettuce with them and eat it with others in the courtyard.

Participant M believes traditional architecture was more functional.

Participant SH also remembered that they, along with his aunts and uncles, went to his grandfather's house. They were all together in intimacy, which could be the main reason for good memories. They used to eat any biscuits that his grandma had in the house, with tea. She was not worried that she should prepare fruit and different snacks for people who were coming. Everything was simple.

Sense of belonging

Participant M said that as they have spent 25 years there, they have a sense of belonging, although going to a different place can be nice too. They have made some changes to this house to suit their needs. She mentioned that she will miss the trees they have planted if they move.

Participant SH said they have made an office for a woman and when they think about moving this is a point too. He explained that several times they had thought about moving, but they like this parish and the neighbours. They are afraid that if they move they will have bad neighbours. Generally, he just wants his family to be comfortable. If he could find a place where they could be safe and relax he would happily move. Until now, they have not found a better parish and neighbours than where they are.

Participant M mentioned that, for them, neighbours are as important as the house. Both should be good.

Meaning of home

Participant M: Home is a safe and comfortable place.

Participant SH: First safety, then comfort. You may feel comfortable in a pergola but not comfortable in a luxury tower. Home is where you feel safe and comfortable.

5.6.3 Workshop part II – Everyday activities, practices and preferences

a. Entrance

Participant M said they have to enter the courtyard before reaching the building. This is good sometimes when one enters the courtyard and passes the trees and flowers. On the other hand, when you enter the building directly it is easier and you don't have to walk through the courtyard. As they used to put clothes in the courtyard to dry, when someone came through the courtyard he could see them, which she did not like. I always think that houses with entrances from the courtyard should have a hidden space for drying clothes.

Further questions were asked to discuss other elements linked to the entrance and the participant responded that something outside the door, like the benches they had in the past, would be nice and useful for sitting and putting things on. Without such elements, they tend to put stuff on the ground.

Participant M also added that there was a curve which controlled the view in the past, but now, once the door is open, the entire house is visible, and this is very bad.

Participant M said that, generally, they take shoes off outside and carry them to the shoe-case inside. Although there is a roofed space, it is not good to leave shoes outside because there is sunlight in there too.

Participant SH said he does not like to take his shoes inside as they are dirty, but he has to.

Participant M mentioned that there are several pairs of shoes that are more formal and those are kept in the wardrobe. However, it is always a problem as there are many shoes. Also, the participant said that as they are dirty she prefers not to keep them in the wardrobe. There is a shoe-case at the entrance. They used to change shoes in different seasons, but there is still a lack of space.

b. *Sleeping*

Participant M said people used to do everything on the floor, but now this has changed. People eat at the table and sit on the sofa. She added that sometimes she sleeps on the floor when taking an afternoon nap. Sometimes, when she is very tired, she thinks lying down on the floor will help her more. However, with her knee and backache problems,

it is hard to get up from the floor. She thinks that perhaps we do not notice, but there are times in a day when we sit on the floor. It is still in our culture to be connected to the ground.

Participant SH said he prefers to sleep on the floor rather than in a bed, but it is hard to set up bedding and pack it up every day – culturally it is bad to leave it on the floor. Also, there are many good points about sleeping on the floor. He explained that his father used to sleep beside different trees in different seasons. He added that the corridor beside the living room is a very cool place in summer, and great for sleeping. It is also very nice to sleep under moonlight. Participant M agreed and continued by saying that it is good that you can change your sleeping place: one side in winter and another side in summer. But in a bedroom, it is a fixed space. She also said she thought it was good to have a dark space for sleeping, but dark rooms will make you depressed.

c. Kitchen and Cooking

Participant SH explained that, in one period. People opened their kitchens according to fashion. After a while, they added a small hidden kitchen at the back of this luxury one to make any mess there. It is not good to have food smells in the whole house. Participant M added that it is annoying having two kitchens, having a fridge in each part. It involves twice the cleaning work.

Participant M believes a close guest can come and sit in the kitchen, so it is not necessary to open it to be in touch. She also said she does not like to be watched when she is in the kitchen, tasting food, washing dishes etc. There are things you do not want guests to see.

When asked for her opinion on the need for a good view from the kitchen, Participant M answered that it is very good to have a nice view. She described two kitchens with good views: one with a window to the sea, and the other one with a green space in front of the kitchen that has birds there as well. She also added that they had a TV in the kitchen in the past. Now they have a radio. When I asked why, she said it was an old TV. Now these LCD TVs need to have a specific space. She hasn't seen TVs in kitchens with new designs.

Participant M explained it is really important for her to have the sink and stove beside each other. While cooking you need to use them both. Now her stove is far from the sink. She prefers to have room on both sides of the stove so that she has space to put things. The most important part is the floor. It should be suitable, not slippery, as it is always getting wet, and a colour which does not need wiping all the

time to keep it clean. Their kitchen floor is covered with white tiles and she has to clean it a lot, so she covered part of that with carpet. It keeps the floor warm in winter and is also easier to clean. The cupboards should be designed according to people's height. It is annoying if they are too high.

Participant M said it would be good if there was a storeroom beside the kitchen. She also said they keep most things for one or two months, but they keep some things for a whole year.

However, participant SH said he does not have any problems with any of the things she mentioned. He thinks it is fine as it is now.

d. Eating

Participant SH believes it is hard to sit on the floor for eating. He also mentioned that there is a veranda in their courtyard where they sometimes have their breakfast.

Participant M said eating on the floor has some good points, such as it is easier to serve more people and you do not need to have lots of chairs. In the past, people used to sit on the floor, but now it is old-fashioned and most people have sofas in their houses. This means that people are used to sitting on a sofa and chairs and so it is hard for them to sit on the floor. Formerly, people did not know exactly how many guests they would have for a meal. It was not really predictable and it was common to have more people with you, so people used to cook for more people than they had invited. But today people will be prepared for an exact number of guests. Participant SH added that, during religious times such as Muharram and Ramadan, people still sit on the floor, especially when there are lots of people.

e. Washing

Participant M explained that their washing machine is now in the kitchen, but in new architecture, where there is a laundry room, the dirty clothes and washing machine are in the same place. They have a basket in the bathroom for dirty clothes. They are carried to the kitchen to be washed, and then to the yard to dry. It would be good to have a laundry near the bathroom. It is better not to have this in the kitchen because the sound is annoying. Also, she added that there are still some things which need to be washed by hand.

She also said that she saw a house with a specific room for ironing, and it was good. Participant M believes clothes need to get fresh air. Also,

there is lots of useful sunlight in this city, so a dryer is not needed. She thinks it can be considered during the design process. There is a backyard at our house but there is no sunlight in winter.

Participant M believes that when washing something it needs to be washed with water, with which participant SH agreed. They explained it is a cultural and religious belief.

g. Storage

They explained they keep all dishes, spoons and so on for guests in a cupboard in the reception room.

Participant M explained that, after a while, a lack of space is always a problem and that she would keep them all in the kitchen if there was enough room. Participant SH said a good point of an open kitchen is that it is easy to move dishes between the kitchen and dining area.

Participant SH said that, in the past, there was a cool place or basement where people used to keep food. They would keep things for a year, but Participant M said that now people keep things for 1–2 months maximum. Instead, a room for clothes has been added. People did not use to have lots of clothes as they do now. It is a problem in all houses that the wardrobe is full and people need more space. It always takes time to organize clothes and after a short time you need to do that again. It is the same with bags and shoes. Also, in the kitchen, there are lots of pots and dishes etc. People used to share their dishes for parties and few people had many dishes. But now people will rarely borrow things from others. Everybody has lots of spoons and forks. These all need more space, more cupboards and more cleaning.

They also explained that they still have one storeroom, like in the past, where they keep extra stuff. But Participant M added that, in new architecture, they will have a cupboard for sleeping things. Or there is a storeroom in the basement.

h. Privacy

Participant M said a stranger cannot come into the courtyard at all. Participant SH said it was good in the past that there was a specific space at the entrance, and the inside of the house could not be seen from there. He does not like others being able to see inside his house.

It was highlighted to the participants that, in the past, privacy was more of a religious issue, but now it is more about hiding things from others. People prefer that others do not know what they are doing. Participant M said it was more like this in the past, but participant SH

said that, instead, people were not as inquisitive as they are now. Participant M continued by saying that they were in the past too, but people used to have interactions with people in society who were in the same class. The interactions between people were different. The financial part of life was not as important as it is now. The economic status of people was not used as a segregating element socially. Also, those who were wealthy did not seek to disturb others with their wealth. But now people want to show how wealthy they are.

Both participants said they do not like to close any doors in their house. Participant SH said that, in the past, women did not use to do their make-up in front of men. He has never seen his mother do it. He thought that make-up things are very personal female things and men should not see them. Participant M exclaimed that they did not even do that in front of their husbands. It was very bad to apply make-up in front of men.

i. Entertainment and social activities

Participant M said she prefers to watch TV while she is working. As she is alone at home, she used to turn the TV on in the living area. If she had a TV in the kitchen she would watch it. The morning programmes are usually about families or cooking, which are good to watch in the kitchen. Sometimes she takes work, if possible, to the living area, in front of the TV. She sometimes does knitting in front of the TV.

The participant's family have monthly gatherings with several friends. I asked them about any special changes for these gatherings at home and participant M mentioned an Iranian expression that says guests are a blessing for the house. When you want to add or change something you may postpone it, but you will do that when you have guests. You will learn a new meal or dessert. You will make things more organized. And these are all good points.

It was discussed that, usually, men and women talk separately. Participant M said they sometimes have music and dancing. At first, people have tea and biscuits, and then dinner and dessert.

Participant SH said they used to have gatherings with colleagues and they had a lot to talk about, but now their interaction is with his wife's friends and their family. And there are not many things in common to share. Participant M explained that, in the past, men would decide who they were going to interact with. But now she thinks this is more dependent on women.

j. Changes in ways of living

Participant M mentioned that, in the past, as women did not do work outside the home, they had to show their abilities by doing housework. It was very bad for a woman not to iron the sheets for example. But there are lots of other things for a woman to do now, so they do outside work and have a housekeeper to do the housework.

Participant M explained that people are very nervous these days because there are lots of small things which concern them, for example rubbish on the staircase, car horns and different things like that. We have the same things in architecture as well, the rooms that you live in.

Participant SH explained that, in the past, people used to have gatherings and ceremonies at home, but now almost 50 per cent of gatherings are outside. Participant M said, in the past, people used to have gatherings with just men, as they did not want their women to be seen. But now it is not like that anymore.

5.6.4 Workshop part III – Perceptions of Traditional vs contemporary Iranian architecture

5.6.4.1 Traditional Iranian Architecture

a. *Urban planning and design*

Participant M said the new architecture seems more geometric but the old type is like music that has its ups and downs. There is no specific geometry, but there is a rhythm there. Access in the new type is easier. The old one probably had some difficulties, which prompted these changes. But from this picture she preferred the traditional sort. Each alley or street had its own form in the traditional type, but they are all similar in the contemporary one, not only on this map, but also in other cities and countries too. But this special urban planning makes us different from other places.

b. *Family living ways*

Participant M said although it is common to think people are now wiser than in the past, she believes that they were wiser then. They had functional architecture in the past and did not just make some ridiculous forms without any reason. They used to live in different sides of the house in different seasons. But today, because of the population, houses are becoming smaller and smaller. People used to live together and share places. The extended family lived together. Children could play in the courtyard, all together. They had a shared reception area. They used to have houses according to their needs. Nowadays, people

like to live alone rather than living with parents or in-laws, so they will have more problems. The elderly used to live with the whole extended family and there was cooperation between them. If someone had a child the others helped them.

c. Materials and climate

Participant M mentioned wind-catchers in the centre and south of Iran as symbols of their architecture. These would never be seen in the north of Iran. It was similar with the materials that were used; people in the north did not use clay for their ceilings because of the rain, but this was common in the desert as it was good in this climate. But now the same materials are used everywhere. It does not matter whether they can survive in this climate or not.

Further questions were asked about the relevance of material choices to a region, to which the participant said materials can be a form of identity. Participant M said almost all people wear jeans today, even though it might be annoying in the summer in hot areas. Building materials have the same situation. Clay is not just an identity for desert regions; it is also a very good material for this climate. With traditional houses, which were built with clay, once you made them wet it changed the environment. But now, in these brick houses, the bricks should be washed several times in order to make them cool, and then they can make the atmosphere pleasant. These are all small points that make the quality of life better. All these small things make people feel pleasant.

Participant M mentioned that, in the past, people used to live in a house through different generations. But now, after 30 years, they say this house must be demolished as it is old.

d. Spatial arrangements

Participant SH said, in the past, the kitchen was outside and at some distance from all other spaces. After a while the kitchen was moved into the home, near other spaces. The washroom was also outside and that has been moved inside as well. For a while, people used to have a large reception area, with lots of furniture, which was used rarely. It was a large space and it was always cold. With new architecture, something changed and the reception and living areas are connected, which is very good. The kitchen is also in a better location than in the past. But it needs more improvement.

Participant M continued by saying that perhaps the reason why people feel more comfortable in traditional houses than in new luxurious ones

is because of the relationship between spaces. A very important aspect in traditional houses was colour. They would never paint a wall brown or black. They were always light coloured, with stained glass windows. They believed that light colours make spaces feel bigger. But in new architecture they use darker colours. She thinks that is terrible. In the past, they used to think about spaces for a long time, and then they decided what would give the best results. Now, people make models and draw 3D images, but after ten years they realize the problems, and there are lots of other houses like that. And unfortunately, they do not want to accept that was wrong.

e. Landscape elements

Participant M said she likes to have a small pool in the courtyard. That would not cause problems, but having one inside the house could cause problems.

They also mentioned they used to have an aquarium as they wanted to have water inside the house. However, it did not have the same feeling and it created difficulties, so they removed it (Figure 162).

Figure 162: A picture of the aquarium they had in their house.

Source: The author.

Participant SH explained that people used to have green spaces in houses in the past, but they have been removed because they caused problems, such as damp and insects. He agreed that they are needed and people in the past were aware of this too, but we have to be careful about the consequences.

Needs

The participants felt that cultural and social aspects are more important. For example, when you have to put bars on your windows to keep your house safe from thieves, it means social aspects have influence on your buildings. People do not want that anyone can see inside their house, so these are needs which are influencing buildings. Participant M explained there was robbery in the past too, but they used to build tall walls. Also, they had small windows outside. Now, we have fences with walls and windows like a jail. It is depressing.

They were very careful about financial aspects in the past, but now people waste a lot of money. They would think about the consequences of using things before doing so, but now people do things without thinking about the consequences.

Materials

Participant SH said his wife wanted to cover her studio floor with tiles, but he said it would make it hard for her to clean. We had a discussion



about covering all the floors with tiles or hardwood, and then covering them with carpet again. Participant SH said that carpet moves all the time on those kinds of floors, which is slippery and dangerous.



Participant M mentioned a building whose façade is fully covered by glass. It is always dirty and it is annoying for the people who see that. An aluminium façade has annoying reflections outside for drivers. Then there was a discussion about a building that tried to use traditional materials. Participant SH said it is ridiculous, but Participant M said that although it is funny it is not annoying (Figure 163).

Figure 163: A new-build building with traditional materials.

Source: The author.

Curtains in different periods

Participant SH explained that, in the past, after finishing an apartment, the builder covered the windows with nice curtains to encourage buyers.

Inward-looking or outward-looking buildings – Balcony

Participant SH mentioned his neighbour's balcony, which is towards the street on the first floor, and how they never use it. Also, it should have a good view; there is nothing attractive in the street to be seen from the balcony. Participant M continued that when the neighbour was building, they were worried their neighbours could see their entire yard. The neighbours just clean it once in a year, and they do not use it at all. They do not feel it is safe to sit there. People can see them from the street.

Culture

Participants were asked to discuss the role of the façade as an important social symbol. Participants responded by saying that now it is a common idea in society that the façade is the most important part. In the past, they used to serve their guests in their houses. But now almost 50 per cent of gatherings are outside. Or for sudden appointments people go out rather than visiting at home.

Participant SH said that at one time all restaurants had modern furniture. Now most of them are furnished in a kind of traditional style. In the house which his dad built, with flat ceilings, the roofs were changed to flat ones, but there was no proper insulation in them. It takes time to understand how they should build them.

Participants believed that positive changes in houses compared to the past were:

Kitchen moved from outside to inside the house.

The reception and living areas are now joint spaces.

Having bathrooms inside houses.

Having water in houses.

Large windows and convenient materials.

Several images were shown to participants in order to help them identify their desires.

Shoshtar:

Participant M said she does not like:

Modern central courtyards.

Participant M said these are very small, and they do not have the feeling of a courtyard.

Niavaran

Participant M said this is nice, with greenery and passing paths which make people feel good. It was nice in the past, it is nice now and it will be nice in the future too. But I think these items were forgotten at one point, and they need to be reconsidered again.

General comments by the participant:

Participant M mentioned benches at the entrances of traditional houses as a very good aspect. Having these in the street or alley would help the elderly and others have a rest. But we do not have them anymore. She really likes them, especially the ones with an arc in front of them that give shade. A main problem in summer in this region is the hot sunshine.

Participant M said that both design and materials are important to make them Iranian. It would be good to use materials from that region. It is also important to consider the climate; for example, in Kerman, houses should have sunlight in winter and they need to be protected from sunlight in summer. She also added that she thinks simplicity is something which is really good for today's world.

Participant M believes we have to be modern; we cannot live like 100 years ago. Although she believes in traditional architecture, she said that architecture should be changed according to new needs. It is not just because they are building something in the West that we have to

do that. Architecture should be improved according to climate and culture.

5.6.5 Workshop part IV – Co-creation process

“Home is a safe and comfortable place.” – M

“I wanted to say this too. First safety, then comfort. You may feel comfortable in a pergola but not comfortable in a luxury tower. Home is where you feel safe and comfortable.” – SH

a. Entrance – outside the house

Participant M mentioned it would be good to have a flowerbox, and a bench to sit on in the street. About the entrance been designed by the author, she said a bench outside is good for seating pedestrians, and also residents may want to sit outside to get some fresh air.

Participant SH said it depends on how the house relates to the street. For houses where you have to enter the yard from the street, it would be good to have a veranda in front of the building. It would be a good space to take shoes off and also shoes will be protected from rain and sunshine. For other houses where you reach the building directly from the street, it is good to have an entrance space before entering the main part of the house. It would be closed.

b. Entrance – inside the house

As participant M explained, she wanted to have a separate closed space as the first space when entering the house. She also said she prefers to keep all shoes in the entrance.

Participant M added a shoe case and a mirror in the entrance hall. Then, after this part, guests will come into the house, so something like a vestibule. She wanted a decorative cupboard for shoes in the entrance, hangers for clothes, and the ability to stay there for a short time and talk to someone. She also mentioned there could be a curve at the entrance in order to control privacy.

During the drawing process, more probing questions were asked to the participants to make them explain in more detail the various aspects they would want to have as part of the different spaces in the house. Participant M said it is good to have cupboards on both sides; it helps to change the walls from flat surfaces. Having cupboards on both sides means that one can be used for decorative objects. It should be a sight-controlled zone. M also wants a bench to help with putting shoes on, as well as a cupboard to keep shoes in. She was asked if she

wanted to have a decorative wall in front of the entrance to control visibility. She agreed but said she did not want to have greenery, water or birds there. She said it would be good if guests could come into the public part without seeing the private part. It would be good to have two doors: one to the public part and the other to the private part.

About having a moving wall, she said although it is more luxurious, she prefers it to be more comfortable. Participant SH continued that having another door is old-fashioned.

The participants believed these open entrances are terrible as there is no privacy. It was very important for Participant M that the house should not be seen at the beginning.

c. Kitchen

Participant M said it would be good to have the kitchen beside the courtyard, but it is not a big deal. The kitchen can be on the other side and have a small backyard. Greenery can be added to the backyard to make the kitchen pleasant, and it can also be used for drying washed clothes. It is very good to relate the kitchen to the open air for both ventilation and sunlight. Also, she wants a storeroom beside the kitchen.

d. Spatial organisation

Questions were asked about appropriate spatial relationships in the house and the zoning of spaces based on privacy.

Participant M wanted to have the reception and dining areas on one side and the living area on the other side, which can get direct sunlight. Also, she wants a separate entrance for the reception area. It was discussed that, in the past, there was a formal reception area and another living area for family. Participant M said now it has become a reception area and a TV room or a private living area. She wants to have two different spaces which are not divided by walls; they will be separated by furniture. And Participant SH continued by saying that today, in new architecture, they are all one space. They want to make them semi-separate, not completely separate, for example an L-shaped plan.

Participant SH said that there is a wall between their living and reception areas and they would demolish it if it were possible, because it would make it bigger and more luxurious.¹⁸⁰ He added that some

¹⁸⁰ In their house the living and reception areas were two separate spaces connected by a large door, and so they demolished the door and connected these

people make this separation with steps. But Participant M said although it is nice to have steps in the house, it is not comfortable and she does not want it.

In terms of the connectedness between spaces, Participant SH accepted it but Participant M said it is important how they are connected. She wants to have them separated and connected at the same time. Participant M stated that, today, people will not go to others' houses without calling first. And when they have guests they will not sit in the living area or lie down. Therefore, that space is organized when someone comes. And it is good having a larger space in the living room.

Participant M stated that the kitchen should be near the dining area and also the reception area. The kitchen must make it easy to serve guests. Also, there must be protection from food smells. They eat in the kitchen usually, and maybe with closer family and friends, but with others they eat in the dining area.

e. Living area

Participant M said she always likes to have a living area which has good sunlight and which is beside the yard with large windows overlooking the yard. Also, she added that she does not like to be in a small space. She likes the living area to be linked to the reception area.

I asked them if they wanted to have any other elements like a fireplace in the living area, and Participant M answered that the important things in a living area are sunlight and the view. It would be great to have a green area outside that can be seen from the living area.

f. Reception

Participant M said that now people have guests more during the evening, and then there is no sunlight, so it is not necessary. Furniture and decoration are more important there. It can have electric light. Also, she believed it would be good to have a tall space for the reception area and a shorter one for the dining area. But these different levels should be the ceilings, not the floor. It should be easy to clean the ceiling.

Participant M believed that in new architecture the best part of the house is the reception area, which is wrong.

spaces, but there is still a wall between them, which is what Participant SH was referring to.

g. Bedrooms

Participant M said the bedroom should have sunlight and be located beside the courtyard. She was thinking that perhaps it does not need proper light, but as she talked with her husband she decided it does need natural light. The bedroom should be calm and quiet.

Participant SH said that bedrooms cannot connect directly to the living area. For example, there might be a guest and someone wants to wake up and go to the bathroom. He should not be seen from the living area. And Participant M continued by saying that her daughter's room is beside the living area and when the door is open the entire room can be seen, which is very bad. Participant SH added that a bedroom should be cool in summer and warm in winter.

Also, they mentioned it is very bad having bedrooms on another floor, and annoying.

h. Storeroom

Participant SH said a storeroom is very bad as it allows you to keep unnecessary things and Participant M said it is hard to clean it. I asked them about having a space above the dining area to keep some necessary , and Participant M said it is a good idea but hard to access. There is a similar space in her mum's house above the bathroom. They used to keep things that they did not use anymore, like old magazines. Participant SH said that half of the storeroom has sleeping stuff for guests who never come. There are other things like blankets and a backrest, which they kept from when they started their marriage. No one used this backrest and it was just stored in the storeroom for years, so finally they got rid of them the previous year.

i. Balcony

They talked about a balcony in their friend's house that was surrounded by a 150cm high wall, it was usable as no one could see them.

j. Participants M and SH's general comments and observations

Participant SH explained that at some ages it is hard to move and make changes. Ten years ago it was easier than now for him. He also added that his parents would never move now. Some of the positive aspects of traditional architecture were noted. Participant M mentioned benches at the entrances of traditional houses as a very good feature. Having these in the street or alley would help the elderly and others have a rest. But we do not have them anymore. She really likes them,

especially those with an arc in front of them that offer shade. A main problem in summer in this region is the hot sunshine. Participant M said that design and materials are both important to make it Iranian. It would be good to use materials from that region. It is also important to consider the climate; for example, in Kerman, houses should have sunlight in winter and need to be protected from sunlight in summer. She also added that she thinks simplicity is something which is really good for today's world.

5.7 Conclusion

The chapter has presented the various narratives of the five participants from the workshop sessions. The narratives present the diverse and overlapping viewpoints of the participants from the four sessions of the workshop – experiences of houses inhabited, everyday practices, perceptions of traditional and contemporary architecture and finally the co-creation process for an appropriate house design for each participant. The chapter has shed light on the diverse urban living practices of Iranian people, how the various practices have evolved and how those have impacted on choices and preferences vis-à-vis house design in contemporary Iran. Based on these narratives, the next chapter aims to develop recommendations for renewed design thinking and practice for appropriate domestic architecture in Iran.

Chapter 6

Summary and Findings

6.1 Introduction

The final chapter of this thesis presents a summary and the findings of the research. The summary explains the context of the research and how the research process and methodology were developed to address the research aims and questions. A brief discussion of the significance and relevance of the vernacular tradition is conducted, following which the contribution of the thesis is presented as a set of design propositions for developing an appropriate housing design in contemporary Iran. The chapter explains the significance of the thesis's contribution and the limitations of the research and also explores trajectories for future research.

6.2 Summary

Available studies on Iranian architecture, as highlighted by Haeri Mazandarani, suggest that new housing designs and the ways of living implied by them do not completely answer Iranian families' needs. People feel that newer houses often do not meet all the requirements and expectations of their residents.¹⁸¹ As an Iranian architect with first-hand experience of living in Iran and interacting with people from different social backgrounds, the author believes that there are major elements that have been overlooked in modern Iranian housing designs. If adequately considered, they could improve people's lifestyles and overall wellbeing. The thesis set out to examine the issue of the growing conflict between residents' sociocultural and spatial

¹⁸¹ Mohammad Reza Haeri Mazandarani, *House Culture Nature – Architecture survey in historical and contemporary houses/ khane, farhang, tabiat/ خانه ، فرهنگ ، طبیعت* (Center for Architectural and Urban studies and research, 2010). P 144.

practices and housing design in contemporary Iran. In this context, the thesis addresses the following research questions:

- What are some of the social and cultural factors that have historically shaped residential buildings in Iran?
- What practical lessons can architects learn from a critical investigation of early and traditional Iranian houses?
- What are the enduring factors and emerging needs that need to be considered when designing apartments and houses for the middle class in Iran today?

The thesis began, in Chapter 1, by looking into the various factors and events that were responsible for the transformation of architectural design and styles in Iran. Delineating the sociopolitical factors impacting on overall changes in perceptions and urban living in Iran, the thesis highlights critical junctures in the evolution and transformation of traditional Iranian dwellings. Then, in Chapter 2, the evolution of housing in Iran was explored in order to understand the critical themes, symbols and traditions that make up the character of domestic architecture in Iran. Diverse disciplinary perspectives on the importance of the concept of house, home and dwelling were discussed. In order to examine the complex relationship between people, sociocultural practices and housing design, a qualitative methodology employing a narrative workshop methodology was adopted to collect rich data about participants' social, cultural and spatial experiences of home, i.e. people's experiences (Chapter 3). The thesis then presented the context of the city for this research which is Kerman (Chapter 4). This case study was chosen for the interesting characteristics of the city, which include both traditional and modern representations of Iran. In order to understand, in depth, the various activities and practices of the residents in the present-day context, a pilot study conducted with an Iranian family was presented. This helps to better understand the participants' discussions on various practices and experiences explained in the workshop sessions.

In order to find out how residents think, relate and experience their homes, workshop sessions involving in-depth interviews with five participants were conducted (Chapter 5). The workshop was conducted in four parts. Interviews were organized in a way that let the participants talk about own desires and understandings of spaces at the beginning. In part I, participants discussed the various houses each one had lived in; in part II, the discussion turned to participants' everyday activities, practices and preferences; in part III, participants'

perceptions and the relevance of traditional Iranian and contemporary architecture were discussed, and the final part involved a co-creation process of participants' desirable house designs. The aim was to identify the main features or aspects of design that the residents feel are missing from where they live, and which, if implemented, would make them feel more content and connected to their memories or cultural/ social preferences.

6.3 Discussion

Due to globalization, architectural design, forms and practices across cultures have undergone several transformations. Various challenges and issues linked to globalization and spatial transformations in cities include terms of homogenization¹⁸² and a lack of identity in architecture. While on the one hand these issues may have negative connotations, there are also positive connotations in terms of looking at transformation from a progressive point of view.¹⁸³ Across the spectrum of views on transformation, it is important to understand that, at any given time, architecture needs to reflect its time, place and culture and link these to the past, the present and perhaps the future.¹⁸⁴ Echoing similar notions, critical regionalism emerged as an architectural concept during the early 1980s. For leading theorists such as Kenneth Frampton, critical regionalism was an “architecture of resistance” seeking “to mediate the impact of universal civilization” and “to reflect and serve the limited constituencies” in which it was grounded.¹⁸⁵ Critical regionalism is an approach that reflects this notion, it strives to address the lack of place and identity in the era of modernization. It is significant in the way it manifests itself as a

¹⁸² Rob Shields, “Entangled Places, Interface Buildings, Generic Design,” in *Buildings, Culture and Environment: Informing Local and Global Practices*, ed. Richard Lorch and Raymond J. Cole, 1st ed. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2003), 18–36.

¹⁸³ Massey, Doreen B. “A Global Sense of Place”, *Marxism Today*, 1991, P24–29. P26.

¹⁸⁴ Bechhoefer, W. B. "Regionalism and Culture in Design Education and Practice", In: *Culture-Space-History: Proceedings of the 11th International Conference of the IAPS*. IAPS, Ankara, Turkey: METU Faculty of Architecture, 1990. P 326.

¹⁸⁵ Keith L. Eggener (2002) Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism, *Journal of Architectural Education*, 55:4, P 228–237, DOI: 10.1162/104648802753657932 . P232.

consciously bounded architecture, one which, rather than emphasizing the building as a free-standing object, places the stress on the territory to be established by the structure erected on a site.¹⁸⁶ Frampton, in his seminal work *Toward a Critical Regionalism: Six points for an architecture of resistance*, analyses work by different architects, highlighting the various inspirations that can be derived from vernacular style and traditions. Some of the architects' work presented in Frampton's book include Tadao Ando of Japan, Luis Barragan of Mexico and Hassan Fathy of Egypt, to name but a few. The architect Christopher Alexander, who was against homogenization and mass-produced building styles, introduced an interesting new approach through his work *A Pattern language: Town. Buildings. Construction*. At the core of his work lies the idea that architecture connects people to their surroundings in an infinite number of ways, most of which are implicit. It shows how people can design, build and shape their own surroundings. To do this, Alexander created "pattern language", a kind of generative grammar with 253 patterns that can be used to make things. The patterns cover all scales, from big towns to medium- and small-scale construction.

While there are some significant approaches to and thoughts about the significance of vernacular architecture in developing design solutions that are appropriate to context and empathetic to peoples' needs, it is equally pertinent to acknowledge the current urban transformation trends that can impact on the approaches discussed above. Malcom Waters explains that globalisation is a social process in which constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, whereby people become increasingly aware that they are receding and so they act accordingly.¹⁸⁷

Waters' definition is highly relevant, especially with respect to the dynamic changes in Iranian urban living, for two reasons. First, it clearly states that people are aware of both ongoing and impending changes that impact on all facets of their existence. This also implies that people are, in a way, equipped to address the implications of globalisation. Secondly, it underlines the developing anticipation of people to accommodate and adapt to these inevitable changes. Exploring these conditions can open up interesting perspectives and approaches for architects and equip them to respond to the urban transformations that cause uncertainty in how people act; in this way, this definition

¹⁸⁶ Geoffrey Bawa and David Robson, *Geoffrey Bawa: The Complete Works* (New York, NY: Thames & Hudson, 2002). P 9.

¹⁸⁷ Malcolm Waters, *Globalization*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2000). P.5.

creates potential and favourable conditions for architects to evolve, develop and re-read the vernacular style and address the changing needs of people. Architect Geowery Bawa's work exemplifies how architecture form and style can creatively evolve and take into account the profound interlacing of landscape, people and climate.¹⁸⁸

The thesis, by delving deeper into everyday spatial practices and people's experiences of home, strives for a better understanding of changing needs, customs and values of people, which facilitates the evolution of appropriate housing-design solutions.

6.4 Thesis's contribution

The analysis and synthesis of the workshop narratives is developed as a set of design propositions to understand and facilitate the process of designing appropriate domestic architecture in Iran, which is the original contribution of this thesis.

6.4.1 Design propositions for appropriate domestic architecture in contemporary Iran

There have been significant changes in Iran's domestic architectural approach over past decades, notable from early in to the middle of the 20th century, which have stemmed from political, social and cultural trends. For instance, current designs do not emphasize the importance of traditional reception areas, and in many cases the same spaces are used for public (non-private) and private living, a feature that could be attributed to fewer social interactions, e.g. family gatherings and the reduced presence of extended families.

Prior to the 1920s and the beginning of the wave of Westernisation, Iranian houses were being built with emphasis on having two types of characteristics: (1) climate, geographical location, available materials and in structural features; (2) the social, cultural and, in particular, religious preferences of the society. Understandably, structural features have drastically changed over time, the availability of new materials as well as modern tools and technologies have provided quite a lot of flexibility for the designers. Likewise, with modernisation and

¹⁸⁸ Thomas Docherty. Postmodernism: A Reader. Routledge, 2016, p.268 . Toward a Critical Regionalism: Six points for an architecture of resistance. Frampton, K.)

changing lifestyles, a number of social and cultural values have been gradually fading in Iranian society. For instance, women these days play a very active role in different business and social life. And hence the early 20th century separation between male and female guests is not a must anymore. Nevertheless, religion still plays a strong role in Iranian society. Unlike Western countries, government directly interferes in religious issues and reinforces them; Islamic guidelines need to be clearly respected in society. Although people in their own homes may not consider these religious rules relevant, they certainly want such behaviour to remain hidden from view. In simple terms, whatever their lifestyle, they do not want to feel exposed to public scrutiny. In some cases, this can be attributed to government-enforced regulations and the consequences of publicly violating them, rather than residents' preferences. With respect to the latter, privacy is a prime example, and it still has an important role to play in Iran's cultural context. Nevertheless, it has been overlooked in designing new houses. There have been some attempts to add some especially visually appealing features that resonate and/or replace some aspects of Iranian traditional houses, e.g. a balcony as a replacement for a courtyard. Regrettably, in many cases, the functionality of such spaces has been neglected, e.g. a fully exposed balcony in an apartment that can rarely be used by female members of the family (if they don't want to contravene Islamic regulations).

These are examples of why, in many cases, residents feel less than content with some aspects of their homes. There are also other elements, like paying less attention to the relationship between inside and outside, which add to the problem. The research also suggests that people would feel happier with their homes if there were elements that made them feel connected with the past, in other words, if new houses to some extent resembled what residents experienced in their childhood homes (given the dramatic shifts in Iran's architectural approach in the past three decades, including excessive apartment-building and implementing Western architectural features, e.g. open kitchens).

The key findings of this research are presented as a set of four design propositions that facilitate design thinking and process when developing an appropriate house design. Appropriateness in this context is defined based on the extent to which the spatial design and organisation of the house cater to the contemporary everyday practices of people in the contemporary urban context in Iran. The four design propositions are social interaction, inside-outside, privacy, and the relationship with the past. It is worth noting that within the

context of this research, the past refers to the period in which the participants spent their childhoods, which is roughly 30–50 years ago.

6.4.1.1 Social interaction

As explained in Chapter 2, in the past, the reception and living areas were two different parts of domestic space, whereas today in most cases they have become one.

It was very common in the past for the entire extended family to live together in one house. Such a lifestyle inevitable created more interactions among family members and house design had to accommodate those needs. In such a context, courtyards played a key role in social gatherings, which were very common among middle-class families. This was explained in detail in Chapter 2.

During the workshops, the participants were asked about social interactions and interestingly enough they all believed that the current meaning and concept of social interaction is different from the past (what they experienced in childhood). Nevertheless, they all agreed on its importance and the role it plays in daily life. For instance, when participant H was talking about his childhood houses, he said: “I think my most vivid memory goes back to when we were interacting with our neighbours. It was creating some sort of feeling that we are connected like a family and we can support each other.” Special events and gatherings were another common example mentioned by the interviewees. They all referred to those events as good and memorable times. Participant S described how she had good memories of those parties. These examples indicate the importance of social interactions in domestic spaces.

Whereas, in the past, the numbers of people at gatherings were large, now people gather in smaller groups. The types of gatherings, the time people spend together and how often they meet each other have all changed. Participant S talked about the relations between people and said, “It feels like we had more free time in the past. We often spent the evening together. It was common that children and adults played together, perhaps in courtyards. Although, back then, there were not sophisticated games as there are these days, children had a better time, at least that’s what I think. Nowadays they go to their room and hardly come out to interact with guests, e.g. the rest of the family, such as aunts and uncles. It is even not easy to have them at the table at the meal times. Participants S, M and SH described how they gathered together in their houses’ courtyards with their extended families to have an evening snack together, something that is not common

anymore. This type of gathering, or a dedicated space that facilitates such events, has been neglected in contemporary domestic architecture. These values and routines, the social interactions between extended family members and friends and the role of such spaces in delivering those values need to be reconsidered in the design process.

Participant A talked about having a day off to spend with the whole extended family, “I used to have a day off. My extended family members and sometimes close family friends would gather in one place to socialize and have fun.” It is worth mentioning that these types of gatherings still occur, though as not often as before and also in a different way. For such events, people go to the suburbs or gather in one family member’s holiday home to spend some time together.

Though it is understandable that these days the relations between people are different and more complicated, e.g. they have higher expectations when invited, as indicated by participants A and SH, it still seems that family members and friends need to be more willing to organise and participate in such events.

Participant SH mentioned that, today, most parties take place outside the home: “these days, people do not want to bother themselves any more. We used to have a large number of guests but it required a lot of preparation, nowadays it seems very difficult, perhaps people are lazier!” During our discussions, he agreed that changes in people’s ways of living, including less available spare time and smaller houses, are the main reasons for this trend. Fortunately, with emerging new services, e.g. to help organising events, people have more options and flexibility to attend or host different social gatherings.

It is worth mentioning that apart from ways of livings, social priorities have also changed. After 1985, people started to feel more concerned with the financial challenges of having large families. The population growth rate was 4 per cent in 1985. The Iraq-Iran war ended in 1988, and just after the war the government adopted a drastically different policy towards population growth rate. Iran’s development, which halted after 1979 because of the revolution and continued until the end of the war, put social welfare and many members of society at risk. And so the government came up with a new approach. Having only two children was widely promoted across the country. The famous government slogan was “fewer children, a better quality of life”. As a result, the population growth rate sharply decreased and in just five years it fell to 1.17 per cent (in 1993). The current population growth rate is 1.28% (2014). Such a change in society inevitably affected the

housing market, in terms of both design and affordability. People have also become more educated and pay more attention to the quality of their life. A number of new forms of entertainment are available in residents' homes (e.g. cable, satellite TV), so house residents, either alone or together, can enjoy their spare time.

In the past, especially until the 1960s, it was not unusual for several families to live together in a big house. As suggested by participant M, having more space and helping each other made it easier to invite guests more often. In the past, courtyards were an important place for social interactions, but this is not the case anymore. Participants S, M and SH mentioned that “we used to gather for a snack in the afternoon with our extended families in the courtyard. It rarely happens these days, perhaps because there are no courtyards anymore.” The courtyard's form and scale have been changed over recent decades. Mrs M said, “I think serving guests was easier in the past. I remember we, along with other people, would go to my grandma's house in the afternoon to spend some time together. You know, people would occasionally bring some food as well, e.g. simple snacks like lettuce that they ate with a local sweet syrup. Sometimes we had quite a lot of different snacks to share with each other in the courtyard.” While all of these comments point towards the lack of a proper space for social gatherings or an alternative to the courtyard in modern Iranian designs, cultural changes should not be underestimated. In general, people value privacy more these days. They prefer not to share different aspects/issues of their social and/or professional life with others unless they feel they are very close to them (regardless of the relationship). Such a mind-set, which is an essential part of living in the 21st century, makes social gatherings among extended family friends, neighbour or friends purely for entertainment, if compared to similar events decades ago, seem very superficial.

M said, “In the past, people did not know how many guests they might have; they just had an approximate number. This meant that they were always prepared for more guests. But nowadays, people do not often go to other people's houses without informing them in advance.” While technology has affected the culture and lifestyles, people still feel that they need to have a specific space for their guests. For example, as houses have become smaller, the living and reception areas are often the same space.

Communicating with the host and asking them if they have time or asking permission to go there could also be interpreted as a sign of respect and mutual understanding. It shows that current ways of living mean that people have less time for others and they have boundaries

that need to be respected, regardless of how close is the relationship between host and guests. Also, in the past, communication tools were not as accessible as they are these days, when people can effortlessly inform each other about their plans.

The importance of having large living rooms and reception areas is not only to be prepared for rare occasions of hosting a high number of guests. These are spaces that family members spend most of their time in when they are at home. They also reflect the financial status of residents.

M said, “Before, people thought or had the feeling that they were very close to their guests, and vice versa. It was even not unusual to share your own meals with them, though if you do that these days your guests think you are disrespecting them.” Despite the fact that fewer and fewer events are held at home, people would still like to have and keep lots of stuff for their parties which, considering the limited available space, is challenging. Proper hygienic conduct when preparing and serving foods is now considered an essential part of social manners. Also, these days, most of the time guests do not go somewhere without giving prior notice, and so preparing a proper meal, with respect to the cultural context, is a reasonable expectation. Being prepared to host large parties, e.g. having enough plates, cutlery and so on, is part of Iranian culture. Even families with a lower income often have them, though they may never be used.

Participant M pointed out that, these days, more gatherings are in the evening, while in most cases the reception is on the side which benefits from sunlight. This can be a good point when the reception and living areas are one space, but when they are two different spaces this seems to be unhelpful.

Most of the participants expressed that, for gatherings, they prefer times when more people can attend. In addition, changes to people’s lives and socialising styles over the years also need to be considered.

Interestingly, M explained, “I remember in the past how men, without their families, often gathered together. The host, because of his religious and cultural perspectives, did not like there to be any communication between his family members (females) and the guests, while today, at least in most cases, this is not a concern anymore.” Mrs Adelhah, an Iranian anthropologist, talks about the period after the revolution when a new form of gathering was established in Iran. In this context, religious events in the form of ceremonies take place at

home, and only women can attend these parties. So an event is hosted by women and only women are invited to the event.

As mentioned before, usually, men and women talked separately. In more religious and traditional families, men and women even sat separately in two different spaces. As highlighted by participants M and S, in many gatherings, especially when the number of people was quite large, men and women would form different groups for chatting and sit in different areas, regardless of the traditional or religious views of families.

M explained that, “in the past, men decided who they (and their family) should meet and interact with. But I think now women have more influence than men on these issues.”

Participant A talked about the role of a common green area outside, shared by several families living in apartments in the same building and how this would help them to improve their social life while living in an apartment. Although such a feature is useful, talking to different participants (if the participants so wished) required having a private open space, rather than a shared one.

The changes observed in social gatherings can be attributed to a number of factors, including: smaller families, connecting via available communication tools, e.g. mobile phones, changes in people’s ways of living, moving towards a more elementary family (parents and their children) and dedicating time for this purpose, in contrast to extended families’ interactions, valuing independence and privacy, cost and the financial aspect of spending on such events (inviting many guests). Although this may not be as important as the reasons mentioned above, social interactions are discouraged by the way that spaces are connected in today’s Iranian domestic architecture. Current homes need to be very well organized to create a good impression on guests, something that with very limited available time and busy lifestyles seems not to be a top priority.

6.4.1.2 Inside -outside connectedness

Being connected to nature, the presence of plants and having fresh air are some of the benefits of outside spaces. Some housework can also be done in such spaces, besides their role of providing a relaxing environment to rest or socialise in. In traditional houses, there were different types of outside spaces, namely courtyards and roof verandas.

From this research, it can be inferred that an important aspect of housing design that has been somewhat neglected and deserves more

attention is how different parts of a house are connected to the outside as well as to nature, an aspect that played a prime role in the past. Interestingly, available evidence that can be traced back to 6,000 B.C. shows that houses had courtyards even millennia ago. Even until recent years, before apartments become a major part of new housing, these courtyards were used as active space. However, this study and field observations suggest that the courtyard does not have an active function in domestic spaces as it did before. The functions that the courtyard had in the past are explained in detail in Chapter 2, e.g, how it served as a green space, a channel for air crossing and a calm and peaceful space for residents' rest. Also, it played an important part in organizing the different parts of the house and connecting different spaces to each other.

During the workshops, a very important theme that was introduced by the researcher and discussed in detail was open spaces. When participants talked about their previous houses, the best memories they had were of green and open spaces. They all talked about how nice it was to spend time in a nice, cool, natural space and how they liked the pleasant temperature in traditional spaces. Technology has changed lifestyles as well as how available spaces are used in new houses, e.g. people do not need to have separate spaces for winter and summer as they did in the past (this is explained in Chapter2).

There was a semi-open space in traditional houses that connected all other spaces to the open air. As a functional space, it was also used for other purposes, like socialising. Figure 164 shows an image that was presented to the participants and that they liked. For example, participant A insisted that, "I think every house needs to have such a space, it creates a friendly atmosphere for chit-chat."



Figure 164: A semi-open space in a new house built by Frayar Javaherian.
Source: *Architecture and culture*. Vol. 48. 2012.

In the past, rooms were connected directly to the courtyard, which created a physical and visual connection with the outside, a feature whose importance all of the participants highlighted. Participant H mentioned that spaces that were connected directly to the courtyard were used more often. Participant M explained, "I would have a home with its living area and bedroom connected to the outside. It would be good if the kitchen can have access to the open air too." Participant S said, "I believe that the living area should be related to the outside and it's better if the kitchen and bedrooms are related to this space too, though it may not be that important." Participant A described how, "I would like to see all the spaces related to the outside." Participants M and SH mentioned that, "our courtyard with these kinds of space and

greenery is a positive point of our home. We will miss the trees if we move to a different place.” Participant S had a different feeling about their courtyard and pointed out that, “our courtyard is not a good enough feature in the house, it is small and without greenery.”

They would all prefer to have access to a shady space outside, like a veranda in the past, as explained in Chapter 2. M and SH both talked about a veranda in front of their house and described it as nice and a good point of their house. According to Nader Ardalan,¹⁸⁹ a porch, as a three-dimensional method for modulating the penetration of light into a building, should be used to intensify the usefulness of a semi-outdoor space and could be an important space in domestic design in Iran.¹⁹⁰ When this feature was discussed with the participants, they all seemed interested in having such a space in their homes (Figure 165).

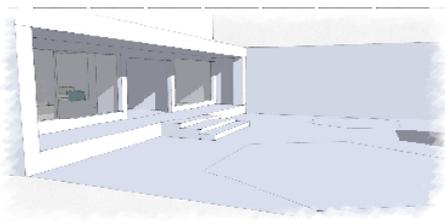


Figure 165: A semi-open space in front of the building drawn for participant S.

Source: The author.

Participants A, M and SH had experience of living in traditional houses in Kerman. The first things they mentioned were trees and a pool, which they remember from those places, as well as the nice cool temperature around the pool, which was quite interesting (Figure 166). The others, who did not live in such houses, mentioned trees and flowers as the most memorable features in their courtyards. Participant “H” preferred looking outside, but in terms of atmosphere he liked this image. Although, they sometimes could not remember the details of their houses, they all had some memories of the outside, which suggests it is a very important aspect in their life. Interestingly, all participants said that although times have changed, these features are important enough to be reconsidered.



Figure 166: A traditional central courtyard with greenery.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. *Houses of Esfahan – Ganjnameh / Khanehaye Esfahan / خانه های اصفهان* / Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.

In most cities, houses had been or were going to be replaced by apartments. Participants H and A, who live in apartments, were more concerned about the balcony, especially participant A. He has a child, and he wants the balcony to play the same role as the courtyard. He wants a safe, secure and private open space for the family. Participants M and SH mentioned two examples: a balcony facing the street (which can be easily seen from outside and has no privacy) as a rarely used space, and a balcony that provides enough privacy, e.g. surrounded by

¹⁸⁹ A well-known Iranian architect.

¹⁹⁰ Nader Ardalan, *Habitat Bill of Rights: Presented by Iran 1976/ منشور حقوق اسکان*, 2010. P.284.

relatively tall walls, that is private, nice and easy to use. It was interesting that participant S was really interested in outward-looking balconies, but when the matter of privacy was discussed, she said that as a woman it is often not easy for her to use that kind of balcony.

Another interesting point was that, regardless of their age or background, all the participants would enter the house through the courtyard and then reach the building. The following images are drawings that were presented to participants S and A, both wanted a recessed entrance through the courtyard (Figure 167, Figure 168).

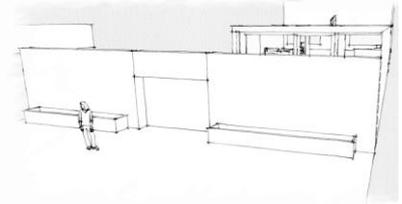


Figure 167: Entrance drawn according to S's comments.
Source: The author.

The participants talked about the roof as a pleasant space where they used to spend time but don't anymore. Now roofs do not have the same function, this is an aspect that can be considered in future research.

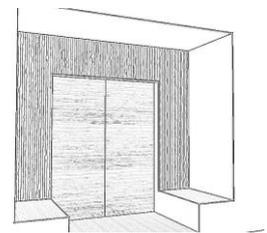


Figure 168: Entrance drawn according to A's comments.
Source: The author.

They all liked to sleep outside, something that is not common these days. Participant "H" said, "We used to sleep outside until a murderer attacked people in several houses in the city. Then we decided that it was not safe to do so anymore." Participant S said, "I like the idea of sleeping outside, as I used to do so in the past. Now I feel that there is no privacy and it is not safe enough, too. I would still sleep outside if I feel it is safe and secure, for instance on the rooftop." Participant A indicated that, "although my flat's balcony is quite small and is not convenient to sleep, I still there when it is warm enough outside."

The preferred relationship between inside and outside for the residents is shaped by a number of factors, including the functions of space, aesthetic and visual attraction and comfort. Some functions, like providing a place to sleep outside, are very rare these days and often not feasible. In terms of visual aspects, efforts are being made in either detached houses or the main entrances of apartment buildings to make these spaces quite appealing, as this adds to the value of a building; nevertheless, sometimes they do not have the expected function (e.g. providing a transition, similar to traditional Iranian houses). The space highlighted in all the interviews and based on the emphasis of all participants is the courtyard. Such a place, with lots of greenery, a pleasant temperature and as a place for most social gatherings, has been the focal point of traditional Iranian houses. In most cases in

modern housing designs in Iran, having such a space or creating alternatives (e.g. balconies) is not achievable. This is due to changes in people's lifestyles, e.g. fewer social gatherings, smaller families and also affordability. Recently, buildings with green roofs have started to appear, but due to financial restrictions they are still very rare. Nevertheless, they hint at a new direction in domestic housing design in Iran that attempts to provide relaxing green spaces, which resonates with the history of Iranian architecture.

6.4.1.3 Privacy

As was described in Chapter 2 (social history and people's ways of living in the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th, Iranian society in general puts strong emphasis on the issue of privacy. This strong interest has its roots in many religious, political, social and cultural events. Until the early 1920s, the strong presence of Islamic regulations and conduct was the main reason behind making Iranian houses inward looking, but the ups and downs of Iran's history in recent centuries, e.g. the Mongols' invasion in the 13th century, have created a sense of mistrust between rulers/ governments and the people, which has also contributed to this. During the 20th century, several changes, mainly driven by political/ cultural reforms, e.g. promoting a strong presence for women in society, Westernisation and modernisation, happened and houses gradually become more outward-looking buildings. However, the Islamic revolution of 1979 was a turning point. Its agenda was to promote Islamic guidelines and set regulations that made following Islamic rules obligatory (e.g. an Islamic dress code, the hijab, for women). But now, four decades since 1979, the government now emphasises that what happens in people's houses is not relevant to the government and is a matter of personal choice. Nevertheless, if, for instance, drinking alcoholic beverages happens in a house in such a way that is visible outside, e.g. on a balcony, there is still a strong risk of government interference.



Figure 169: The entrance drawn according to A's comments.
Source: The author.

Privacy was introduced at the entrance and different parts of the house were designed in a way that would not be seen, or visually accessible' without the host's permission. They had andarooni (space specifically for the family) and birooni (spaces for strangers), this type of separation does not exist anymore. Although, today, houses include separate private and public parts, the private section is not the same as andarooni (explained in Chapter 2). This theme was discussed with the participants during the workshops. Participants A, SH and M liked the curve in the traditional entrance and said it was very good in terms

of controlling visibility. This is a drawing from participant A showing his preferred house entrance.(Figure 169). It is very similar to traditional entrances.

They all were concerned about what others can see in their house, except the bachelor who did not care about it as much as the others. This could be attributed to several things, for instance the physical appearance of the house, e.g. furniture that may reflect how organised the residents are as well as revealing their financial prowess.

It was a matter of privacy in the past not to put pictures of women within people's view, but it is different now. Participant S referred to this, saying "I used to put images of the family in the living area and remove them when hosting some specific guests, but not anymore."

They mentioned it is now part of the culture that people want to hide how they live. For example, participant S said that their curtains always cover the windows to prevent being seen. It was interesting that she was keen about having large windows and described this as a good point, but she also said she will use curtains to cover them. Likewise, she was one of the people who liked outward-looking buildings, but she agreed that, for instance, outward-looking balconies are not going to be used as outdoor space. The other three participants, who were more traditional, explained that these outward-looking balconies would not serve their true function due to a lack of privacy.

Privacy at the entrance was another concern that they all shared. In most houses, when the door is open, the entire house can be seen, something that they said is still not acceptable in our culture (Figure 170). M explained that "When the entrance door of our courtyard is open people can see inside from the street, to me this is like a disaster." SH said, "In the past, the walls surrounding our courtyard were lower until I noticed someone was watching inside the courtyard while we were there. So I raised the height of the wall to prevent that." As explained in Chapter 2, the boundary of each house is separated by walls from neighbours and the street. Although there is no central courtyard any more, courtyards are surrounded by walls.

Figure 170 : Image of participants M and SH's courtyard.
Source: The author.



As mentioned before, two of the participants were around 50 years old and the others around 40. It was interesting that the younger ones preferred to have the bedrooms on a different level with respect to

the public parts of the house, while the other two wanted to have all spaces on the same level.

The participants had different views about the kitchen. They all believed that it needs to be near the reception area, but they had different views about how it needs to relate to other spaces. In particular, they had contrasting views and preferences about having an open or a closed kitchen. The traditional ones preferred to have closed kitchens, while the other participants preferred open ones. Interestingly, there were some contradictory aspects in their views; for example, H said, "I want to have an open kitchen. I also want to have a kitchen such that it would not be in everybody's view as it might be cluttered." Participant S, too, said she prefers to have an open kitchen, she indicated that she wants part of the kitchen to be closed and not completely exposed to other spaces.

Participant A wanted to have the kitchen near the entrance so that it can be reached from the entrance without being seen from the living area. In addition, he explained that, "I like a house that has completely separate bedrooms."

They all agreed that the private and public parts of the house should be separated, the core idea was not to be exposed to or seen by guests or other people.

Participant A described his granddad's house as a nice and memorable place until one of the neighbours built a tall building in front of it: "Because the residents in the new building were able to see inside the courtyard, it was not pleasant to use it as often as before." As mentioned earlier, culturally, it is preferable to live in houses that provide adequate privacy. This is a very important point, which has made a lot of people reluctant to use their courtyards. It is worth mentioning that there are some regulations from the city council about windows overlooking neighbours' courtyards.

The emphasis on having privacy and separate spaces stems from Iranian cultural and religious preferences. Memarian believes people naturally like to have privacy, and a family's habits intensify this need for privacy. Also, Shariah recommendations about the veil and the categorization of people into intimate and non-intimate impact on the extent of separation between private and public zones. In Muslims' houses, the reception zone is basically separated from the private zone by joint spaces. In contemporary architecture, the elimination of joint spaces

leads to interference between different residential zones and a reduction in residents' comfort.¹⁹¹

“H” explained, “I would like to have two different reception areas; one to spend time with my close friends, which I call the private living area, and the other as a formal reception area for all other guests.”

Another point that was mentioned about privacy concerns some activities that are not culturally/ religiously accepted, like drinking alcoholic beverages. People who do so are more concerned about their privacy.

The role of privacy in traditional houses in Iran and its importance in contemporary housing design has been repeated throughout this thesis, which is because of its prime role in Iranian culture. The true meaning of privacy, and what it means to each of the participants in this research, is not easy to describe. Nevertheless, they all implied having a kind of controlled/ filtered access to the outside. In other words, all the interviewees asserted their desire for the presence of a function that gives them control over revealing their personal life in their houses. For them it is privacy. The necessity for privacy is rooted in historical, social, cultural and personal values and preferences. As mentioned before, the emphasis on privacy may involve different reasons for different people, for some it is because of the fear of being exposed and held liable due to not respecting obligatory Islamic regulations, while others do not like to be perceived as disorganized people and want their place to look clean and tidy.

6.4.1.4 Re-inventing the past

During this research, it became clear that people would like to have some traditional elements in their houses, but to have such features they are limited by their furniture options. Often, their houses do not provide such traditional concepts from an architectural point of view, e.g. orsi, the traditional window (Figure 171). People used to keep traditional things and symbols in their houses as decorative objects. So, during the workshop sessions, different elements from traditional houses as well as traditional symbols and paintings were shown to the participants in order to find out if they liked to have traditional elements in their houses.



Figure 171: A traditional sash window or orsi.

Source: Kambiz Hajighasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه* Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.

¹⁹¹ Gholam Hossein Memarian, Seyed Majid Hashemi Toghr oljerdi, and Ali Mohammad Ranjbar-Kermani, 'Privacy of House in Islamic Culture: A Comparative Study of Pattern of Privacy in Houses in Kerman'. P 70-71.

The two participants who did not live in traditional houses believed that old-style brick, for example, completely exposed and not covered with marble or granite, is a material that reminds them of traditional architecture, but the others believed clay-built structures remind them of traditional architecture. Not surprisingly, they all liked a feature of Iranian traditional design, orsi, traditional sash windows. “H” liked the form and different colours used in them. When I asked them if they would like to have Orsi in their homes they answered, they would love to if they could afford to build one. S also said, “I would like to have a nice window like this.” A wanted to have all the windows in his house like the traditional orsi, and a large one in the reception area.

As for other symbols, they wanted to have Persian symbols in their houses of different kinds.

Again, the participants with more traditional views were more concerned about connecting to the past than the others.

The spaces that they put most emphasis on and that shaped their best childhood memories were the courtyard or open spaces. They barely remembered bedrooms, kitchens or other spaces. It was interesting that they all wanted things they remembered from their childhood. For example, participant S’s opinion was, “I want to have a bower in my courtyard which is covered with trees, over the path which leads to the house. It is one of the things that I love and remember from my childhood house.” This suggests that it might be useful to ask participants about their childhood memories before starting the design process, which could lead to a design that resonates better with residents’ preferences.



They wanted to have traditional symbols in their houses. For example, “H” wanted to have Persepolis elements in his house.

It was interesting that participant H said, “I want to have a specific space in my home, which should be decorated and furnished traditionally. Although I want to have a modern home, I am interested in having a small pool in the house, like it was in the past” (Figure 172).

Figure 172: A traditional pool room.

Source: Kambiz Hajjighasemi. *Houses of Yazd – Ganjnameh/khane Haye Yazd/ خانه های یزد- گنجنامه* Shahid Beheshti University, 2004.

It is worth noting that although “H” was not interested in traditional architecture, he thought this house represents a good example of what he would like to have, both because of its materials and the concept.

The main point of his choice was that the image of the building represents a mixture of traditional and modern houses (Figure 173).

Figure 173: An image that participant H liked.
Source: Photo taken by participant H.



This picture reminded the participants of the atmosphere of traditional Iranian courtyards that is not common anymore. They all liked the picture, especially S who said “the small pool in the middle and the geraniums reminds me of the past and my childhood” (Figure 174).

Figure 174: Traditional courtyard
Source: Still from Mother movie.



As mentioned earlier in this part, the participants would like some traditional elements and features, though they may face limitations in implementing such features in their houses, e.g. there is not enough space. Some participants, in particular S, suggested a few simple changes, e.g. using traditional-style furniture and decorative objects sometimes can create a pleasant atmosphere in the house.

A mentioned an interesting point while looking at newly-built buildings with traditional concepts, he said, “they do not seem real and look artificial (Figure 175). in fact this combination does not reflect authenticity.” This is a valid question that requires further study and deserves more attention, how we can use the traditional elements today and make them more real? Also, for A, the most important part that relates the house to the past was the materials.

Figure 175: A new central courtyard.
Source: Architecture and culture. Vol. 48. 2012.



About this picture (Figure 176), A said that this kind of window is not part of culture, as traditionally everything was divided into smaller sizes. About the Shoshtar residential complex¹⁹² (Figure 177), A made an interesting point, saying he thought there is unity in the whole complex, which cannot be seen in the cities and between houses today, “There was a harmony in the past, which is rarely seen any more and it is annoying.”

Figure 176: A wide window in a newly-built house.
Source: ‘House No. 7 / Ayeneh Office | Iranian Architect’, 7, accessed 6 April 2017, <http://iranian-architect.ir/project-0040>.



¹⁹² The Shoshtar residential complex was designed by a well-known Iranian architect, Kamran Diba.



Within the same context, M believes that “these days less attention is paid to modern buildings visual aspects.” She exemplified this by referring to a new building whose façade is fully covered by glass, its windows are often not clean and look very unpleasant. She also pointed out trendy aluminium façades that have annoying reflections for drivers. There was a brief discussion about a building which has tried to combine traditional materials with contemporary architecture. SH said it is ridiculous but M believes it is funny but doesn’t look annoying.

Figure 177: Shoshtar residential complex.

Source: Me; Mar. Iranian Biomonthly on Architecture and Urban Design. معمار, Vol. 38 (Thought of Art and Architecture, 2006).

Mrs M said, “I think each part of the country has its own architectural symbols, which can be used again these days. They may be related to the climate and available materials of the region.” She said, “Clay is not just an identity for desert regions, it is also a very good material for this climate. In traditional houses, which were built with clay, once you made them wet it changed the environment. But now, in these brick houses, the bricks needs to be washed several times in order to become cool, and then they can make the ambient atmosphere pleasant.”

M mentioned benches at the entrances of traditional houses as a very good aspect, “I think having these in the street or alley would help the elderly and others to have a rest. But we do not have them anymore. I really like them, especially the ones with an arc in front of them, they provide pleasant shade in summer in this region that has plenty of hot sunny days.”

6.5 Significance of the thesis

6.5.1 Design Propositions

The four propositions presented above were developed based on an in-depth analysis of participants’ narratives about their social, cultural, spatial and behavioural practices in their homes. The narratives reveal some of the conflicts between people’s needs and spatial design and organisation in domestic architecture. The main implications of these propositions are that they can critically inform architects about the emerging and transforming socio-spatial needs of people in Iran and

facilitate the design-thinking process to address these needs. The propositions also sheds light on the importance of understanding the everyday practices of people, which reveal the various ways in which spatial design and organisation is appropriated, adapted or conflicted. The propositions also indicate that contemporary Iranian housing design cannot have desirable outcomes if the historical, cultural and social preferences of the society are not considered. Copying or being inspired by well-received buildings in other cultures, e.g. European countries, and hoping to repeat the same success in Iran (or a different society with major cultural differences) is not realistic as the aesthetic aspect of design is only part of the features of a building. The propositions highlight various neglected design aspects relevant to residents' needs and present opportunities for re-interpreting traditional architectural elements in Iran. For instance, how roofs can become functional spaces again (e.g. as roof gardens), and even provide alternative/ compatible spaces similar to the courtyards in Iranian traditional houses, is mostly neglected in the current process of housing design in Iran.

6.5.2 Contribution to Iranian architecture research

Though the history of teaching architecture in Iran dates back decades, and currently a number of university in Iran are teaching this subject, they mostly rely on international textbooks of architecture. Most of the research materials produced in Iran are extremely narrow and relate to very specific projects. In addition, original projects based on research-by-design approaches and qualitative analysis are very rare. This thesis adds to current knowledge and provides a new and previously unexplored perspective for Iranian contemporary architecture. Any research by design focused on current Iranian architecture and its connections to the past, even if exists, is in Persian. This research, written in English, provides a valuable source to other architects and researchers wishing to start projects in Iran, perform research or engage in comparative studies. The limited number of original reference materials produced in Iran and focused on Iran housing design indicates a lack of adequate information available to architects. Understanding residents' preferences for their homes can add notable value to housing design. Generating such knowledge and narrowing the information gap are the main aims of this research.

6.5.3 Transferability

The detailed description of the research methodology and the process of research by design enable the research findings to be compared or related to other contexts. Although the research context is based in

Iran, the findings of the research are transferable to other societies with similar cultural characteristics.

6.5.4 Importance of participatory research.

This research shows how important participatory research can be when less explored and even neglected aspects of design are studied, particularly in the Iranian context. The thesis has demonstrated how participatory methods, when carefully planned and properly deployed, can facilitate a symbiotic relationship between architect and client in the design process. It is important to highlight that a number of people from different walks of life participated in these workshops to help shape the design process. This process has helped to test the hypothesis that, from an architectural point of view, often, new housing in Iran does not meet residents' expectations and preferences. In other words, there are notable shortcomings in contemporary Iranian architecture with respect to people's social values and cultural preferences. The participatory approach in the workshops generated a significant amount of information about the participants understanding/ preferred meaning of space, and also their life routines. Questions included: How can relating to the outside improve the quality of people's lives? Why do current designs of domestic buildings fail to address their residents' privacy needs? Would people feel more connected to their homes and be happier if their homes were modified, e.g. their design and function?

The thesis has presented an in-depth analysis of various social and cultural factors that define the participants' everyday practices. The design proposition presented demonstrates the emerging needs of people and the importance of addressing them through design. The significance of the design propositions highlights how the findings play an important role in enabling architects to move in a new design direction for appropriate domestic architecture in Iran.

6.6 Limitations

Studying a tangible and established subject from a fresh perspective, relying on participatory research (which is inherently difficult), field visits and convincing different groups of people who are culturally reluctant to share any information about their personal lives, is impossible without lots of motivation and dedication.

Following are some of the barriers that were faced during this research.

- It was particularly challenging to recruit participants as very few people were willing to participate in in-depth interview sessions discussing their everyday practices, home and family.

- It was hard to make participants distinguish between their ideal and dream houses.

- The participants are used to seeing and living in existing kinds of housing. It was not easy for them to envisage that some more convenient designs/ housing schemes might be available to them. While participating in the workshops, they were referring to their current status of living and home as an established way of living that can/will not be changed.

- Cultural preferences were also a major barrier. In principle, Iranian people, particularly those who live in smaller cities, prefer not to talk about their personal lives. This meant that finding participants who would share their personal lives was difficult. For instance, there were cases where participants, despite their initial agreement, did not complete the workshop and insisted that their answers not be included.

Given the barriers to recruiting participants, the time constraint and the complexity of dealing with sociocultural and religious values and practices, though it was deemed advantageous to limit the sample of participants to five, it was clearly a limitation to delve into the large issue of the appropriateness of housing design in Iran. However, a larger number of participants would allow further empirical and theoretical contributions to be made to the research topic. Chapter 3 explained in detail my positionality in this research: being an architect and researcher I was able to understand the participants' responses from an insider's perspective, although this also involved certain preconceptions and bias when interpreting the participants' responses. I have addressed this issue as far as possible by providing, in detail, the participants' narratives and an explanation of the thesis's propositions

6.7 Further Research

The richness and complexity of the research topic, housing and people relationships, opens up several trajectories of research. The higher order of propositions presented allows for further design research into to more specific spatial interpretations to be developed into a handbook on domestic Iranian architecture design.

This thesis shows the limited nature of available information with respect to research by design studies and, more importantly, with respect to the relationship between contemporary Iranian architecture and the everyday practices of people, which is another potential trajectory for research. Currently, no study exists that indicates how traditional elements can be re-interpreted and used in modern houses to reflect the social and cultural connotations and symbolism of the past. As the thesis has demonstrated the diverse and rich architectural history of Iran, investigating the re-interpretation of architectural elements for a contemporary context offers important insights for architectural practice in Iran.

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Appendix 1

Transcription of interview with Fariba Adelkhah

An informal discussion with Iranian anthropologist, Fariba Adelkhah about Iranian ways of living today.

At 1st of March 2013 British Institute of Persian Studies organize the second conference -JAVANMARDI (chivalry) in the Persianate World at the British Academy London.

I met Fariba Adelkhah, an Iranian social scientist and anthropologist who lives in Paris in London at the conference above. She is senior research fellow in centre for international studies and research. She wrote several books about Iranian anthropology, one of them concerns being modern in Iran.¹⁹³

She was very friendly and we talked for 1.5 hours after the conference about Iranian domesticity and she answered my questions.

Q: Can we categorise society through religious and secular families?

A: A new version of “religious” is now common which is really different compared to the past. The relation between genders is now different and women can wear a hijab and communicate with men. Women work outside the home with men. The difference is in clothes and the way they wear the hijab. There are many customs which are related to religion and are common in all families, either religious or more secular.

Q: Do you agree that the meaning of privacy has changed?

A: Almost everyone tries to hide his idea and lifestyle from the others because it might cause some difficulties or offences. It means privacy is not just related to traditional and religious ideas.

Q: What is the weakness of contemporary houses in your personal experience?

A: It is difficult for me to live in houses with small windows and terrible views that makes me depressed.

Q: What do you think about the role and function of the kitchen in contemporary Iranian houses?

A: The kitchen became a place for women where they might have their own TV to watch the program that interest them and they may keep their books, magazines etc. This is a place for ladies to chat during parties.

Q: what is the meaning and role of house in Iran today?

¹⁹³ Adelkhah, Fariba. Derrick, Jonathan. Being modern in Iran. New York: [Columbia University Press](#) in association with the Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Internationales, c2000.

A: As restrictions have grown people try to ignore the government and the social situation at house. They try to make their own and ideal world at home.

Q: Can you mention some elements in contemporary Iranian houses which identify them as Iranian?

A: Some elements which seem important in Iranian houses to me are: Calligraphy, Traditional symbols as decoration.

Q: Is there any special thing which you think has become important recently?

A: The curtain is now a luxury thing, and it kind of shows how wealthy the residents are.

Q: What are the special events which have recently been added to Iranian family's activities?

A: The ladies, party has become more common since the revolution; they are places not only for some religious ceremonies but also kind of fashion shows and sometimes dancing and so on. This is now common in the whole society. Celebrating the birthdays of holy persons or having a kind of memorial for the dead.

Q: Is there anything special about the society today?

A: There is a competition in the society to show off.

Q: What is the more important option in choosing a house in Iranian society today?

A: It is important where to live (in which part of the city). It gives the residents and identity.

Appendix 2

A summary of questions discussed during Workshops

5 participants were selected. All participants belong to the middle income bracket.

A summary of questions which were discussed with participants is listed below.

The first stage

Talking about the homes which they have lived in.

Would you please tell me about the memories which you have of the house you grew up in?

Do you have any images of that house?

Can you remember any special ceremonies or parties?

The most important things which you remember from that house?

Can you remember in how many houses you have lived?

Can you mention good and bad points of each house?

Is there any special house which you have seen and would like to live in? Why?

Would you please tell me what the meaning of home is for you?

What are the main points for you in selecting a house to live in?

Would you like to spend your whole life in one house?

Do you think that sense of belonging is important?

Do you like to have different moments in the same place, for example the kids growing up and so on?

Write any words which you think about when you hear the word 'home'.

The second stage

Talking about their ways of living and what do they do in their everyday life?

Housekeeping works such as cooking, cleaning and so on.

What are the daily activities at home?

Daily routines

Chores: Dusting, sweeping, doing laundry

Mealtime: Preparing food, cooking, eating

Eating:

Which one do you prefer: eating at the table or on the floor?
Do you think that the objects belonging to each place must be kept in that place?
What is your idea about other things, such as the dishes which are used for guests - would you put them in the guests' area or the kitchen?

Personal care: Bathing, shaving, getting dressed

Changing dress, keep them, clean them ... -

How do you categorize your clothes?

Sleep:

Is there any special aspect which you think is necessary for bedrooms?

Do you like the work place and sleeping area together?

Would you choose to have separate spaces - one for sleep and the other one for personal activities and personal belongings? If the clothes and other things had a special space, what are the things which you would take with you in the bedroom?

Other activities

Creative: Painting, playing the piano ...

Intellectual: Reading a book, doing crossword puzzles ...

Physical: Taking a walk, playing catch ...

Social: Having coffee, talking, playing cards, having guests, parties...

Spiritual: Praying, singing a hymn

Spontaneous: Going out to dinner, visiting friends

Work-related: Making notes, typing, fixing something

Which part of your house is allowed for guests to visit? Ladies, gents and kids?

Where do you chat with your friends?

Where and how do you like to talk on the phone?

Is there any special space which you like to have in your home?

What is your idea about the relation between different members of the family? In the past, inside the house there were no secret and private parts for everybody. But today there is, with individual spaces and so on.

Is there anything which you want to put on display? How? Why? Where?

What would you do in open or semi-open spaces?

The third stage

Explaining some important themes about domestic architecture in Iran. Images of some traditional Iranian architecture and the architecture during Pahlavi era also some newly building with Iranian elements have been shown to the participant.

Now let's talk about the aspects which you like to have from the past. What is your idea about having the guests' area and living area on different levels, which are separated with little partitions? Different height and levels.

Balconies in the street will be seen by pedestrians, will this make any problem for you?

Which one do you prefer: living in a house, or in an apartment with shared facilities?

Let's talk about the entrance:

What are the different spaces of the entrance? What will you put there?

One of the problems of entrances in Iranian contemporary houses is that there is not a space for an entrance and it is just a door. Please explain the entrance which you like.

Do you think that WC is a part of entrance spaces?

I am going to show you some alternative entrances which are designed for different families. Please tell me your thoughts.

Do you like to have a close and completely separated space like your house and have a place for sitting? For example, if the postman comes would you invite him in that space to have a sit for a while?

There are different ways to divide spaces in a house, for example private, semi-private, public and semi-public. What is your opinion?

What is the relation between the kitchen and other spaces?

Today the kitchen is often a part of the living room - what do you think about this?

What is your idea about having two parts where one is hidden and the other one is linked to the living area? So the visibility is now limited.

About fireplace or small pool room. What is your idea about having a small pool or a vertical surface of water in the house?

Now let's write a list of spaces:

Do you like to have separate rooms for you and your husband?

What is your idea about a guests' room?

What do you think about having a space to have different groups, for example different genders? Do the kids need a space as well, or will they play in their rooms?

Can you explain the relation of the dining area, kitchen and living area?

In our traditional houses it was common to have niches besides the windows and to sit on them. Do you like them?

I do not like the doors with glass on the top. What is your opinion?

Which one do you prefer: the traditional Iranian window or the modern one?

What do you think about curtains? As you like big windows, does it matter for you that others can see inside your house?

What is your idea about having a separate toilet and bath?

These days there is a change in the form of cabinets, and everything is going to have a fixed space; it is not just 2 rows up and down any more. What is your idea about it and the limitations when it comes to moving things?

Do you like to change your decorations and their organization?

Do you like to use Iranian symbols in your house? Why? How?

Main changes in architecture during the Pahlavi dynasty after 1921:

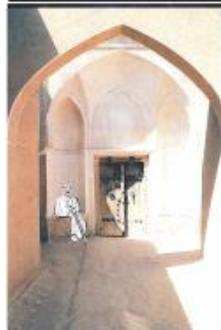
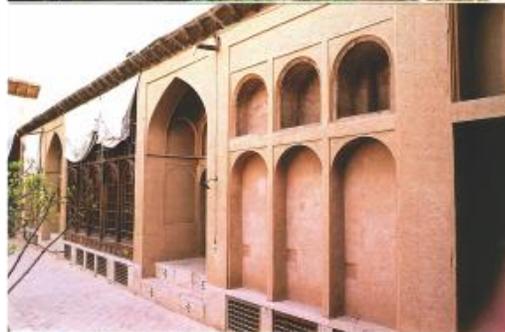
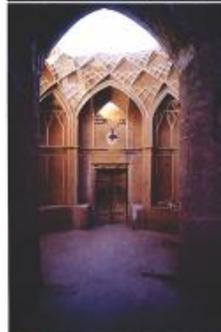
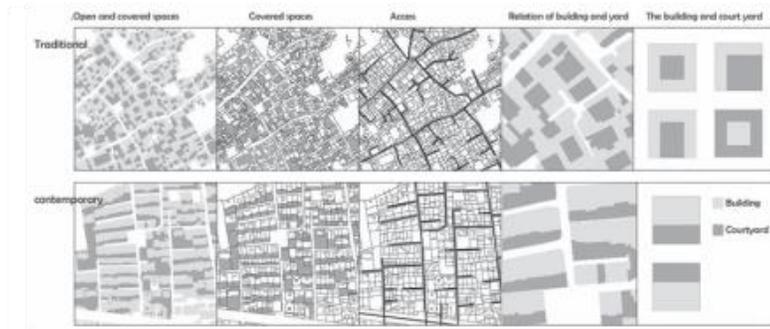
Combined radial changed to linear combination.

Importance of entrance.

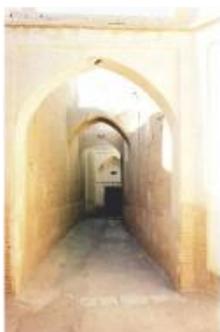
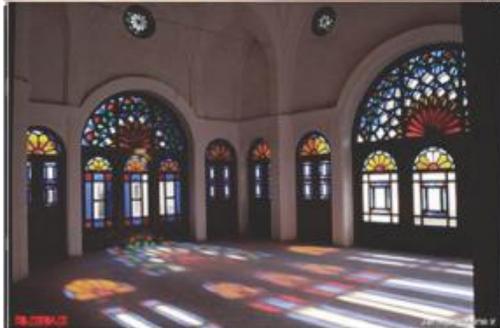
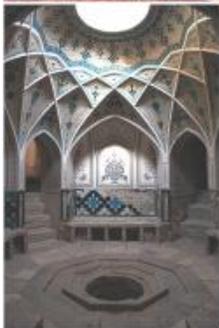
Windows occurred in streets with more decoration, and balconies added to the buildings

Materials changed to new ones. Structure of buildings changed and refer to symbols of Empires: Achaemenian and Sassanian. Corridors added to buildings and stairways became more important and ceremonial.

Samples of Iranian Traditional architecture



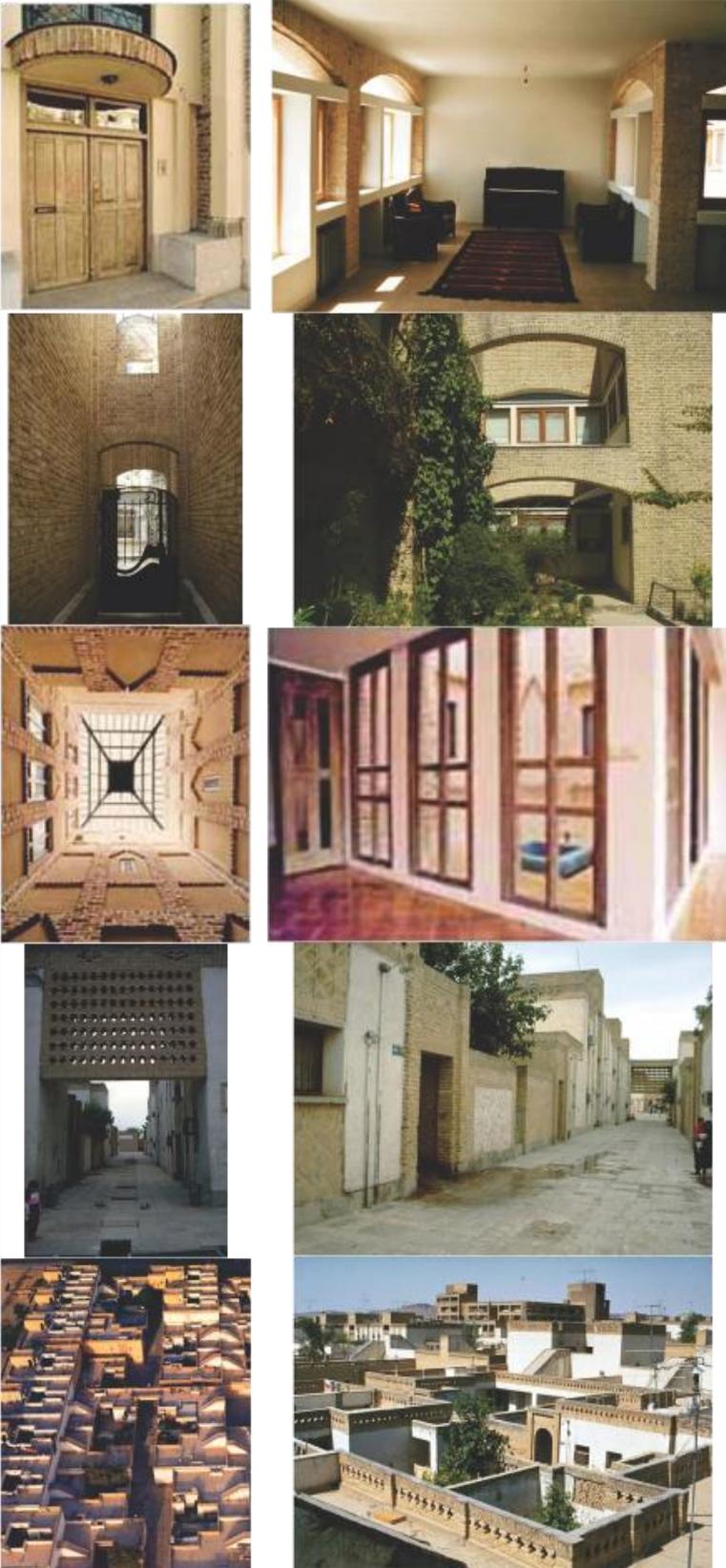
Samples of Iranian Traditional architecture



Samples of Iranian architecture during Pahlavi era



Samples of contemporary building with Traditional aspects



Samples of contemporary building with Traditional aspects



The fourth stage

In this part, the architect and participants are going to draw some parts of houses depending on the participants' desires. Different images from modern and traditional houses and elements in houses will be prepared for them to choose. Different tools to draw will be prepared. A third person will help to draw the participant's ideas in 3D during the interview.

The main questions which were discussed in the last part of the workshop:

What are the features which make a house Iranian?

Which spaces must be related to the yard or open space?

What do you want to have in the yard?

What will you reach when you enter the building?

How do you want to relate the kitchen and the living area?

Is it necessary to make spaces multi-functional?

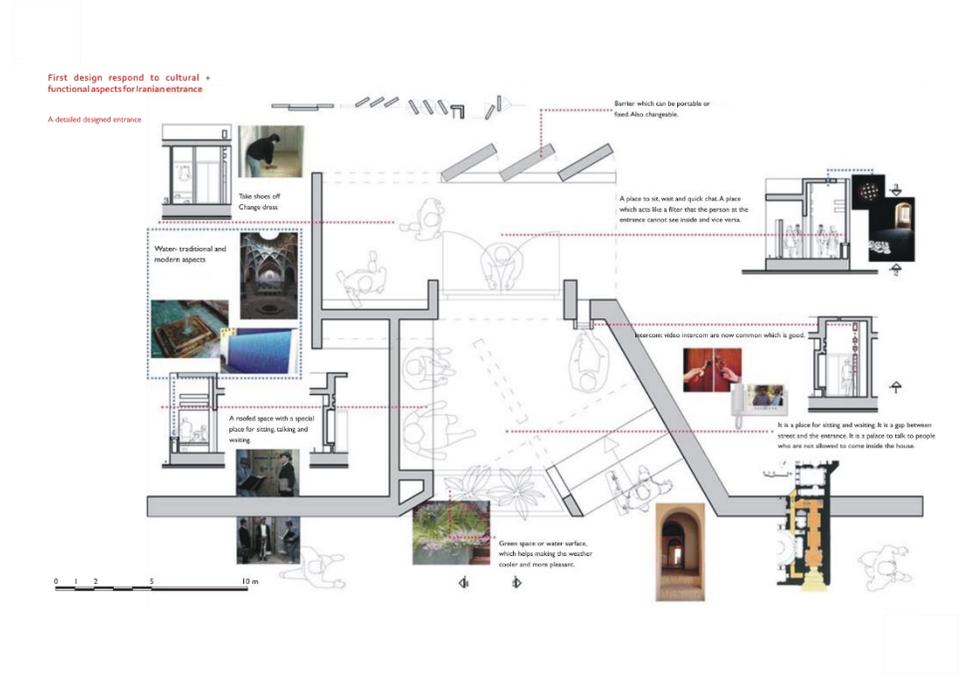
Could we have a part of the cooking in the yard?

How do you explain the relation between the kitchen and private space?

Let us make a list for an Iranian house.

Do you think that a house which will be made in Iran must be different from houses in other parts of the world? If yes, what the differences are.

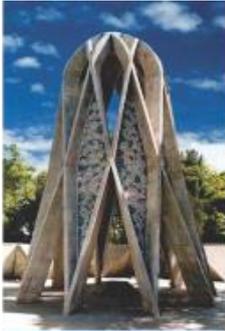
Entrance designed by the author



Samples of Modern courtyards



Samples of Iranian symbols



Appendix 3

Ethical approval

The
University
Of
Sheffield.

School
Of
Architecture.

Dr Rosie Parnell

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Western Bank
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Re - thinking an appropriate domestic architecture for Iran

The University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on the above-named project was unconditionally **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you agreed to the following document that you submitted for ethics review:

Research ethics application form (23.08.2013)

Information sheet (23.08.2013)

Consent form (23.08.2013)

Should the course of the project require you to deviate significantly from the above-approved documents, your request for written approval will be required. Please also inform me should you decide to terminate the project prematurely.

/

ator



Date: 23/08/2013

School of Architecture

Participant Information

Re - thinking an appropriate domestic architecture for Iran

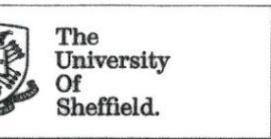
- You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish.
- This research is a part of a PhD thesis, spurs from my interest in the domain of home and its significant impact on peoples' lives. This thesis aims to develop a domestic architecture that are culturally and emotionally appropriate in the contemporary Persian housing context. Some social and cultural values have been forgotten or misinterpreted in designing new homes, which causes dissatisfaction and complaints from their residents.
- There will be 4 semi-structured interview sessions which might take 1 to 2 hours. You will be required to share your experiences of home. All sessions will be recorded by video and audio and photographs and films and photo will not record the face of participant. The interview will also involve some sketching and developing design ideas with the researcher. Contents:
 - Short story of the house / apartment that the participant lived in.
 - Discuss the needs, desires and ideas about living and how the participants want to live.
 - A brief history about Iranian domestic architecture and the study approach by the researcher.
 - Discussion with participant about the alternatives which were designed with architect.
- It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw at any time without it affecting any benefits that you are entitled to in any way. You do not have to give a reason.
- Previous experience suggests people enjoy thinking and discussing their homes and there can be long term positive effects on helping participants think through ideas.
- If the research study does not go ahead as planned, you will be contacted and the reasons for this will be explained.
- If you wish to complain about anything that has occurred during your participation in the research you should contact the research supervisor. If you feel that your complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily in this manner, you may contact the university's general registrar.
- Visual and textual data will be DE identified and no participant identities will be revealed in the dissemination of the research findings. Transcripts of the interviews, video, audio and photographs will therefore be coded, with a list of identity codes stored separately. No photographs or video will be taken of peoples face.
- Records will be carefully stored. Digital recordings such as: videos, audio and images will be kept on a password protected in the researcher personal laptop. Only accessed by the researcher. Paper based recordings such as transcribed and drawings will be stored in locked cabinet in researcher office.
- The results of the research will be part of the PhD dissertation, conference papers and academic journal publications. Public exhibition might be established which will show this process. Anonymised/coded identified data will be kept for future research and other data will be deleted 5 years after this research is completed.
- This research has been ethically reviewed by the university of Sheffield Department of Architecture and is in the review process.

▪ **Contact for further information**

If you want any further information, please contact one of the following:

Researcher:	Fariba Fani Molki	Email: F.molki@sheffield.ac.uk
Project Supervisors:	Prue Chiles	Email: p.chiles@sheffield.ac.uk
	Dr Tatjana Schneider	Email: t.schneider@sheffield.ac.uk

Thank you for taking part in this project. Your involvement is very much appreciated.



School of Architecture

Participant Consent Form

Research Project: *Re - thinking an appropriate domestic architecture for*

of Researcher: *Fariba Fani Molki*

Participant Number for this project:

Please initial box

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated 08/2013 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
Email: F.molki@sheffield.ac.uk

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for my recorded performance to be used in further stages of the research. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.

I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research

I agree to take part in the above research project.

(of Participant
and/or legal representative)

Date

Signature

(of person taking consent
on behalf of participant)

Date

Signature

signed and dated in presence of the participant

Researcher

Date

Signature

signed and dated in presence of the participant

Notes:

When this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the letter/pre-written script/information sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.



یافتن معماری مسکونی مناسب برای ایران

هدف این پروژه پژوهشی شرکت کننده، قبل از شروع مهم است که بدانید این پروژه شامل چه بخش هایی است و دلیل آن چیست. لطفاً زمان کافی برای خواندن دقیق این متن اختصاص دهید و در صورت تمایل با دیگران مشورت کنید. هدف این پروژه ارتقاء معماری مسکونی ایران است که با شرایط فرهنگی و احساسی امروز ایران همخوان باشد. برخی ارزش های اجتماعی و فرهنگی در معماری ایران فراموش شده یا به اشتباه تعبیر شده است که منجر به نارضایتی و گاه مصالحه ساکنین خانه ها شده است. بخش پیش بینی شده است که هر یک بین 1 تا 2 ساعت زمان لازم دارد. لازم است که شما تجربه خودتان را از خانه برای ما در فرم های مشخص شده و تصویر ضبط خواهد شد. در فیلم ها و تصاویر چهره مشارکت کننده ثبت نخواهد شد. این مصاحبه همچنین ترسیمی نیز می شود.

روایت کوتاه از خانه ای که در آن بزرگ شده اید و خانه ای در آن زندگی می کنید.

تفاوت در مورد آرزوها و نیازها و ایده های مشارکت کننده در مورد نحوه زندگی کردن.

توضیح مختصر در مورد معماری مسکونی ایران و رویکردهای این پژوهش.

نقشه مشارکت کننده در مورد پیشنهادات معماری طراحی شده توسط معمار بر اساس گفتگوهای گذشته.

تیمار شماسه که تصمیم بگیرید در این تحقیق همکاری داشته باشید یا خیر. در صورتی که تصمیم به همکاری گرفتید این

شما داده می شود (همچنین یک فرم رضایت نامه باید امضا گردد) و شما در هر زمان می توانید از ادامه تحقیق انصراف دهید.

دیتا. لازم نیست که هیچ گونه دلیلی ارائه گردد.

شان داده است که مردم از صحبت کردن در مورد خانه شان لذت می برند. همچنین این یک تاثیر مثبت بلند مدت برای مشارکت

تفکر در مورد ایده ها به همراه خواهد داشت.

به اتمام نرسد با شما تماس گرفته خواهد شد و دلایل توضیح داده می شود.

خواهید به هر دلیلی در مورد پژوهش انجام شده اعتراضی داشته باشید با استاد راهنمای پژوهشگر تماس بگیرید. اگر احساس

رد مناسب صورت نگرفته است با دانشگاه تماس بگیرید.

ی و بصری بصورت ناشناس ارائه خواهد شد و هیچ اطلاعات هویتی از اشخاص در متون پژوهش ارائه نخواهد شد. رو نوشت مصاحبه

بل های صوتی و تصاویر با یک لیست از کدهای شناسایی کدگذاری خواهند شد. هیچ فیلم یا عکسی از چهره اشخاص ثبت نخواهد

نده با مراقبت کامل نگهداری خواهند شد. اطلاعات الکترونیکی مانند ویدیوها اصوات و تصاویر بصورت رمز دار در کامپیوتر شخصی

ری خواهد شد. فقط شخص پژوهشگر به این کامپیوتر دسترسی دارد. اطلاعات کاغذی مانند رونوشت ها و ترسیم ها در یک کمد

دفتر پژوهشگر نگهداری خواهد شد.

بخشی از پروژه دکتری محقق می باشد. همچنین امکان استفاده از آنها در مقاله های کنفرانس یا مقالات دانشگاهی وجود دارد.

یک نمایشگاه عمومی جهت نشان دادن روند پژوهش وجود دارد. اطلاعات کد گذاری شده برای پژوهش های آینده نگهداری

بگر اطلاعات 5 سال پس از اتمام پژوهش معدوم خواهد شد.

طر مسایل اخلاقی توسط کمیته تایید اخلاقی دانشکده معماری بررسی گردیده است.

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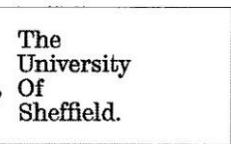
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تاتیانا اشنایدر

با سپاس از همکاری شما.



مدرسه معماری

فرم رضایت نامه مشارکت کنند

عنوان پروژه: بازنگری جهت یافتن معماری مسکونی مناسب برای ایران

محقق: فریبا فانی ملکی

شماره مشارکت کننده در تحقیق

لطفا در مربع عا

1- من تایید می کنم که فرم اطلاعات پروژه به تاریخ 1392/06/01 که موضوع تحقیق را توضیح داده است خوانده ام و این امکان را داشته ام که در مورد تحقیق سوال بپرسم.

2- من می دانم که مشارکت من داوطلبانه است و من آزادم که در هر زمانی بدون هیچ گونه توضیح و عواقب منفی انصراف بدهم. همچنین در صورت عدم تمایل به هر سوالی که نخواستم پاسخ نمی دهم. F.molki@sheffield.ac.uk ایمیل

3- می دانم که تمام اطلاعات کاملا محرمانه نگهداری خواهد شد. من اجازه استفاده از این اطلاعات ثبت شده را برای مراحل بعد این تحقیق می دهم. می دانم که نام من در این تحقیق فاش نخواهد شد و من در این تحقیق یا هر گونه نتیجه آن قابل شناسایی نخواهم بود.

4- من اجازه استفاده از این اطلاعات را در پژوهش های بعدی می دهم.

5- من موافقت می کنم که در پروژه بالا مشارکت کنم.

_____	_____	_____
امضا	تاریخ	نام مشارکت کننده: (با وکیل قانونی)

_____	_____	_____
امضا	تاریخ	نام شخص گیرنده فرم : (در صورتیکه با محقق متفاوت است) باید در حضور مشارکت کننده امضا گردد

_____	_____	_____
امضا	تاریخ	محقق: باید در حضور مشارکت کننده امضا گردد

رونوشت ها:

زمانی که این فرم توسط همه اشخاص امضا شد و تاریخ زده شد ، یک کپی از آن و هر گونه نوشته دیگری که ذکر شده در اختیار کننده قرار خواهد گرفت. یک کپی از این فرم نیز باید در اطلاعات اصلی پروژه نگهداری شود. این فرم باید در یک مکان امن نگهداری شود.

Appendix 4

Interview transcript H

Part1

Would you please tell me about the memories you have about the house in which you grew up?

H: *The first house was in Khajoo.¹⁹⁴ It was a house of just one floor and it was surrounded on two sides by an alley. There was one door which accessed the garage and another which led into the courtyard. This was the living area, which I cannot remember exactly. There was a bathroom and a small living area, with three bedrooms which I cannot remember exactly. There was a staircase which went to the roof from the parking-space. I remember during the war with Iraq we used it as a bolt-hole. That is one of the things which I remember very well. The kitchen was here. Then we moved out of this house.*

What else can you remember about this house?

H: *The neighbours were very nice.*

What do you mean by very nice?

H: *We were always visiting them or they us, which was really nice. Then we rented a house for a year while our next house was being finished. The new house was in Hezaro Yekshab¹⁹⁵ parish. We lived in Khajoo until secondary school, when we were almost 12–13 years old.*

So, the most important thing you remember about this house is your neighbours? Is there any special event or a special place which you always went to?

H: *I remember once a man who was escaping from the police jumped over the wall and came to our house. I remember shooting that day, and that the man survived. We were always playing football in the alley. We were playing football in those two alleys next to our house. There was an unpaved area in which we were always playing.*

We played ping-pong in our neighbour's house, who was a colonel. Also, he had a girl with whom we went cycling.

One important thing is that the area was riddled with underground canals and once a hole appeared in the yard of one of the neighbours' houses and another time it happened at the junction of the two alleys. This was the main reason why we moved from that house, since it might well have happened in our house as well. But it was a good place.

Was there any specific place where you played while you lived there? Did you have shared or separate rooms?

¹⁹⁴ Khajoo is a parish in Kerman.

¹⁹⁵ Hezaro Yekshab is another parish in Kerman.

H: *I cannot remember.*

I remember once it was Ramadan and we were fasting, and we did not eat anything until two, when someone brought us plums, so we broke our fast and ate them. I think this was the only fast which I ever did.

Our next house was around Terminal,¹⁹⁶ and we lived there for one year but I cannot remember that house. I just remember that it was just served by a street from one side.

Our next house, which was in Hezaro Yekshab, was a two-storey house with a separate entrance. I remember that house clearly. (The neighbours and street.)

Let me draw the bedrooms, two rooms this side a living area and one room here and the toilet was here Here were several stairs; I do not know how to draw stairs!

Which side was the upper floor and which one was the lower?

H: *This one was the upper and there was a basement below that. Here was the courtyard. Here was a door for the garage to the basement. Here was the entrance. Then there was a staircase which went up to the kitchen and the living area. And again stairs to the upper floor. The second level was laid out exactly like the first one.*

Did you have tenants on the second floor?

H: *No, it was vacant, so my brothers occupied it. This was our room when we moved to the second floor. The other two were my older brother and my uncle's bedrooms. My uncle lived with us for a while. There was a door here to reach the courtyard. Another door was located in this bedroom. And these are the bedroom's doors. A bathroom was here.*

Where was your bedroom?

H: *This was mine.*

Did you share a bedroom with your brother?

H: *No, this was his bedroom.*

Which one was your parents' bedroom?

H: *I think this one.*

After a while, when one of my brothers got married and my uncle also left, we moved to the second floor. There was a ping-pong table on the second floor. We would meet our friends on the second floor, not the first floor.

What can you remember about this house?

H: *Many things, we were always playing with our friends.*

¹⁹⁶

Terminal is a parish in Kerman.

What did you do other than playing?

H: *We did not have anything else to do. We were always playing football. We had a team. We had a motorcycle which we rode to go to our friends' houses.*

Did you have any parties or celebrations?

H: *For my uncle and two of my brothers' wedding parties we gathered in the house after dinner. Only close friends and family were there. And we celebrated until 5–6am. Men and women were not separated inside the house and we had singers.*

When my older brother got married he moved to second floor and the entrances became separated. There were two doors beside each other. A staircase was here to reach the second floor. My dad used to build stairs higher than normal. When we moved from this house, my other brother moved to this house.

Did you have any special occasions, guests, or religious ceremonies?

H: *We had guests all the time. Here was a pavement and there was a tree here. One night we had a guest who had a lorry full of something. He slept on the pavement beside his vehicle.*

We organized a table tennis tournament with friends in this house. We were about seven people. One of our friends lived near us and we were always together.

When we moved to this house, there was empty land beside the house and in front of the house as well. One of our relatives owned the other land beside the house and together we decided to put up a shared wall.

I remember once that heavy snow fell and everywhere was covered with the snow. It was lovely. I have pictures of that as well.

Did you play in the courtyard?

We played football and basketball there. We put a basketball hoop on the wall to play basketball.

Is there anything special which you would have liked from this house now?

H: *There is something which I cannot talk about.*

My bedroom was beside the alley and I could hear all the noises from outside. I remember once, in the middle of the night, there was a thief in one of the neighbours' houses and the neighbour was shouting and asking for help. We wanted to go out, but my mother did not let us because she was afraid of us being injured.

Outside the house, in front of the entrance, there were several steps which we put our shoes on. One of my brother's friends asked my brother if our

house had got two doors. And, when my brother asked why, he explained that my brother came out of the front door, put his shoes on and went. And, several minutes later, he came out again and put his shoes on and left. My brother explained to him that we were twins.

When my older brother was going somewhere we would go into his house (on the second floor) and ask our friends to join us.

Would you gather in the reception?

H: Yes, almost always. One time, one of our friends came to our house with his girlfriend. They were talking in one of the rooms; we were watching them through the glass above the door. Suddenly, the chair which we were standing on fell and catapulted us into the room. We said sorry and got out, but the girl did not stay any longer.

Once when we were living in this house and we had a van, it was near the last Wednesday of the year¹⁹⁷ and we were thinking about preparing some wood in order to make fire. One of our friends told us that he knew where people stored it, and we went and loaded some into the back of the van and escaped.

How did you treat your guests?

H: Everybody would be in the living area, men and women together. Just the people who wanted to do something like drink and so on would go to this other room.

I: Where did you do all the cooking? In the kitchen, or anywhere else?

P2: No, it was all in the kitchen. But my parents had a vow to make a special broth once a year which was always prepared and cooked in the courtyard. Some people were always invited, some who were helping stayed the day before and the whole night. This was an annual ceremony.

We were always with our friends when our house was empty or theirs was empty. We had different hobbies, and one of them was calling the others and having fun.

Is there anything in this house which bothered you or which was a problem?

H: The stairs were not comfortable; also, the stairs which were added to the entrance for the second floor were bad as well. But, in general, it was cool.

How was it in terms of light?

H: After the building was built, the first floor at the back did not get enough sunlight, but the second floor was good.

¹⁹⁷ Charshanbeh soory: The evening of the last Tuesday of each year there is a celebration in Iranian traditional ceremony which is related to the New Year.

Was there a balcony on the second floor?

H: Yes, there was a balcony.

As I said before, beside our house was a vacant plot of land, and after a while a very luxurious house was built there which became one the best houses in that region. Once, my brother made wine and put it on the balcony and my father came upstairs and saw it and threw it all onto the land beside the house. It was smelly, and in order to cover it up he was forced to go and conceal it all.

When my brother moved to that house, we moved the table tennis table to the basement and, as there was not enough space, we were forced to install it when needed.

Were there two spaces for parking and a basement?

H: *The whole basement was for parking and there was storage, and also the place where the main heating system engine was kept. There was another store room under the kitchen; its door was located by the entrance and it was a small room.*

Under the stairs were some flowers but, after constructing the new staircase for the second floor, it was destroyed. There were two nice flowerbeds in the yard. There was a fig tree, which was great. There were some vegetables as well as trees and flowers in the flowerbeds.

In the corner of the yard was a toilet.

Did you use the outside toilet often?

H: Yes, as our house was always busy it did get used.

We played in the yard. There was a swing in this part of the yard.

We sat in this room very often because it opened onto the yard.

Did you bring your friends home when your parents were at home?

H: *Not at all. We were always with our friends, but as we had a friend who was often alone, we were always in his house.*

In front of the house were several nice trees. My dad always planted trees. There was a space in front of the house which was a bit set back from the pavement and there were some flowers there.

Do you like to have plants and flowers in front of your house?

H: *I like water and trees.*

If you want to think about the entrance to a house, what are the main things you like to have in yours?

H: *Do you mean the lobby? I like to have a green space and trees.*

Before the land beside us was built on, we made it a place for football.

Did you mention that the problem of the house was its stairs and also its lack of light?

H: Yes, *although all the rooms had windows, because of the building in front it was a bit dark.*

What was the best point about that house?

H: *I think the plans were good for that time. I have heard that the designer was an architect who studied architecture in an American university.*

Is there any other house which you have seen and liked?

H: *Our neighbour's house, which I said was very nice.*

I: What made it so special?

P2: *It was big and like a palace. After a while the new owner made it into a jail. The wall became tall and he put some fencing up as well. The first owner made it really nice with great architecture.*

Was it luxurious?

H: *Yes, it was a building in the middle of some land (a detached house). He bought several plots which were together and made them into one large plot. He made a fashionable house.*

It means you prefer a house which can have sunlight from all sides. A house full of light.

H: *Yes, we have recently been constructing an apartment and it has lots of windows. I like sunlight very much.*

In the last house, it seems that the relation of the space was almost like the previous one. Is that correct?

H: *At first the house was built as a one floor building. It was connected to the street on two sides. The kitchen was here and it was not open at the beginning. Here was a corridor. Two rooms next to each other, here, and another room which was on an upper level with stairs here. Under that room was the garage/parking-area. And there was a green space which enjoyed the light coming through the ceiling. It was knocked down/demolished after a while. When we had knocked down the green space, it was replaced by a bathroom.*

There were two separate spaces, one a private living room and the other for guests' reception which were a closed area. But we removed the wall between them and linked them.

The upper level was exactly like the first one, but instead of this room it had a balcony.

After a while, we opened out the kitchen.

We set the two living areas on different levels in order to separate them. The difference was about 20cm. Here was a door when they were completely separated.

There was a staircase above the bathroom to the second floor. These stairs were changed several times.

But the house enjoyed sunlight from both the north and the south, so it was very bright. At first when we moved to this house we were not satisfied because the parish of the previous house was better. We lived in that house for ten years (Hezaro Yekshab). We moved to this house in 1993, when we were starting university. We spent the last year of high school in Hezaro Yekshab and then another brother got married. We moved to the new house and he and his wife took over the house from us.

It was very common in the past to have a living area for family and a reception for guests. What are your thoughts about this?

H: *That was many years ago, now it is completely extinct. I prefer to have one large living area rather than having two small ones, because you spend a lot of time in the living area. Watching TV, seeing visitors and so on is all in the living room. You spend less time in the bedroom. I think it would be better to have a kitchen which is directly connected to the living area rather than having a separate kitchen.*

We had four bedrooms in this house. At first, my room was here. When my older brother got married I moved to that room which was on the higher level. As it was a special room we decided by flipping a coin, and I won. So it was my room. It was a separate room with stairs. I remember we bought a very good tape-recorder here.

It had a courtyard with a flowerbed. Like at our previous house, the broth was cooked in the courtyard. There was a basement in the courtyard. The courtyard was on two levels. And the door was here.

Do you like having different levels in the yard?

H: *Not now, I prefer to have one level which allows for more useful space.*

Did you ever sleep in the open, such as in the courtyard or on the roof, in any of these houses?

H: *Yes, we slept in the courtyard sometimes until there was a murderer who started breaking into courtyards and attacking people.*

Where did guests sleep?

H: *In the living area.*

Did you have any store rooms?

We had two storage-areas, one under the staircase which went to the second level and another under the courtyard.

What did you store there?

Bedding, dishes, copper dishes¹⁹⁸, books, etc.

And what about food?

Walnuts were kept in the basement, but the rest of the food was stored in the kitchen. We stored wine in the basement as it was warmer there.

My father had a builder who undertook the construction of the house. We also had an engineer for overseeing the process, but my father was always listening to the builder's advice rather than that of the engineer.

We moved to the second floor for one year, after which we moved back to the first floor.

One of our tenants who lived on the second floor had to park his car in the courtyard. We put a wooden ladder in the yard for him to use. One rainy day, the ladder was slippery and it swayed around, and he fell.

Now we have knocked down this house and are building an apartment instead.

If you had the chance to stay in one house forever or move to a different house, which would you prefer?

H: As I was always moving, I would prefer to change my house. It would give me different memories from different places. Maybe in old age I would need peace, in which case I might change my mind.

I like to have a house with a playing area full of trees. And I like to be near my brothers. Everyone in his own house, but as neighbours.

May I ask you how you felt when you were knocking down your parents' house?

H: I was sad. As I spent my youth in that house, and I had lots of memories there, I was very sad when it was knocked down. When my parents were not at home we would gather with friends and we had fun until 5–6am. And it was really enjoyable. We had fun there, especially when we were university students.

One of my sad memories of this house was losing my father.

Would you please give me a list of your priorities for selecting a house?

H: I like to have a house in the centre of its plot. I want to have light from all four sides and see everywhere. A house with 200m² building and 1000m² land. I would like to have a tennis and badminton court in the back yard. A place in which I can play football as well. A garden in front of the house with

¹⁹⁸ It was common in the past, especially in Kerman, to have dishes made from copper; gradually they ended up in store rooms for special events as they were old fashioned and heavy. But recently copper dishes with new designs and which are lighter are common again.

a swimming pool. A very big house would make it hard to maintain. I think it should be well-planned.

My uncle had a room in his house in which you could see every other place from there. It was on the upper level. There were stairs to reach it. And beside the stairs were some flowers. It was a place for meeting friends and fun. I would like to have a space like this. And I would like to furnish this space not with modern furniture but with traditional backrests and so on. The rest of the house would be furnished with modern furniture.

Do you prefer to eat and sit on the floor or on a chair? And do you sleep on the floor or in a bed?

H: *It depends on the situation, but I prefer sleeping in a bed. Sometimes I like to sit on the floor, but in general I prefer sitting on chairs and sofas. I have a knee-problem, so it is not comfortable for me to sit on the floor. When I am with my friends I will go along with their wishes.*

I will write here the word “HOME”; please add every word which comes to your mind when you hear this word.

H: *Visiting friends*

I always studied at home, not in the library

Calm – especially for me as I am far from my family

Before knocking down that house in Kerman, in which house did you feel most at home?

H: *In Kerman. Here, the house is just like a temporary place. So we bought a small house as we are bachelors. A house with no future in it.*

I liked that room which was on the upper level even though it was lower in terms of height. I put some pictures of actors on my walls (Hediye Tehrani and an Indian girl).

I was always listening to loud music. I love to listen to loud music, especially when I am alone.

My father was always calm, and I feel peace when I see him. I have never seen him angry. I never saw him angry. Home gave me a nice sense of my father. My father would never ask us “where you are going?” and “what are you doing?” We were always free to do what we wanted.

I always ask my mother for my routine money-needs, but for serious ones which were much larger amounts I asked my father.

What was your favourite music?

H: *When I was 20–30 years old: Daryoush, Googosh, Moen, Andy and the pop-singers who were famous in those days.*

After 30, I started to listen to traditional Iranian music, like Shajarian.

In general, I listen to different types of music but to these the most. Some foreign music as well.

I tried to learn how to play the sitar, but I was not successful.

Is there any music which reminds you of home? Or relates you to home?

H: *No, they remind me more of people rather than spaces.*

Now I like to have a private space of my own. If I want to live with my mother I will have a separate home for myself as well. I do not want to stay with my twin brother anymore because we were together too much¹⁹⁹.

I always wanted to have two modern cars, one for myself and another for my partner. I hate driving people around, so she can go on her own.

I always like to have guests in the house.

Do you prefer to serve guests at home or take them to restaurants?

H: *It depends on the person. It does not matter for me.*

Do you like to have a house near your work?

H: *If no one will know it, but generally I prefer to live in a place where my colleagues will not see my comings and goings.*

Part 2

Here is a series of activities which might happen in a person's daily life. Please have a look and explain what you would do in these situations.

H: *I brush my teeth every night. I never use a hair-dryer because it may damage my hair.*

I always brush my teeth in the living area in front of the TV. I keep my toothbrush in the living area; I never keep it in the bathroom. It takes almost 15 minutes. I rarely brush my teeth in the morning but always at night.

What is your idea about the space where you wash your hands and face? How do you like it be in terms of light, area, colour etc?

H: *I prefer a calm space where no one will disturb me.*

¹⁹⁹ He is talking about living with his twin brother for his whole life and he prefers to be alone now.

Do you think that the toilet, sink and shower should be together or separate?

H: *Nowadays they are together, but I prefer them to be separate.*

What about the toilet and sink?

H: *I don't mind having them in one space, but it would be better to have the shower in a separate space. I prefer using a Western toilet rather than the traditional Iranian one. In terms of colour, I like bright colours.*

What do you want to have in the same room as the toilet?

H: *A mirror and a cupboard in which you can put things.*

What about the bathroom? Do you prefer having a shower or a tub?

H: *I like to have a bath specifically for myself with a tub, and another one for other people who may come to my house with a shower.*

Where do you store your towels?

H: *I will put it outside to dry, and then I will put it in my wardrobe. I never put it in the bathroom, as it is always wet there. I put shampoo and other things on the bath.*

Do you need sunlight?

H: *It does not matter.*

Where do you usually sleep and rest?

H: *Sometimes I sleep in front of the TV.*

When will you sleep in front of the TV?

H: *In the afternoon, at night I will go to bed to sleep. If I have guests I may sleep on the living-area floor at night. Anyway, I don't mind as I can easily sleep, and the environment is not important for me in order to sleep.*

Is there any specific action or hobby which you always do before sleep?
What do you think is necessary for your sleeping area?

H: *I prefer a soft surface and darkness. I can sleep in the light as well, but I prefer a dark and silent place. Generally I turn the lights off before sleep, because a bit of light comes from outside which is enough. I wear specific clothes at bedtime.*

You said you sometimes sleep in front of the TV in the afternoon. If you had a TV in your bedroom, would you sleep there in the afternoon?

H: *No, I would sleep in the living area; I prefer to stay in a larger space.*

What if it could all be one space?

H: *No.*

Do you have any specific activity before going to sleep? Reading, listening to music ...

H: *Recently I started to read English storybooks at night. I always have a bath at night, because otherwise I would be late in the morning. I will have a quick breakfast in the morning and then go to work. I will eat some fruit in the evening and have a light dinner late in the evening before I go to sleep.*

Ok, now let us talk about coming in and going out.

Is it in different situations when you reach the door and ring the bell or knock on the door, and when you use a key?

H: *I always open the door with a key. I will lock the door when leaving. Generally I am alone and there is no one to open the door for me. I prefer to open the door with a card or a code.*

When you come home and have things in your hands, what do you do with them? What do you put in the entrance hall and what do you put elsewhere?

H: *Shoes go beside the door, bags in my bedroom. Clothes in the bedroom. As it is warm here we don't need a coat, but if I had one I would keep it in the entrance hall. As I live in a small flat there is nowhere to put clothes when you first come in. It would be better to have a space for clothes at least for guests who come to visit.*

What about yourself?

H: *Coats in the entrance hall and other clothes in the bedroom.*

And shoes?

H: *They go beside the door. I have several pairs of shoes which I use often and I put them beside the door, but there are some shoes which I use rarely and I put them in the wardrobe.*

Where would you do such things as polishing shoes before going out?

H: *It would be good to have a closet beside the front door for putting things like this. I usually do it at my office as there is one of those automatic machines for polishing shoes.*

Are there any other things which are important to you when coming or going from your flat? For example, flowers etc.?

H: *I prefer to have a garage door which is operated by remote control so that you do not have to get out of the car to open the door. I have seen a very chic entrance. It had a very fashionable façade. The façade is very important for me. It had several steps at the front. Then there was a fashionable lobby upstairs. There were flowers beside the steps. A very nice wooden door. The stairs were white. I have also seen a house which was designed in the style of traditional houses, I liked it too. It was kind of traditional; it reminded you of old buildings. It had a certain elegant originality which I liked. The brickwork was attractive. The window frames were a wooden colour. There were some flowers and arcs...*

Do you think that it reminded you of past memories?

H: *No, I have never lived in such a house. But it was different and it seems that there is peace in this kind of house.*

If I were to live in an apartment I would like to live on an upper level in order to have a good view.

Tell me about the food in your life.

H: *Cooking is difficult. I rarely cook. I make tea, like in this picture, at night. I will drink tea during the day at work, as I am there until 4 pm. I usually cook very fast; I do not spend much time on cooking. Generally I cook for several days in one go.*

What food would you keep and for how long?

H: *I have a small fridge so I will just keep things for a month maximum. I do not cook anything else. Sometimes I buy ready meals. When I have guests they cook or we will go out; I do not cook for my guests.*

What about the style of dining? Traditional or modern? Which one do you usually do and which one do you prefer?

H: *In my friends' houses it is almost always the 3rd one (self-service), while in some older families it is the last type. I think the first two types do not exist anymore.*

Which one do you prefer? The way people do things now, or in the past?

H: *No, I prefer the new one. It is more comfortable and cleaner. It is easier to sit in this situation. When you sit more comfortably you eat better. If I am alone I might sit on the floor to get off my feet and I will spend more time eating. But I prefer to eat at the table with guests.*

H: *When it comes to washing clothes, I used to wash clothes by hand, but I use a washing machine now. I think the washing machine can be in the bathroom or the kitchen. Actually, it is not important for me. In the past I used to send my clothes to my mother for washing.*

And how about washing your dishes, etc.?

H: *It depends on the amount. If it isn't much I will wash them by hand, but if there are lots of dishes I prefer to use the dishwasher.*

If there is a chance to put clean laundry in the sun to dry, then I always do so. I send some of my clothes, like throws and new items, to the laundry. I iron some of my clothes at home, but as there is no space for an ironing board it must be set up and taken down each time it is needed.

It would be good to have a chance to have a special place for ironing and for the washing machine. It depends on the space I have.

How do you go about cleaning, and so on?

H: *When it is dirty I clean it. If I am on my own, as I am now, I have to clean it myself. I will try to be careful about making a mess. But when we are two it is usually messy.*

Is it important for you to always keep your bed in order?

H: *Not at all. It is always disordered.*

Will you buy vegetables and wash them?

H: *Yes, I have recently been doing this.*

Will you do any group cooking or preparing something at home? ²⁰⁰

H: *No. In the past I used to bring food which my mom cooked from Kerman but not now.*²⁰¹

What are your thoughts on storage?

H: *I think each bedroom should have cupboards so everybody has their own space for their things. It would be useful to have store rooms in the public basement for bicycles etc. It is good to have store rooms outside of the house.*

What are your thoughts about having transparent cupboards?

H: *They can be mixture of transparent ones and covered ones. It depends on the things which you put there.*

Different people have different ideas about putting things on display: some like it and some don't. What is your opinion?

H: *I think attractive things should be on display. I put things which I bought during my trips on display to show them to others.*

Do you categorize your crockery?

H: *There are some dishes which are for daily usage, which I put above the sink. There are some which I rarely use which I put in other cupboards.*

Will you put the dishes which you use for guests in the living area or reception?

H: *No, dishes cannot be in the living area; they must be in the kitchen.*

Where do you store bedding, blankets etc.?

H: *In the cupboard in the bedroom and the living room.*

What do you keep in your bedroom?

H: *I store my clothes in a wardrobe in my bedroom.*

And where do you keep cleaning equipment like the vacuum cleaner?

H: *It would be good to have a special space to put them. We do not have one, so we put them in the living area. It would be good to have a closet in*

²⁰⁰ It was common in the past to make food together with family and neighbours.

²⁰¹ His mom cooked for him in Kerman and he brought them to his city.

the living area to put the vacuum cleaner, iron and other such things in. A space for tools which have occasional use.

I like watching TV and listening to music. I like lying down and watching TV. I rarely read books, unless it is a very special book.

I exercise at the gym, four or five times a week, so I rarely exercise at home.

In the past you had a table tennis table, would you like to have one now?

H: *I would like to have an area for tennis or group games.*

I do not ever pray or anything like that.

Yes, I drink tea and coffee.²⁰²

When my friends come we play football outside together.

I do all these things in the living area as I am alone. If I were with other people, I would want to have a room for myself.

I do not have pets. It is difficult to take care of them. I like them but I cannot do it myself.

I drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes sometimes.

Do you let someone who comes to your house enter all parts of the house?

H: *Now in this house there is no problem. But if I had a big house I would have a private room for my own TV. In the past, everyone could enter my room (when I lived in my parents' house) but I had a private cupboard for my personal and private things.*

Now you see your friends and others in the living area, so do you like to be in a semi-open space with your friends?

H: *I would like to have a nice courtyard with a pergola in it. If the weather is good I prefer an open space.*

Do you need any special space for talking on the phone?

H: *No, if it is private I go to the bedroom.*

Do you believe in inner and outer parts of the house, like the past?

H: *Not at all. The world has changed now.*

Now everybody has his own bedroom -the kids and so on.

H: *It is good, each house needs a public space and also individual spaces.*

Do you put images on the walls?

²⁰² He is referring to the pictures he has.

H: *In the past I used to put images of actors on the walls, now I put other images and statues and some things for decoration.*

Is there any special activity which you like to do but which you now do not do?

H: *I would like to have a private living area for my special friends, with a TV and traditional furniture. And a public living area with modern furniture.*

I believe that my bedroom must have its own bathroom.

What do you do in the semi-open spaces?

H: *Play, eat...*

You like to spend time with your friends in a semi-open space, what about the times when you are alone?

H: *When I am alone, I watch TV, eat something.*

If you wanted to divide your house into parts, how would you do it? For example: private, public, entrance...

H: *The living area would be a public area, the kitchen semi-private; a traditional living area would be a private part, the bedrooms private. Each person would have their own room. Guests who are good friends would come to the private living area and kitchen. The private living area would be that one which I said should be on an upper level. In an apartment I would like to have a nice balcony with a good view.*

What do you mean by a nice balcony?

H: *A large balcony where one can sit.*

What about the entrance?

H: *The entrance should be a public area.*

How about making it a space which can be a bit limited? So, when opening the door, the whole house would not be on display?

H: *That is better. But it is not important for me. Anyway, the people who come to your house are known; if not, they would not come.*

The kitchen should be connected to both the private and public parts of the house. It would be good to be able to come from the private part to the kitchen without being seen by people who are in the living area.

Would the kitchen and the entrance be connected?

H: *It would be better to have the kitchen not too close to the entrance, to avoid being seen. It is better for it to open onto a public space.*

Imagine there are some guests in the living area and you have brought something and want to put it in the kitchen: you would have to pass the guests and then go to the kitchen.

H: *From this point of view, OK it could have two doors. A door to the private living area or it could be placed here in a way that ensures that anyone who wanted to go to the private living area would not be seen by the people in the reception. Actually, it is a good idea, for example, when there were guests, someone who did not want to be seen could go to the private part without being seen. I would want to have this.*

What do you have in this public area?

H: *A sofa, a dining table near the kitchen, a sitting area, a TV.*

Do you think there should be a special place which is just for dining, or to have just a dining table?

H: *I prefer to have diversity, not fixed spaces. It would be better to be able to move the table to different places. I do not want to have a fixed dining table.*

Nowadays in the kitchen everything tends to be fixed.

H: *I have seen the dining table in the kitchen. It depends on the size of the house; if it is big enough, I would prefer to change this but, if not, I would prefer to use the space in the best way.*

Do you like any special features in the kitchen? Is it just a place for cooking or can it be for something else, too?

H: *I like to watch TV when I am eating. When I am working, I want to listen to something.*

Now everyone entering your house will see your kitchen. Is that good?

H: *It would be better not to be seen. It might be a mess.*

Where did you usually eat when you lived with your parents?

H: *We usually ate breakfast and lunch in the kitchen, but I preferred eating in the living area.*

Part 3

This is an image of our urban design in the past and now. As you see, the buildings were inward-looking and they were not in rows. They were like a number of different parts joined to each other, like puzzles.

H: *I like this one.*

Why do you like this?

H: *This one is straight, the other one is not. I prefer this one which is not straight and has more diversity. Actually, in terms of speed and driving the new one is more convenient but the old one would be more pleasant.*

I like that type which did not have yards in a row.

I like a house situated in the centre, with the sides open. It depends on the area, if it is not possible it depends on the neighbours.

These are some images from our traditional houses. For example, with sunlight from the windows and ceilings.

H: *I like this kind of light.*

What do you like about it?

H: *I like the shape of the windows. I think the house has got nice lighting.*

Do you know why they used colourful glass?

H: *For diversity?*

Yes, and to avoid intense light and to control the sunlight.

H: *They could reduce the number of windows!*

They wanted to use sunlight in winter, as well as add to the beauty of the house; what are your thoughts about using colourful glass?

H: *I think that, as houses are smaller now than in the past, it cannot be used. Also, the financial factor is very important.*

I believe that we now spend lots of money on different materials for the façade, so it is not just a question of finance.

H: *We can compare it to a new one and then decide. In these images I like the one which has more light and more variety of colours. I like the curved elements more than the cubic ones.*

What do you think about having sunlight from the ceiling?

H: *It is impossible in an apartment. No, I do not like it.*

One of my friends mentioned that she likes being able to see the sky from my room.

H: *It is good for a one-storey house. But it could be in just a small part of the house and not the whole house. This is not just about light, but insulation, cold and heat, is also important.*

It is possible to resolve this with particular features.

H: *My ideal house is a house which has a swimming pool, a tennis court and also a room in which you can see the sky. It is not possible. Is it?*

I believe we can bring all that together and do as much as we can in order to create that environment.

H: *I want to have a room for my PlayStation, and so on.*

Can you describe your favourite room for that?

H: *I would like to be able to see the outdoors from it. It could have an opening in the ceiling as well. It should be connected to the outdoors both visually and physically.*

One of the most important aspects in traditional Iranian houses was the courtyard.

This house is in Kashan. You know that houses in the past were inward-looking. And their outsides did not have any windows and decoration.

H: *No, I do not like it. I told you that there was a house in our neighbourhood whose second owner made like a jail; I did not like it at all. I have seen a series of houses in Sarcheshmeh which were built with American-input. The yards were separated by flowers, I liked it very much. There was grass in the yards and the fences were just 60-70cm high. But, safety is important too.*

Do you know the reason for having inward-looking houses?

H: *No.*

One important issue was privacy, and that is something which has completely changed today. Another thing was, as most parts of our country are located in desert, they wanted to have their own paradise which was a garden for their house. All courtyards had a garden with trees and a pool.

This house had a courtyard and open space set on three levels.

H: *I prefer this one which has trees and water rather than that one with different levels.*

Another point was that all areas were to look onto the courtyard.

H: *Weren't there any windows on the outside?*

No, there were not.

H: *Architecture will change over time.*

There are still some people who do not like others to know what they are doing and where they live and so on.

H: *The yard can be connected to the street. What happens then? They can have several rooms which are completely private. There is no problem in seeing the yard.*

In the past, courtyards were places where people undertook some other activities as well. Also, there is a climactic aspect too.

H: *I remember several houses which I have seen in the past that had a tall wall which meant that no one could see the inside of the house.*

Did you like it?

H: *It was surrounded with a large garden, so it was not boring at all. That made them really pleasant. Can we have a mixture of all these?*

Sure. We cannot have the same things but we can make a connection to the past, instead of ignoring it.

H: *Yes, that would not be good.*

Evidence shows that domestic Iranian architecture goes back to 8000 BC.

For example, the entrance in traditional Iranian architecture had a place to sit outside the door. Also, there was a hierarchy for access. Sometimes several houses shared a vestibule.

H: *I remember Naseri's house has an entrance like that. There are two stone benches before the door. Then there is a wooden door. Then, before the yard, there is a corridor again with a stone bench on both sides. Then it is connected to the courtyard. Anyone who is coming to the house will see the garden but not the house when entering the yard.*

You know, these days, you may not care about privacy from a religious point of view but you have to be careful because, if someone sees you, it might cause problems for you. In the past it was more religious, now it is more political.

H: *That is right, but it seems that the new generation does not care about it anymore.*

Yes, you can see the difference on Facebook, comparing the photos of different generations.

H: *I can deal with different types of people easily.*

Another thing which was nice about traditional houses is that their functional walls were always decorated, although this depends on the financial situation of the residents as well.

H: *Actually, these houses are attractive and I like them all.*

Yes, but the walls had a functional aspect as well, and the walls are now just partitions. The walls inside and out were not just flat surfaces.

H: *I think it is a matter of variety as well. Nowadays it is common to use cupboards instead. Also, in the past, as the walls were very thick people could use the space within them. Now the walls are very thin and so this is not possible.*

Yes, but in the past they would prepare different storage-areas of different sizes. But now residents must buy additional furniture to cover these needs.

H: *If you mean that this was a good thing, I agree with you. But I do not think it is possible to do the same things in new houses.*

It is possible to introduce new elements. We will talk about it in the next stage.

H: *Maybe there needs to be a new construction system. Also, this would probably be made of wood.*

Yes, but I believe there are some things which must be considered during the design process.

H: *If I could afford a large house I would do such things, but in a 50m² house you cannot have an entrance-corridor. You need to use the space in the best way.*

You should consider the point of why they had a corridor like that. According to their needs, it was necessary.

H: *In the past, in order to go from one space to another, you had to go to a semi-open space, but no one would do it now.*

We do not have to copy that layout, but it is not good to ignore them entirely.

H: *It would be good if we could have a mixture of a traditional Iranian house and a modern house.*

For instance, in this house the wall is not just a division between two spaces. Is that right? It is decorative and also a place to put things, actually multi-functional.

H: *Again, I think the only reason is the thickness of the wall. I remember an old house with walls of 100cm thickness; now if you had something like that you would be encroaching on your neighbour's house.*

Cupboards and wardrobes are the replacement.

H: *OK; the interior design is good.*

These were things which were thought about carefully, but today they are ignored. It is not important to consider the residents' ways of living.

H: *Now cupboards and wardrobes would be added.*

Maybe it would be good to think about the TV and where to put it. But it is not good to fix it somewhere; it is better if it can be moved.

In the past there were other things, but now the TV is important. Also, it is related to people's desires. For instance, around the kitchen now almost everything is going to be fixed. It seems people are more satisfied with this, that everything has a specific place.

H: *It is not important for me with regards to things in the kitchen, but I prefer to be able to change the arrangement of the furniture to avoid having just one boring space.*

I agree with you. I personally try to design something with the capacity for change. But I have a friend who believes the first thing is the best and should not be changed.

H: *It might be the best, but change is always good and fosters diversity. It is not necessary to make everything changeable, but some things like sofas, TVs and their arrangement should be changeable.*

Another aspect of traditional houses was that different spaces were on different levels. The bedrooms were always in an upper level from the courtyard. Like in this picture, the different levels helped people who wanted to look down without being seen.

H: *Do you mean having two floors?*

Look at the image: this is one level which is divided into two for another function. Now all spaces have a fixed height, which is 300cm.

H: *It is good. Having different heights will make the plan more interesting as well.*

In traditional houses they had a place called “shah neshin”, which means a place for seating the king. It was a special place in the part which was for guests.

H: *That was in the past, and now the guest area is not separated from the rest of the house. When I mentioned that I would like to have a traditional area, I meant this.*

When you say 'traditional', you mean sitting on the floor, with back-rests?

H: *Yes, for instance, in a 200m² house, if we could have a 3m x 4m area for this, it would be good.*

Do you like these traditional forms for decorating ceilings and walls?

H: *Nowadays wallpaper does this for the walls. But the traditional way is more attractive. I prefer this one rather than that one.*

In traditional houses, as well as a pool in the courtyard, there was a small pool in a room for other purposes.

H: *Now you can still see this in traditional restaurants. I like it there, but I prefer to have a swimming pool rather than this. But it could be nice if I could have it in the traditional part of the house. A small vertical surface of water might be on the wall.*

Do you like water in the house?

H: *Yes.*

This was something which belonged prior to the 20th century. Now let us have a quick look at the 20th century house.

The inward-looking focus changed to an outward-looking one. Windows were knocked through to the outside, and the outside façade became decorated.

The balcony in the street dates from the first period of Pahlavi.

H: *I like a house which has a balcony.*

What do you want from it? Some people want to be able to see the street, while some like to be able to see nature.

H: *I like to have a nice outdoor view. I like to see nature (mountains and trees) as well as people in the street.*

These are façades of older buildings.

H: *I prefer this one.*

Another change occurred with regards to the stairs. They became more luxurious and adherent to fashion.

H: *I prefer outward-looking buildings.*

These corridors were added to our architecture during the Pahlavi period. Before that, the rooms did not open onto the corridors. Also, their decoration.

H: *I prefer this one. In traditional houses the rooms were separated and they were not connected to each other.*

In traditional houses the rooms were separated with doors between them, and the doors could be opened and closed. So the rooms could be connected in this way.

H: *I want to draw a traditional house which I remember.*

Here is the entrance, which is before the door, and there is a stone bench on both sides. Here was a staircase to the roof. A wooden door was here and again a stone bench on both sides. People could not see inside, and beyond that is the building. There is a room here, and the reception is here. There was a room, with a window, and here was its door. The door opened onto the corridor and the window looked onto the garden. And here was the kitchen. The reception had two doors and was called the two-door room. And here was the porch.

They built a toilet here and there was a store room here. Here was open and there was an oven for bread-making. Also, they cooked food there as well. Here (below) was the garden. There was a walnut tree which never grew above that. There was a small pool at the centre of the garden and there were stone benches around the small pool for sitting, at a lower level than the pool. There was a statue of a lion there, too. Here was a corridor connecting the pool. The pool was at the centre. I made a mistake in the drawing.

Here were cobbles in front of the building. Then there was the garden and another one next to it was connected by a door. Here was a toilet. The garden was surrounded with trees and at its centre there was grass where we played football.

Here was an old bath. Now they have built a toilet and bathroom inside the building. In the past, the bath and toilet were located on different sides of the garden.

This house was built about 80–90 years ago and there have not been many changes since then.

The small pool was located exactly at the end of this cobbled access-way.

Here was another room and there was storage for food, with a small door.

Almost all houses had fireplaces until very recently. Now they are just more decorative than functional.

H: *I like fireplaces. It is better to make them more functional. I prefer to have a wooden one, rather than gas.*

Part 4

Today we are going to try our hand at designing.

H: *Me or you?*

Both of us together.

H: *Where and how?*

These are some tools to help us.

H: *Shall we design a house?*

We may design a house or a part of it.

These are some drawings of entrances. They show different typologies.

The hexagonal one, which is drawn here, was very important in traditional Iranian architecture. The proportions of these entrances are related to this hexagon.

No 1. You would enter the house here and then have two sides to enter, public and private. There are two parts, an open and a closed area. There is a green space in the open area.

In the next option (no 4), the open area is bigger and has a place for sitting.

H: *Is it the entrance of the house?*

Yes.

H: *It is the first stage as you enter the house?*

Yes, but you would go to a closed space. It means you will enter directly from the street to the building rather than entering the yard first.

In the different options shown in no 8, you would enter the house and there is just one way through to the other spaces. But, in these alternatives, you would have two separate ways to enter the public and private spaces (numbers 2,3,5,6)

H: *We do not have such things any more.*

It is not important if we still have it or not, the point is which you prefer.

H: *No, I do not like it. For example, it will designate bedrooms as in the private part and the living area in the public one and ... you mean the door must open into the room or into the living area?*

No, you would have a space which divides access to the two parts. And you would not enter the living area directly.

H: *And are there places for sitting?*

Yes, there could be. In no 9 we have a sitting area in the open space as well as a sitting place inside the building. It could be a space for sitting, a cupboard or a space for any other activities as needed. Anyway, in these examples we have a closed space for entering, and there is just one access to the entire house from this space. In the others (numbers 1-7), people might like to have a private space and so would have two separate accesses to the two parts.

H: *OK, I think these ones are better.*

You can have a walk-in wardrobe for dressing there; do you have any other suggestions for it?

H: *You mean that I must say how it could be better?*

Yes.

H: *I believe we cannot have the traditional one if we imagine this as the living area.*

Why can't we have the traditional type?

H: *We should consider the financial aspect, as well as other things, such as space.*

We can manage the financial issues, so forget about that. What would you like to have? Do not think about the buildings which are built for us.

H: *I would like it if this would be the entrance, having space for a lobby, space for shoes and clothes on both sides, then a door this way, which would access the public part, meaning the living area and ... and another door this way to enter the private part. I would like to have a living area between these two parts which would be furnished traditionally and would link the two parts. The kitchen must be between the two parts, so that it could be used by residents from both parts and, if needed, when someone wants to enter the kitchen from the private part without being seen from the public part, this should be possible. I like this, which one is this?*

Let us have a look at this one which is more detailed. You would enter from here, which is above street-level. This could be a green space, or it could be a water-feature. These were things which we had in the past, a sitting area outside the entrance.

H: *Is it a lobby?*

This is a semi-open space which is outside the building, it is roofed but without bordering walls.

H: *This is just the entrance of the house, and not important!*

It is important. Why do you think it is not important?

H: *You can have all of that in the lobby.*

Please imagine that you are in the street or alley, and you want to ring the bell. Do you prefer to stand in the alley and ring or enter a specific space and ring? Or is it not important?

H: *This is better.*

Do you think it would be better to have this inside the building or outside?

H: *I would prefer to have it inside. But I am not sure about the stone bench. There are just two options: you know the visitor or not. You will let him come in or not. There is no other choice.*

Does this mean that you would ask the postman to enter the house? Or how about if someone has to wait outside, for example if they have forgotten their keys?

H: *Such things would happen only rarely. And how many times would the postman come annually? You could put these in the lobby.*

But these things do happen. Or do you think that if you were waiting outside the building and waiting for somebody, you would not need a sitting place?

H: *I cannot understand the point of an outside sitting area. Is it a sofa or a chair?*

It is a stone bench.

H: *If it is just a stone bench, then we could have it there. But I think we could put the sitting area inside. You can furnish a lobby with a sofa and ask people to sit there if you wish.*

You say that that space is more private. Do you think we could add anything to this one?

H: *Flowers would be good. It would be nice if we could have a space for a fountain or a water-feature.*

Imagine that there is a sitting area and, besides that, trickling water. There could also be a culvert for water to pass under the stairs, which would be here. And it could be a loop which allows the water to return. And there could be flowers between them. I would like a place like that. Flowers and water and a sitting area.

Another thing, we had specific door-knockers in the past, but now it is common to use video intercoms. What do you think?

H: *I think that nowadays we cannot have those kinds of door-knockers, but I believe that these intercoms are good. You can see who is outside, and then you can decide whether to let them in or not. I agree with it.*

Now, imagine you are now inside the building, in the house.

H: *A cupboard for everybody who comes to the house to put their coat and other things. A place for shoes. It should be arranged in such a way that the people who are going to the private parts and those who are going to the public parts do not see each other.*

Another thing which I want to talk about is the capacity to move walls, and have flexible spaces.

H: *What do you mean?*

You can have panels which can be moved around in order to have different configurations of space.

H: *It is possible to control what is seen?*

Are you agreeing that it would be good to control access to the living spaces of the house?

H: *Yes, but only if it did not cost a lot.*

I believe the panels can be multi-functional, so they are not a waste of money. I agree that financial issues are important, but may I ask you how much does it cost to have an aluminium façade?

H: *I completely disagree with aluminium.*

OK, these new materials, like specific wooden façades and so on?

H: *It is expensive.*

You could spend a bit of your façade money on something which might also be a closet. Why should you build it later? Why not plan for all of this at the beginning?

H: *A cupboard has several functions.*

This can be multi-functional. You can organize how you spend your money. It is very common now to spend more money on the outside of the house for a façade and less on the inside, in order to reduce the cost. I believe this is not the case.

H: *I think the façade is very important and we cannot ignore it.*

Yes, it is – but the inside is more important.

H: *I think that, when you see a house with a bad façade, you would not go and see the inside of it, in terms of buying a house.*

Yes, this is exactly the point. It is the commercial part, not the living part.

H: *We should see the outside first before going inside.*

Forget the commercial part, and think about living there.

H: *OK. I will imagine that I want to buy a house and live in it.*

OK. How many times you will see the façade in a day? How much will you stay inside?

H: *When I want to enter a house I will see the façade. OK. Now imagine that the façade is not decorated at all.*

It is impossible. The façade is important in an urban context. But it is not more important than inside.

H: *I think people who spend their money on the outside will spend money on the inside as well. Because the inside must be finished first.*

Unfortunately, this is not the case.

H: *The person who does this is a businessman.*

What percentage of people build their own houses? For example, in this city?

H: *Here, inside the building, it is very low.*

It might be a bit better in another city, but it is almost the same everywhere. Have you been to houses which the residents have built for themselves and have made more pleasant?

H: *I have seen that the outside and the inside of the houses are similar. For example, my parents' home was the same inside and outside.*

Yes, they must be related.

H: *Now 80% of houses are the same, inside and out. They are all similar.*

I think there is more variety in terms of façades. Which one do you think is more important?

H: *I think both. 50% for each.*

I do not like to enter a house with a rubbish façade. But 70% for the inside and 30% for the façade. I think the inside will have influence on the outside.

H: *I think the house must be attractive from the outside. I would prefer to live in a house with an ordinary inside and a fantastic façade rather than an ordinary façade and a fantastic inside. The façade will be seen by everybody, and it is very hard to make changes to it after construction. But it is easy to make changes inside the house.*

Please tell me, as a user, how much would the inside influence you and how much would the outside? There is another matter which is that people might be showing off, which is now common. In the past, it was preferable for them not to show the inside. There are still some people like this.

H: *Now, here in this house, you can make changes – add a cabinet or closet, change the kitchen. It might be impossible to change the entrance.*

These are small changes and they cannot have a very large effect.

H: *They are related to the overall plan.*

Yes, planning is important; people often think that such matters relate to the interior design. But, my dear, all matters should be considered at the same time. There is no difference between the structure and mechanical, electrical and architectural aspects. They must be conceived together. This is the main problem in our house.

H: *I think the planning must be good.*

What do you mean by good planning?

H: *I mean that it must follow my preferences and not the architect's.*

You mean it should match your ways of living?

H: *We were constructing an apartment and the plans changed several times during the design process; actually, there were some changes after that as well.*

May I ask you what the reasons for the changes were?

H: *For example, I wanted to have a small private living area and I asked them to make the kitchen smaller in order to have a 4x4 area for this.*

Also, I like to have light in the rooms, so I asked them to have large windows. I wanted some changes according to my desires.

I have reviewed our previous sections. I tried to note some points from what you have said. For example, the relationship with your neighbours. You mentioned you often played in the alley. Consequently, the façade might be an important aspect for you. What do you think?

H: *In the past I did not notice façades, but recently I have become very curious about them and am always searching for them.*

It might be because you are undertaking some building for yourself.

These are some images to help you make your desired domestic spaces. You can use the whole image or a part of them.

H: *What should I make now? Living area, several rooms?*

Let us make that special traditional space which you would like to have in your home.

P2: *I like these very much, that upper level space which I mentioned before.*

These are some Iranian symbols. You may want to use these.

H: *OK, I have selected some images.*

H: *This bath is visible from the outside?*

Yes.

H: *Is it possible to put blinds on the windows?*

It is.

Please put the images which you do not like to one side.

H: *This is like a dormitory.*

H: *What are these?*

Several traditional paintings. They were painted by Reza Abbasi from the Safavid period and Mahmood Farshchian, a contemporary artist. Which would you like to have from among these Iranian symbols for your home?

H: *I like the Persepolis symbols. I do not like the religious ones.*

This is good for a bedroom, not for a public space. It is a good idea to have this for a section of a wall, not a whole wall. I like to have curved forms.

I did not see any attractive bathrooms!

OK, these are my favourites.

OK, let us start with your special space. We can make a 3D model of that as well if you want.

H: *I would like such a space on an upper level.*

What about the height?

H: *Not low; it could be closed on one side and the other sides could be open and visible. It could have a wall to close off the side, or may be screened by glass.*

Do you want to see inside of the house?

H: *It would be great if I could see the outside as well. But it should be possible to screen it off with blinds. For instance, this is good, but it is a bit low. If I was there I would make it higher. It would be better to have flowers in between and the entrance from the middle. A view of the outside from the other side. It is small and I prefer a larger space. Instead of that space which is beside it in the picture I would prefer to replace the flowers. Here is a place for sitting. I would prefer to have some hidden storage there, for wine and other things which I want for myself in private. If not, I would make a closet for storage in this part of the house.*

These are some other images like the one you have selected.

After a short break

H: *I like this part of the building. There is a view of both inside and outside and there is an upper level as well.*

I like this one, too: the combination of spaces, the water which is here, and the room located here.

This picture is good. I like the fireplaces and the upper-level space.

I like the small pool in this one.

If you put your favourites separately we can link them.

H: *I like this entrance, in the yard, as there is water in it. It could be good inside as well; but I like it outside more.*

This is good, having a swimming pool in this open space and the living part here.

I would like to have this in the courtyard, before the entrance and with a swimming pool beside it. Does it matter if it costs a lot?

No. Let us try to find a good combination.

H: *This is the entrance, which would be in the middle.*

How difficult this is!

Imagine we have a pool here. Here is a porch. Here is the entrance. Here we would have a sitting area. And now we reach the home itself. I want to have trees here. I will draw them in pen. I would like to have a connection between the two water sources.

H: *I would like to have a space, like this image, when entering the building. OK, now let us go inside the house. It is very disorderly!*

No problem.

H: *I would like to have chairs in this porch.*

This is the entrance to the building. There is a porch, swimming pool and sitting area. I would like to connect these trees at the back of the pool to the trees in front of the building. It is a small garden which is full of trees.

Now, how should we start on the building? Shall we start with the bedrooms or the living area?

Do you want to enter the part with the rooms first?

H: *When entering, first you arrive at the living area and the two-way part which I described.*

I would like to have a part like this in the building. A fireplace, windows, stones. Here are lots of windows, but I like this.

I like a fireplace to be located in the centre. I would like to have a combination of these images as the living area. It would be good to put this fireplace instead of these ones.

Can we put all this together? We can cut out those parts which you like.

H: *In this image, I like the living area and the view which it has to the outside. I don't know how to choose. It is really hard.*

Imagine this is the kitchen. I would prefer to link it to both parts of the house. Can I draw it myself?

Yes, why not. You should do it in your own way. These images are here to help you. It is not necessary to force yourself to use these. Do you want to have something like this?

H: *Yes, it would be good to have it here.*

It would be good to put it here as well. I like these flowers; they can go between the living area and the bedrooms.

The rooms must be upstairs.

Would you please tell me what particular points you like about this kitchen?

H: *I like it generally. is good as well.*

I would like the stairs which reach the special living area to be in the middle. Beside the stairs, I would like to have flowers and water.

I cannot match the images!

I like to have these in the living area for the TV.

Imagine there is the corner with a TV and sofas.

The kitchen is connected both to the living area and private spaces.

Your traditional space has become very modern; do you want to put some traditional images there?

H: *It does not matter; we will make the contents traditional. We won't have a sofa or table; there will be just backrests.*

Let us change this part, move these. These stairs are good. I would like to have a part of the house like this.

Can we find a smaller kitchen?

Have a look at these images.

H: *I like this image because it is on two levels. But I want to put the stairs in the middle and have them surrounded by flowers.*

Let us make that with these images.

H: *OK, but it is really difficult.*

Could you use the stairs which you selected to lead to the bedrooms for this one as well?

H: *No, I want to have a special staircase for this space. It should be the stairs with flowers and water around it.*

And the upper level must be a combination of these.

I would like to use these images on the wall. I would like to have a combination of these to decorate the walls.

OK, now we should think about the kitchen and the upstairs bedrooms.

Where should we put the kitchen?

Take it easy, we can first put it somewhere and then explain the relation.

H: OK, how should we show this relation? I would like to have the kitchen at the centre, in a way that every other space can access it easily.

OK, let us find the things which you would like to have in your kitchen.

H: The beauty of the kitchen is important for me.

What do you like about this kitchen?

H: I like the cupboards and how they are located.

Do you want to have another look at the kitchen images? What do you think about forms such as this in the ceiling?

H: Actually, I like these. I am thinking about having these for my building under construction. I like this kind of light on the ceiling.

Do you remember we talked about thickness of the walls? You can see this wall is storage which can be accessed from both sides.

H: It is good; I cannot say it is bad, but I think it would ruin the space.

The designer thought about this during the design process. But if we do not consider this during the design time we have to add something after finishing the construction. Is it not better to think about it before?

H: I think this kitchen is better.

I believe if it is interior design it depends on where it could be used.

How long would it take?

I want to have a connection from the kitchen to the TV area. It would be good to have it close to the stairs which go to the upstairs rooms. Although it must also be an independent space in itself. It could be closed or open. I prefer the open one.

I would like to cover part of the house with stone, a part of a wall, for instance. I would like to pass this wall when entering and have trees around. I would like to have an alcove beside the pool. A roofed space with no walls around it.

I do not have anything else to say.

Thanks a lot.

Appendix 5

Interview transcript S

part 1

Please talk about the house where you grew up, everything you remember.

S: Our childhood house was a house with a very big garden. There was a huge piece of land at the back of the house which was abandoned. The house was located in the centre. There was a space for cars at the back of the house with a large door. There were 2 buildings and one of them was smaller. My uncle used to live there for a while. At the back of the house there were walnut trees. Here was the yard and the garden was here. There was a demolished wall and we used to play on top of it. Imagine this was the other house's yard; here was our house's yard. There was a door here and a long corridor with trees on both sides was here. Different types of trees: from March to September we had different types of fruits. Cherry, sour cherry, pomegranate etc. Here was full of walnut trees and at the other entrance as well there were walnut trees. And all around the house were spruce trees. Here were the tall trees. I cannot draw them. Trees were all around the garden. Beside the walls were spruce trees.

How tall were the walls?

S: they were not tall, about 1.5 m. Both sides of this corridor were surrounded by the trees. The trees from both sides reached together and made that corridor shady. Then the corridor came to 3 stairs which was the main yard of the house on the upper level. It was a large yard, about 3 m wide. Then, again there were 2 steps which led to the main living area. Here was another living area beside the kitchen. The main living area had 3 large windows which made it possible to see the whole garden from the living room. At the back there were several rooms with windows to the open space at the back, where the walnut trees were. An eglantine plant was here, which was full of flowers in spring. In the morning there was always its nice smell. A goat willow plant was here with a lovely smell too. It was really great. In that corridor with trees there were roses. And my mom used to make syrup from them. A door was in this side which was for guests to come in without entering the living room. The guests' area was connected to the living room by a small door. That's all I can tell you. The other house was like this but it was not as nice as this one. It was a normal and small house which was built after this one. This one seems older and maybe because all my memories are about this one. There was a row of spruce trees.

What is the benefit of spruce trees?

S: the wood has been used in ceilings and also for match making factories. There were dealers who came from Esfahan and Tabriz to buy their wood.

Is it a fast growing tree?

S: No, it takes time. The spruce trees around the house were old. The other house did not have fruits; the only fruit tree there was a plum tree. The rest of trees there were spruce. On the land in the back we had made a volleyball court for ourselves. The car was able to come near the second house and there was a large area for car parking. I have 5 sisters and we used to play there in the afternoon especially in summer. There were some vegetables and strawberries planted here.

Here was an old wooden door in the past when we were kids. About 1980 some changes were made in the building. The wooden door was removed and a wall was added here with a large new door. The wooden door was an old door with at least 10 cm depth which was made of walnut wood. It had a door knocker and was really lovely. The yard was very large but the door knocker sound could be heard in the building.

Did it have 2 door knockers?

S: it was just one with a very loud sound. I think I have said everything.

What about the other house's entrance? Was that here too?

S: yes it was. After the wall was built that house was not used anymore. Here, there was not a wall and also it was empty at the back and it was the passage way after making the wall it changed all to the back door.

These were the room's windows. Here was the vegetable patch. The vegetable patch was exactly at the back of the house. Here was space for several cars to park and nothing else.

Ceilings were made from spruce wood in old houses. It is still being used. In the old houses the walls were very thick. And they used to build their ceilings from this spruce wood. The ceiling had different layers and the last one was thatch which needed to be repaired once in a while.

Because the rain would wash the thatch so they needed to be replaced.

S: it was more because of the snow. As they were removing the thatch while cleaning the roofs from the snow they needed to be replaced. It was done after winter while they were still wet.

Now let's talk about the internal spaces.

S: Where should I start?

The most important thing which you remember and which was more interesting for you.

S: from the living area as we spent most of our time there. And I have lots of memories of the living room. A large living room was here with a large door about 2m wide. There were glass panels in the door. Also, another living area was here with an entrance from the yard. And a large window here. A room was beside this living area and it was the kitchen. Shall I write the names?

Yes, please.

S: kitchen, small living room and the main living room.

What was the difference between the 2 living areas?

S: as the small living room was located beside the kitchen and store room, my mom was always there. Her sewing machine was there. And we used to eat meals in this part. I said here was a storage room too. Several doors and windows. A room was located here with a window towards the back yard and walnut trees. This room was called the 2 doors room.

What did you do in this room?

S: This 2 doors room was connected to another room which was called the dining room. There was a door between these 2 rooms and also they were connected to the living area with another door too. Before the new guest room was built, the 2 door room was used for receiving guests. Guests used to have their meal in the dining room and rest in the 2 doors room. After a while, the guest room and reception area was built here. The 2 doors room was large. The dining area was almost till here. When the kids had grown up and the family became bigger, a reception area was built here. A large room which was from here to here. And it had 2 windows at the back. A large door here. Actually, bigger than these windows. From floor to ceiling. A door connected the reception to the living area here. The toilet and bathroom was at the back. I mean you had to come to the yard and then go to the back of the buildings to reach the washing rooms. Before the washrooms there was store room. It was scary. There was a toilet in the garden too. With a path between trees it was scary at night. We used to go together to the toilet at night.

The old toilet and bathroom were scary.

S: My mom said that in their time the toilet was located at the end of the garden. It was common to make toilets at a distance from the building. Step by step it came nearer. When I was almost 8 it was demolished. It was one of those deep holes which were really scary. There was a stove beside it for bread baking too. A lady used to come to our house once a week and bake bread. The stove was moved later too. And then it was removed completely. I loved that bread. Hot bread with butter was great. Our house was far from the river but in spring the river sound could be heard in our house which was nice.

Do you like this sound?

S: yes, I love it. The eglantine plant was really nice. Also, we used to have lunch below the plum tree in summer. That was lovely. There was an empty space under the tree. We have some images of that too. It was possible for cars to come up near the building.

Cars could come from both sides?

S: yes. Cars could come beside the step. We had 2 big plum trees and we used to swing between these 2 trees in summer. Also, another big plum tree was here too. 2 cherry trees were here. We used to bind 2 trees together with rope and put blankets between the ropes and sleep there. In summer some other relative's kids would come to our house too. For a while our neighbour had several daughters and with our cousins we were lots of kids playing there.

Trees are lovely. It seems that most of your memories are about the trees.

S: Yes, all of them. For example, climbing trees. Today kids do not think about climbing trees at all. We were always climbing trees. There was a cherry tree where there was a race to pick up the black cherries. In the morning while waking up I used to go to the cherry trees before washing my face. While coming home from school we used to go to the cherry tree then pear trees. All the way in the corridor we were eating different kinds of fruits from the trees. Also, there was an apple tree here. It seems all my memories are about trees.

The grasses in the yard were tall and we used to play hide and seek between them. Also, we got bee stings there too much. In the past there was a hall which I cannot remember. I mean it was all one space and it was open at the front. It was a roofed space, then it was changed to a closed space and became the main living area. There were several changes. Another change was adding the guests' parts.

Where did you use to sleep in this house?

S: my parents usually slept in the small living area which could have been closed with the door. But we slept everywhere, usually in these 2 rooms. It was larger and we slept more here. Sometimes sleeping in front of the TV in the living area. But our main room was this one, where we kept our cupboards. My mom was not strict so we were free to do what we wanted to. I remember once we were playing with water in the yard with the hose. Someone went to the living room and the others followed him. So the water went to the living area as well. Everywhere was wet, walls, carpets etc. It is really nice to play with water in summer.

There was a storage space in the corner of the small living area, where my mom used to keep her special china. It did not have a door; it was just covered

with a curtain. I remember once we were playing in the living area and suddenly someone fell on that storage and all the dishes were broken.

The corridor, which was shaded, was a great place for biking. The upper level yard was good too. But the one which was surrounded with trees was better. There was someone who did the house chores. So we were always free to play for the whole day when we were not at school.

The outside entrance had a bell but it did not have an intercom. There was a strip connected to the lock and the people who were close to us knew they could pull it and open the door and come in.

You mean it was possible to open the door from the outside?

S: yes. As it was far from the house, it was hard to go and open the door. So the person who wanted to come in could pull the strip and open the door and come in.

Was there any problem that everybody could open the door and come in?

S: no, that was not a problem at all. It was far to go several times in a day. I remember we were playing at night while my mom was not at home and the loser had to go open and close the door and then come back. There was not any light in that corridor to the door. It was really scary. Also, in the back rooms where we used to sleep, there were windows to the garden. Beside the wall of windows, we had a large bed. I remember it was scary at night seeing the shadow of the trees and also the wind sound and sometimes dogs.

Did you sleep in the yards?

S: no, there were frogs in the yard so we did not sleep there. But in the afternoon we used to sleep under the eglantine after lunch. I have a bad memory of this siesta. We had 2 turkeys. Once I was sleeping under the eglantine with my mom when suddenly one of the turkeys jumped on me. I never slept there again. When you were running in the garden in the middle of the night you could feel that you had just passed a frog. In the summer, during watering the garden the whole surface was covered with water which came from the water way. There were several men who were doing garden watering. I remember sometimes there was lots of water which flowed out through the door. We had a garden man who did not let us eat the fruit.

I remember we used to go up on the roof very often. But I never go to our roof now. There was a walnut tree which reached the roof. It was possible to sit under its shade in summer. Also, we used to pick the walnuts and eat them there.

Did you use stairs to the roof or a ladder?

S: Ladder. We ate walnuts in the afternoon and then sour cherries, apples and plums. Here was a small wall which we used to hide behind and look at the alley and see what was going on. Which was one of our hobbies.

Are there any specific things which you would like to have from that house now?

S: many things. The yard, garden, the corridor - which was well known in the town as it was unique. It was a different house. There were lots of houses with gardens at that time but almost all of them were not related to their garden. But in our house we had to pass the garden to reach the house so the house and garden were nicely connected. The corridor was great.

People had more free time at that time. We used to see our aunts and uncle during the evening. I cannot say it was every single night but it was very often. When a baby was born the whole extended family used to gather every night in the baby's house. Adults and kids used to play together. Different indoor games. Today kids and adult are not going to play together. It is a desire from both sides. Each generation has their own space in parties.

Some of the games made the house messy but it was ok with the host. But now a spot on the wall is strictly forbidden.

It seems that people have changed.

S: yes. After breakfast in the morning we used to play in the yard until noon. After lunch a quick rest and then going out again. At 5 pm until 6 pm there were kids' programmes on TV. Someone would say "kids' programme" and everybody from different parts would come to the living area and watch TV. We also had an afternoon snack at that time too.

As my father was a well-known man in that area we used to have religious rituals in Moharam²⁰³. We would serve lunch to lots of people for 2 days.²⁰⁴ The night before Tasoia people would gather in our house and set up the tools which were used during the mourning. My mom had lots of special fabrics for these locations with pictures or quotations.²⁰⁵ They had a frame which should have been covered with those fabrics. There were different types. Some needed 4 people to carry them and others could be carried by one person. In Tasoia and Ashora, at noon the whole yard, garden and building were covered with carpets on the ground. People were served group by group continuously. I cannot say how many people were served. It was not just a group comes and finishes. The big pots for stews were placed in the back yard between 2

²⁰³ Moharram:

²⁰⁴ Tasoia and ashora: ...

²⁰⁵ Alam:

buildings. People came without formal invitation and serving lunch started at 11 am. People came and ate and quickly left. They were served with old copper bowls. And a group was responsible to wash the bowls for the next group immediately. 2 really busy days. Also, in Ramadan the whole extended family was invited one night.

How many people were served in Ramadan?

S: in Ramadan people were invited but in Moharam there were no invitations. So in Ramadan there were fewer people than Moharram. It was common to take the lunch away Moharam too. For dinner – eftar- in Ramadan first bread and cheese with vegetables were served then the main course. Those were busy; almost the whole house was occupied.

What would you like to have from that house now?

S: actually everything. I'd like to have that house exactly the same as the past. I do not like it any more. Everything has been changed. The walls have been demolished. The building is still there but there is not that atmosphere any more. Because of the city planning lots of trees have been cut. We siblings are not going there anymore because a new street runs all around the building.

Are they going to occupy the whole house?

S: yes. We used to spend time with the rest of the family such as my aunt and uncle not only in meal times but also for snacks and we used to have evening snacks in the yard in a large group. At one time my mom used to smoke hookah. She used to make things ready for smoking in the evening with my aunt. That's all.

Now let us talk about the house which you are living in now.

S: I am not going to talk about the other houses I used to live in as they were not special. I do not have good memories in them. During construction of this house, where we are living now, we lived in a basement which belongs to one of my relatives for 1.5 years. That was a good period. My son was born before we went to that house. We have been living here since summer 2000. We lived on the ground floor for several years then we added another unit on the first floor and moved to that for a while. Then we again moved to the ground floor which was bigger. In this house I have lots of good memory. My kids' birthday parties. My sister's engagement party. Our 10th wedding anniversary which was on 9th April. And it became our annual party for New Year too. That was the last year my grandpa was with us. It was great. There are lots of good memories in this house.

Would you please talk about the building and what are its pros and cons? As you built it yourself it must be according to your wishes.

S: yes, it is good because it has a large area. At first as we were just 3 and the house was large, it was hard to keep it clean. I was thinking that 2 of the rooms were useless. It was good for a while but after a while it became boring. And we made some changes, and now I think that everything is good. And in these changes we tried to make some functional changes. And made the useless spaces more useful.

Is there anything else you wanted to have?

S: it would be great if we had a yard or a house which was surrounded with garden. This house's yard is very small. Or maybe if it was one of those houses where you enter the house from the yard, it could be better. Overall it is good and we do not have problems here. When we felt bored we just made some changes. We have now lived here for 14 years and we have had big changes in the house three times.

At first the floor was covered with green rugs. The curtains were green. Then we painted the wall and changed the floor. The kitchen has been painted again and the windows became black. Now it has been almost 2 months for which we have been renovating the house and it is more fundamental changes.

Part 2

Now let us go to the next level.

First, you have been living here for a long time and you have lots of good memories here. You are watching your kids growing up in the same house. Do you like this? It is possible to spend your whole life in one house. In the past it was common that different generations spent their life in the same building. But now it is not common. People have to move frequently. And the number of people who stay in a house forever is going to be smaller. Which one do you prefer?

S: I like diversity and like to move. But now when I think about leaving here I think I will miss here too much.

Why? Is that because of the sense of belonging you have to this place?

S: We used to live in one of our own houses just for 6 months. But after we left there we went to see those neighbourhoods. And I love this place and believe I will miss here if I leave one day.

Now you are making this diversity with internal changes.

S: now as we are not moving the changes will help us like this place more. It would be boring if we had to live here as it was 10 years ago.

You are making changes and also people will form habits by Street and the environment etc. people are different, it is hard for some people to make changes in their routines.

What is your idea about store rooms and cupboards or wardrobes?

S: I think they are very important. When you do not have them you have to put your stuff in the places which can be seen. And it makes mess in the house. Today the store rooms have been removed from the planning and it creates difficulties. There might be some lockers in the basement which is inconvenient.

I was talking to another participant last night and he mentioned something which was interesting. He said there is a big difference between cupboards and store rooms. While the stuff is in the store room you can go and see all the stuff together and find what you need. But in cupboards you have to open a door and look inside, close the door and open another one. It is hard to see everything at the same time, and you may forget what you really wanted. In some cases a store room is more useful.

S: Extra sleeping things are always a problem. You cannot get rid of them and you should keep them because you may have a guest for several days.

In the past it was common to have a store room for food and these things which were related to the kitchen and another storage space which was for the other stuff of the house which was related to bedrooms. The sleeping stuff was kept there. I think in the past more space was needed for keeping food compared to now. Right?

S: yes it is. But there are still some people who do the same as the past. A friend of mine said that his father used to get a pack of laundry powder and he would never get one or 2 boxes. But I will never get more than 2 packets.

It might be because it is now easier to get things when needed compared to the past.

S: the only thing that we buy in a large amount is rice. We buy the rice for whole year, and the rest of the food will be prepared when needed.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁶ There is a very good rice in the north part of Iran, and it is common for people in all other cities to order their annual rice from there.

This means you do not need a store room for food?

S: we buy things which we can put in the kitchen cupboards for a maximum of 2 months, such as cans, tissues etc.

How do you categorize the things?

S: there is a cupboard for washing stuff and another one for tissues, but everything is in the kitchen. There is a small room behind the kitchen which had been used to keep some stuff. And now we added to the cupboards so I can buy for more than 2 months.

So you keep all food in the kitchen?

S: no, I keep rice in a cooler place but the rest in the kitchen.

What about suitcases and sleeping stuff?

S: we have a walking wardrobe in the bedroom where sleeping stuff is kept on the lower level and there is a space on the upper level for clothes. The suitcases are going to be on the cupboards which were newly added to the bedroom and have large spaces. The suitcases will go on the upper level.

Do you think that there is enough store room now?

S: the changes have been made according to our needs, so I think it is ok.

What were your needs in terms of storing things that you added?

S: the cupboard in the room was very bad. I always had problems for bags and shoes. There was a bookcase in the corner of the living area which we wanted to remove. But I decided to change it to store room for shoes and bags. So doors have been added to it and it became a shoe place. Men do not have lots of shoes but women always have so many shoes. The room which is beside the living area was store room and lot of useless things were kept there. During the changes, a large bookcase was added to it and it became a study room. We may put a pool table there in the future. If not we will put a table with 4 chairs for studying there.

As I knew it was designed as a guest room, is that right?

S: yes, but below that room was a water pump which always made noises so it was never used as a guest room. It became store room after a while.

Do you think the location of your new shoe store room is good?

S: I'd rather it was closer to the entrance but as it is not related to the bedrooms and it can be close there is no problem now. We have another cupboard at the entrance which is for daily used shoes. And there is just a place to keep shoes which are not used daily or keep summer shoes in the winter and vice versa.

Where do you keep stuff like the vacuum cleaner and so on?

S: I used to keep them in the room beside the living area, but now in the storage of the bedroom. You can find a space for this kind of stuff in the big houses but it is a problem for small houses where to keep them.

What is your idea about a central vacuum cleaning system?

S: It could be good. I do not know but I have heard that this central thing like garbage and it can cause problems like insects and so on. I have seen today the builders do not build the central shaft for rubbish. I am not sure if that could be connected to the vacuum cleaning system or not! But it might be more organized. In the apartment it would cause problems if something went wrong. It seems that it is necessary to have an external vacuum cleaner too. There are some spaces that might be hard to reach with the central vacuum cleaner. Or if you want to vacuum your car you need one.

Do you have any other idea about store rooms and similar spaces?

S: we recently changed the garage to storage for those kinds of things which are not clean, such as different tools and so on. As we are replacing the yard's door with a remote one, we are going to park the car in the yard.

You have had space outside which you are using for this stuff. Don't you think it could be better if it was inside?

S: not at all. They should be outside. We replaced the heating system so we put the old heater in the garage. My husband likes to buy tools and he had lots of them which need to be kept outside.

Now let us talk about house cleaning. Do you still use the traditional handy sweep?

S: it is good to use sometimes. Making it wet and sweeping the carpet makes the carpet fresher and nice. Yesterday I swept my mom's house with the vacuum cleaner and after me, my Mon did it with the handy one. She had lots of rubbish too. The handy one could make carpets cleaner. Little bits of rubbish stick to handmade carpets more.

Also the vacuum cleaner ruins handmade carpets too.²⁰⁷

S: now, as the floor is made of hardwood, it is possible to sweep while the house with the kitchen sweep.

A friend told me that it should be a possibility to wash the entrance directly with water. What is your idea?

²⁰⁷ Vacuum cleaner and handmade carpets....

S: in apartments people used to take their shoes off outside the door of the flat but here we have to come into the house and then take our shoes off. It is very bad. There is a part of the house which is always dirty, and always needs to be cleaned. It would be great if that could be solved. In our house my daughter and I take our shoes off outside and carry them to the house and put them in the shoe storage. But my husband and my son won't do that. I hate keeping shoes in front of the door. Shoes must be placed in the shoe storage. Sometimes there might be 4 pairs of shoes belonging to them outside.

What about the other floors? Someone prefers that every floor can be washed.

S: I believe the best way of cleaning is washing directly with water. Nothing can be better. I wash the kitchen with a hose every week. There is no water way at the staircase but I wash there by hose once every couple of months, although it is hard to remove water after that. I have to do that. Nothing else can do the same job.

So you still use the old fashioned system?

S: sure, I waste lots of water. My sister lives in an apartment which, because of the system of cupboards, it is hard to wash the floor. And it is always a problem for her.

My sister lives in Canada, and she had a problem with the washrooms that did not have an outlet in the floor. So it was not possible to wash the whole area.

S: Oh, it is terrible if the washroom cannot be washed fully. It needs to be washed completely.

What about the rest of the house?

S: I sometimes wash the windows with water too. During the renovation, before installing the wallpapers, I washed all the windows from outside. Although water leaked from windows to the house and splash on the walls but the windows should to be washed. Kitchen and washrooms should be washed but the rest of the house can be cleaned with wipes.

Would you please explain your dish washing system?

S: We have a small space at the back of the kitchen and the sink is there. I clean the dishes there and if there are not too many they will be washed there. If there are lots of dishes I put them in the dishwasher in the main kitchen.

Is there any special arrangement? Where do you wash fruit?

S: I don't mind. I usually put the fruit in a bowl and then in a basket. I believe the sink is not clean enough to put the fruit there. Just as I will not wash the greasy dishes with the glasses for example.

What about clothes?

S: once in a week I use the washing machine to wash clothes. I wash the dark and light clothes separately. Everything, including socks, will be washed in the machine. Only underwear should be washed by everybody in the bathroom.

Your washing machine is in the kitchen. Do you think this is good?

S: yes. Where else could it be?

It could have a separate space or be in the bathroom.

S: no, the bathroom is not good at all. Humidity, electricity - it might be dangerous. Also, the humidity will ruin the washing machine.

What about having a separate space for washing clothes such as a laundry room? Do you keep the washing machine in the main kitchen or the back one?

S: it used to be beside the fridge and now it is in the cupboard.

It cannot be seen now.

S: Yes.

What about when you have finished washing? What will happen to the clothes after you take them from the machine? What about ironing them?

S: everybody has a basket for dirty clothes in his room. At the weekend I will wash them and iron them immediately, and put them outside with the hanger to get air. There is a basket for the socks where I put the socks to be dried.

Would you put them in the yard or in a room for getting air?

S: recently I have prepared something in the yard to put them in there. But in the past I used to hang everybody's clothes outside their wardrobes, and after they had dried put them in the wardrobe.

Where do you keep your iron?

S: In the corner of the bedroom.

Do you think it is the right place or does it need to be somewhere else?

S: it is ok. But I can put it in the small area between rooms – the small living area- but I do not have any problem with this now.

What about other chores? Do you do everything yourself or does someone else?

S: the living area will be cleaned every 2 or 3 days. But someone will come to clean the whole house every week.

In the past, people used to do some house jobs together, such as preparing vegetables and so on. Do you do that?

S: there are some people who still do that. But I do not. Now you can buy cleaned, washed and chopped vegetables easily and fresh. Why should you freeze them? It always makes a mess doing these kinds of jobs, so I prefer to buy them. The elderly still like to do that but I do not.

A friend said that in the past ladies should show themselves by their housekeeping arts. Now it is not necessary; there are lots of other ways.

S: I don't think so. Some people like doing this. Although they are working outside the house they like to bake cookies and so on.

About eating.

S: in the past we had a dining table in the kitchen, but the kids prefer to watch TV during the meal so they moved their dish in front of the TV. Now we have arranged the TV and made a kind of table in the kitchen in front of the TV. So it has been solved.

Anyway you adjust your meal with TV.

S: yes, with TV we all will be together. In the past, the kids were eating in front of the TV and I was eating alone. Now we all eat together.

Cooking. Some people believe that cooking should be done in the small separate part of the kitchen, because of its smell and so on. But you put your stove in the main part of the kitchen.

S: I think it is not good for the stove as it is very small so you may feel depressed. It would be good to watch TV during cooking. Washing dishes takes less time than cooking.

What do you think about moving the sink to the open part?

S: it does not matter. But having the sink in a hidden place could be good as the mess during the washing time could be hidden and also splashes from the sink are hidden too.

Is there any problem if the stove and sink are far from each other?

S: No. I used to have this and I did not have any problem. If you spent a long time there it could be boring.

Would you please tell me your opinion about sitting on the floor during a meal? Have a look at these images and tell me your ideas about different situations.

S: it depends; sometimes it could be good sitting on the floor. Some people like to sit on the floor and some people prefer chairs. Serving on the table when there are lots of people would cause a mess. But the younger generation, which is used to having meals on the table, prefer it. But for the previous generation I think sitting on the floor is more comfortable. But now almost everybody has knee problems so it makes it hard for the elderly to sit on the floor. I personally prefer eating at the table as it is easier. Also, fewer dishes will be used on the table; you will serve things in 1 or 2 dishes.²⁰⁸

Tea, drinks and snacks are all in the kitchen? Would you eat these things in the bedroom?

S: in the kitchen. People used to have a tea maker in a corner of the living area. But now everything is in the kitchen.

Do you have any special comments about the dishes which you keep in the kitchen? For example, the pots.

S: I do not keep lots of pots. After a while I replace them so I do not have many pots.

Don't you have different sizes of pots?

S: no, I just have a big one which has been used rarely. It doesn't fit in the kitchen cupboards. So I used to put it under my son's bed. And he was not happy with that. Now with these new changes we made bigger cupboards in the kitchen so it is going to be kept in the kitchen.

Where do you keep the dishes which are for guests?

S: I put a cupboard beside the dining table and put all the dishes in it. Also, a small table with a box which has the spoons and so on is beside it. The rest of the dishes, which are going to be used by the family, are in the kitchen.

Isn't it hard to keep them far from the kitchen?

S: I used to keep them in the kitchen and move them when serving guests. Now I am going to try the opposite. Now I am going to take them to the kitchen after being used and clean them then put them beside the dining table. I used to keep the dishes which were for serving cooking and fruit there. As it is now in the dining area I put the dining stuff there.

²⁰⁸ Traditionally while serving meals on the floor, each type of food should have been prepared in lots of dishes which are put on different parts of the table cloth.

About the more personal things, like sleep and so on. Do you sleep on the floor?

S: no, I usually use a bed.

What about siestas?

S: usually in the living area and on the sofa, as I want to make it short. If I went to bed, I would sleep for a long time. And sometimes I watch TV too. Sometimes when I am very tired I may fall asleep there too.

Any way you do not sleep on the floor?

S: no, during renovation when I moved to my mom's house I tried to sleep on the floor but I could not so I was sleeping in my sister's bed while I was there.

Talk about tooth brushing and activities like that.

S: we have a bathroom in our bedroom so we keep toothbrushes and all other personal things there and the kids have theirs in the other bathroom. Everybody used to change in his own bedroom.

As you mentioned, during the renovation you made a place for bags and shoes. Is there anything else that you have done related to the clothes?

S: we added more space for clothes in each room. Also for long dresses as well. Also, some drawers have been added.

Do things like hair dryers have a special space? Are they shared between the members of the family or does everybody have their own?

S: they are in my room as I usually use them. If anyone needs them they will come to my room.

There are 2 bathrooms and 3 toilets in your house now. How are you going to use them?

S: the one at the entrance is for guests only.

Do you use that toilet yourself?

S: not usually.

In my house there is a toilet for guests so we do not use that and just at the times we had guests I used to check if it needed cleaning. But yours is in the middle of the house. So I wanted to know if that is important or not.

S: The kids get used to going to the upper washroom as I asked them to. They will use the upper one even if they are in the kitchen.²⁰⁹ They will ask for permission if they want to use this toilet. But they generally use the upper one.

Someone told me I need to have a space to put my beauty stuff. Did you add something like this during the renovation?

S: No, I have a drawer and a mirror and I put the beauty stuff there. I had put them in front of the mirror but it makes it cluttered so I added one drawer for them and now everything is inside. I do not like to put them on display.

What will you put on display?

S: perfumes and some daily make up things can be on display. The hair stuff and creams will be kept out of sight.

There is stuff like this in the bathroom - where will you put them?

S: I wanted to get a cupboard for them but then I realized because, of damp in the bathroom, while they are in a closed box it may cause a hygiene problem so I have got things like baskets which can be seen and are easy to clean.

What about the towels?

S: we use to keep our towels on the back of the door with a hanger to be dried. I am not sure what I am going to do now. Maybe in the bathroom because I am not sure we can put them on the door again.

What about the towel dryer in the bathroom?

S: It has not been installed yet. But it will be.

About the entrance. We talked about the entrance a bit and we talked about shoes. Your house has 2 entrances: one from the street to the building and the other one from the street to the yard and from the yard there is a door to the building.

As you said you are not using the toilet at the entrance normally, what is your idea about having a toilet at the entrance?

S: I believe the only problem of this house is the toilet at the entrance. But we needed to have a toilet in the lower part of the house and there was no other place for that.

²⁰⁹ Kitchen is beside the lower toilet.

Some people say there should be a washroom at the entrance. What do you think?

S: No, no. And because of this I always keep the toilet door closed and keep its slippers inside in order to hide what that is.²¹⁰

A friend told me that he used to wash his feet when entering the house. Or I have to wash my face before coming to the house. But this is not general.

S: no, it is not. What does he do that needs to be washed before changing clothes? First clothes should be changed, then go to wash.

Someone is at the door with a bag in his hand, and wants to open the door. Or wants to wait for someone. What would he need outside or inside?

S: Mirror, shoe storage and a clothes hanger.

A chair or table to put something on?

S: I'd rather keep it clearer rather than make it busy. In our house we can put things on the stairs. Maybe because of this I did not need another thing.

When you have guests where will they take off their coats?

S: there is a cupboard at the entrance to put their clothes.

What about their shoes?

S: they will take their shoes off outside the door as this is not a busy building.

Will you let them come in with shoes?

S: yes.

Tell me about the shoe polishing and the mat beside the door.

S: Mats in front of the doors are full of dust and rubbish. I used to have one but I am not going to use that anymore because if there is nothing you will clean it every day. For shoe polishing there is a place in the store room in the entrance. My husband usually sits on the stairs and polishes his shoes and so do the others.

About the entertainment activities which could be in a group or individual, do you have any special space for any? For example, watching TV during the meal.

²¹⁰ It is common to have specific slippers in washrooms in Iran. Usually there are different sizes for different people.

S: we usually watch TV in the evening after the kids have done their homework. Usually the TV will be turned on by the kids or my husband, not me.

What about the time you are doing chores or something else?

S: I used to listen to music while I was alone but now I prefer silence. Some people like to have a sound. My mom turns the TV on when she wakes up, and does her work. But I usually do not want to hear that sound.

Today everybody in the family has their own TV.

S: yes.

What about your kids?

S: they have their own PC and are busy with that. But I'd rather it was not like that. Unfortunately, there is nothing we can do about it.

It is modern society then.

S: yes, it is. But we watch some series together, usually on a Friday afternoon. I usually listen to music in the car. The kids have a different taste but I can choose for myself at home. I used to play the piano for 2 years, but as my daughter is very curious and I had to answer her questions continually I decided to quit for a while and start it when they grow up. I also like painting but I am not doing any of them now. But I would like to do them sometime.

What about reading books?

S: I like it. If I have time I will lie down on the sofa and read. Although there is a table and chair in the library I prefer the sofa. We used to go to the park in the summer in the morning and do exercise. When I am free I like to dance. When I am alone I may dance in front of the mirror with nice music for myself. I especially like Rastak's music.²¹¹

Drink tea and coffee:

S: yes, usually in the afternoon. After a siesta I drink tea with my kids and my husband. My son prefers coffee, but we will have tea and cake. We do not talk too much at home unfortunately. Everybody is on their own in the house. Just my daughter will tell me about her day at school. Some families will spend hours together and chat but we do not. We are all together usually in the evening during dinner. We used to play more in the past.

Do you play while your friends are at your home?

²¹¹ Rastak: An Iranian music group.

S: *when they are here the men will sit and play cards etc. When we are just 2 families we could play together but when we are more – 3 or 4 families – the men will sit on one side and the women on the other side.*

Is this separation because of the number of people or because of religious attitude?

S: *men prefer to play with men when they have enough people. They will play with women when they do not have enough people to play.*²¹²

Praying

S: *I used to pray in the past but not now unfortunately.*

So you do not have a specific permanent space for praying.

S: *No. In the past I had my stuff in the rooms beside the living room. I have not decided where to put them yet. Generally, in Ramadan my praying things were always open in that room. In some houses you can see their stuff is always ready for praying but not in our house. Generally, in Ramadan we think more about the spiritual things.*

I used to make notes of my daily plans and put them on the fridge.

Would you do things related to your job at home?

S: *yes, at night before going to sleep while watching TV in the living area.*

What about your students' papers?

S: *I bring their exam papers home during exam time. I used to put them in the dining room but I am going to put them in the study room from now on.*

What is your idea about having a pet?

S: *I like animals but they need lots of cleaning. My kids like dogs and cats. But I can just tolerate birds which will need less cleaning.*

Drinking and smoking?

S: *I do not like smoking but drinking is sometimes ok.*

Where do you keep your drink stuff?

²¹² It is a personal idea or experience which she had from a specific group. It cannot be generalized.

*S: there is a cupboard where we can keep drinking stuff, but as some of our guests do not like drinking we have to keep them in the cupboard and not on display. I like to put them on display.*²¹³

We have a group of friends and we have a party with them every 2 weeks. I believe that is the best entertainment we have and I love to spend time with them. We used to laugh a lot in the past but now we are just laughing with these friends.

As you have had these parties for several years they should have their own style now. Are there any changes during the party in the house or is everything as usual?

S: The kids will play in their rooms. The men will sit on the floor and play cards or something else. The women will be in another space talking together. Usually after dinner the men and women will sit together and have fun.

So you sit separately before dinner and together after dinner.

You mentioned you do not want to put everything on display. But you will put something for decorating or ... what do you prefer to put on display? As you remember, in the past, around 15 years ago, it was not common to put people's photographs on display. You could have seen just grandpa's picture or father's. Now it is common to have lots of pictures on display. Can you please tell me what kind of pictures you put up and where?

*S: I put my own family's picture in the living area. It is common to put grandpa's and others' pictures but I do not like it. I like to see pictures of myself when I was younger. At first I used to remove pictures when some special people came to our house but I do not do that anymore.*²¹⁴*I usually put the pictures which are more attractive in the living area. There are also some pictures which I like but they are not good quality so I keep them in my bedroom.*

Anything else?

S: The kids like to go out for a meal. We usually go out on Thursday nights if there is no party, sometimes with friends. Also it may happen on Friday at noon too. Which I think is a good way to pass the time.

Can you remember how your curtains were in your childhood house?

²¹³ It is a religious tradition that alcoholic drink is forbidden. Also by law it is illegal to keep or serve alcoholic drinks anywhere. So people are used to hiding them.

²¹⁴ As women should wear scarves and have pictures with scarves, ...

S: *Organza without any lining.*

Curtains have changed a lot and now they are an important element in houses.

S: *people want to hide inside their house.*

Also, having more layers of curtains makes it more luxurious.

S: *maybe. In my parents' house the curtains were almost transparent and the whole inside of the house could be seen. We used to sleep in the living area but there was nothing to hide at that time. Our house door was always open. Windows were large. Now the windows are smaller and curtains have different layers.*

Would you feel safe in that system now? -like the past-

S: *No. Maybe because I am used to this system now.*

And probably because society has changed. You have seen or heard things which mean you do not feel safe if someone sees you.

S: *now most of the time while we are at home, the curtains are closed.*

You do not want anyone to see inside your house?

S: *No.*

Would you like to see outside if there was a nice view?

S: *if our house was on the 20th floor and I was sure no one could see inside my house, I'd like to have glass all around my house. It is great but impossible.*

Thanks a lot.

There were some things in traditional houses which were nice, such as different levels for different functions. Also the relation between spaces. People used to sit on different levels and do their chores. What do you think about this type of relation between spaces where there is a space at the centre and the other spaces around it? Can it be used in today's houses? Would you like to have these in your own house?

S: *I don't think that it could happen today in new houses. In this house the rooms are all around; we do not have this relation any more.*

It is not important what we have now. Just tell me your opinion.

S: *it can be.*

It was common to have verandas of different sizes in traditional houses in front of rooms. People used to sit and do things in these semi-open spaces. Today we almost do not have it.

S: *we do not have it at all.*

Would you use it if you had this kind of space?

S: *maybe. These places were used as sitting area usually.*

They might bring their sewing machine there and do their work there too.

S: *I think they kept some food here too, because there is no direct sunlight.*

Sleeping in open space. Will you do that?

S: *I like it. I have done this in the past easily but now I do not feel safe. I think everybody is watching me.*

Maybe as the relationships between people were different in the past. People had different relations with their neighbours. If you had a safe and secure space not on top of the roof, would you sleep there?

S: *yes.*

There were lots of activities in the courtyards in the past. Also, the pool in the middle of the courtyard had different functions in different situations.

S: *today it is different; people who have a yard use it rarely.*

What is the reason?

S: *in the past, people used to interact more with neighbours and family so there were always people around to help. Maybe that is the reason.*

Today, there are more facilities in closed spaces than open spaces. So is easier to work in a closed space.

S: *this can be a reason.*

If all the facilities, you have inside could be located in the open air would you go there?

S: *I do not think so. People used to wash their fruit in the pool; no one will do it now.*

Sure, it cannot happen now because of hygiene too. They did not have any other choice at that time.

Now think if your kitchen can be related to the open space. And there could be the ability to do some work in the open space.

S: *it is good to have the kitchen related to open space.*

Or if you could make it flexible to be open and closed.

S: *it could be good.*

Actually, there are some things which are now impossible.

It was common in traditional houses that rooms were connected to each other. They could be separated or joined when needed. The kind of privacy in that period was a reason, but the other aspect was they could connect the spaces for special occasions too by opening the doors. And they were completely separated when needed. Now the relation between spaces is completely different. The rooms are not related to each other. There is a central space with rooms leading off it. Do you like to have this flexibility in the rooms?

S: *no, I do not like it. I prefer to have rooms separate.*

It can be a door or a moving wall, which gives the possibility to make changes when needed.

S: *you mean having a wall between 2 rooms which lets us make the space when needed?*

Yes, for example in your own bedroom.

S: *I think it can be useful for parents with infants. They can share their rooms until the baby grows and then they can separate the rooms. I think this is the only time it can be used.*

Living area and reception. Now we have one large space which includes both the family living area and guests' reception. But it is always divided by the furniture. But we like to see the whole space together. But there are several problems here when there is one big space, because you have to clean the whole area all the time. Also, you should keep it hot or cold. It does not matter if it is going to be used or not. But if you could make it possible to open and close them when needed would you do that?

S: *no.*

I don't know why, but generally people in Iran like to have large spaces.

S: *maybe as the windows are small we prefer to have large spaces instead. If we separate the reception and living area, it will make it very suffocating.*

You prefer to have one space?

S: *yes.*

What about having some partitions which are not tall and they will just organize the space? These can be just on specific levels and be free at the bottom and top.

S: *no, I do not like it.*

Someone told me I like to have different levels but I want to see all my luxury furniture in the guests' area too. I will not use it but it is a pleasure for me to look at it.

It is common when someone is sick for people to go to see him and wish him a speedy recovery. In the past the patients used to sleep in a special room and have visitors there. How is it now?

S: *It is still the same. He was sleeping on the floor but now the patient will sleep on the bed.*

Where will the patient sleep? In his own bedroom or in the living area?

S: *it depends on the sickness. Sometimes he would stay in his bedroom. But usually the bed will be moved to the living area in order to keep him from being bored.*

Do you still cut the blocks of sugar into cubes? Or chores like this? Where do people usually cut up the sugar?

S: *No, now we can buy cubic sugar. But there are still people who cut up the sugar. Usually people do it in the living area, and rarely in the kitchen. It takes time so it would be less boring doing that while watching TV.*

In traditional houses, people could not reach the house directly. There was a hierarchy at the entrance.²¹⁵ There was also a roofed space between open and closed spaces. If you remember, people used to take off their shoes in that roofed part. But today, usually there is not a roofed space in the yard.

S: *that was good because it kept shoes from getting hot or wet too. And they did not need to bring shoes inside.*

The relation between spaces. If you remember in traditional houses, there were several doors beside each other but in the middle of the 20th century they changed to one large door which related different spaces, and also made them separate.

People used to sit outside in the open space. There are some people who still do that. In the past, people used to put a day bed in the yard and sit on that but now it has been replaced with chairs and tables.

S: *I really like it. Sitting in an open space on the day bed or chair. Some families still do this.*

²¹⁵ It has been explained in traditional houses.

Yes, they do, but it is a bit different. As you remember, we used to move everything from inside to out and we spent a long time there. But now it is just sitting there for a cup of tea and for a short time. They do not take all tea making stuff out; they just take a cup of tea with them.

S: yes, but anyway it is lovely sitting outside.

Do you think we still have wedding parties or other ceremonies at home?

S: there are still some people who have large houses who prefer to do this because of the restrictions in public spaces. People who want to have a party where men and women can be together do that.²¹⁶

Do you think if that was not a problem people would still have their weddings at home?

S: now it is easy. There are some organizations which will prepare the house for the party and there is nothing for the host to do. This is not as hard as it was in the past. So if they have a large house they would do that.

In the traditional courtyard people spent more time than now.

S: now people who have a place outside the city spend more time in the open space there.

What is in this picture that you would like to have in your yard?

S: the small pool in the middle and geraniums.

Geraniums are part of our memory.

S: yes, maybe as we used to have them in our house from childhood.

It is not common now? People have more luxury plants.

S: yes, there are not many geraniums any more.

There were some chores which people used to do in the courtyard.

S: my mom still uses this for grinding. You get better quality than the electric things.

Would you do some things in the yard if you could?

S: I wouldn't, but maybe others would.

²¹⁶ Legally at wedding parties, men and women should be in separate spaces or women should be wearing hijabs.

Not exactly this, any other chores?

S: if someone brings and packs the stuff yes. But I would not take out the stuff and then take it back in.

Part 3

That is important. In traditional houses there was a stone bench outside of the entrance for sitting. As you can see in this picture, which belongs to the Pahlavi dynasty, the person who is doing the survey is hardly doing his job.

S: this is a reason that they picked some weird names for the people while they were documenting things.

These pictures are from some traditional and contemporary urban planning. You can see the relation between yards and the closed spaces or the streets. In the traditional plan you cannot distinguish houses: they are like puzzles and linked together. But now they have been replaced with blocks of terraced houses on the north or south side of the street. The only difference is some are reached from the street and some through the yard. And all the buildings are cubes on one side of the site. In the past they could also have been on 2, 3 or 4 sides, or the building in the middle. They might be in different shapes if the site is located in a corner. Having cars has had a huge influence on our urban planning. But this is not all because of cars. Suddenly there is a gap between the past and present.

If you could have these different options, would you prefer to have a building which is open on all sides or have these row blocks like now?

S: I'd rather have this modern style: a detached house.

Now think about having a courtyard. Forget about the limitations such as the land area and so on. If we can have a yard in the middle of a building not as big as courtyards, it can be an open space at the centre of the house and it can be seen from the whole house. Would you like to have such things?

S: I'd rather have a building above the yard and it would be possible to see the yard from the house. It does not matter if it would be from all sides or just one side.

Like Shahzde Garden?²¹⁷

S: *yes, something like that.*

These are some traditional entrances from different perspectives. If you remember, the only part outside the house with decoration was the entrance. There was nothing anywhere else, like a window to the street, at all. In the Pahlavi period, that entrance changed to this outward-looking façade. The inward-looking building changed to a completely outward-looking one. Windows, columns, decorations all became very stylish and smart. All decorations which used to be inside came outside. There was not a simple wall without decoration in traditional houses. They used to have a function and decoration, not only something to separate the spaces. Now the appearance of outside the house is more important.

This is a balcony which was added during the Pahlavi period.

S: *I like it.*

If you could have the chance to choose between 2 kinds of balconies: one towards the street and one a private balcony which cannot be seen by others, which one would you prefer?

S: *I prefer the private one. But I like these kinds of balconies beside the street.*

Would you please explain what your interest about this is? There is a palace in Esfahan Hasht Behesht which is located in the middle of a garden and is fully decorated inside and outside. But it seems after Pahlavi the outside became more important and now the outside façade is almost the most important part of the building.

S: *yes, it is.*

I do not want to say they should be the same. Although it is important in the city how the buildings' façades are, we need to consider the resident of a house is not using the outside façade.

S: *Maybe it is not functional, but it is important. And I have seen houses with very nice façades but inside they were terrible.*

I think this is more than it has to be.

S: *Maybe they want to have a good impression on visitors. And people see a fashionable building. If it matters for them they would have notice to inside as well. Or they are estate agents and want to impress buyers.*

²¹⁷ Shahzadeh garden : A garden belongs to 19th century near Kerman.

It seems the most important thing is encouraging buyers and impressing viewers. The urban façade is important, but unfortunately from the urban planning view also they are not as good as a city façade. There are several buildings beside each other in a street with completely different façades and sometimes this is annoying for visitors. Also, it has been seen that they spent lots of money on façades and inside they cut the budget in each part where it was possible.

S: yes, exactly. I have seen an apartment in a good part of the city which has a very nice façade. But inside the lowest quality wood was used. The washrooms were terrible. But the façade was great.

It seems it is going to be a culture. Sometimes society leads constructors to this.

S: our house is the opposite; it is more luxurious inside than outside.

It was our culture in the past; people did not use to show off this much.

S: yes, maybe.

People kept their wealth inside and for their own comfort. Today someone might be in a very bad financial situation but have a modern car and a luxury house in order to show others how wealthy he is. I agree the façade is important and, as we see in traditional houses, they notice about the outside in urban scale. For example, the entrances or the elements which have been added in the alleys are nice.

S: yes, the traditional houses have their own style.

Architects believed that residents of the house had the first priority. And they had to be considered to feel comfortable in the house. Do you know why they made the courtyard? As there are not lots of gardens and green areas outside, they were trying to make a paradise garden inside the house to cheer the residents up.

S: But you should consider these pictures are all from wealthy people's houses.

Yes, that is right, as these are the traditional examples which we still have. The small houses have rarely been saved until now. But it seems the small houses had the same style too. For example, the images from God Father TV show²¹⁸ - although that is not a very big house, it has the same style. They would not ignore it. The problem now is not there is no money, it is about how people are going to spend it! In the past, they all had a small garden and people could see greenery from their

²¹⁸ God father TV show:

rooms, even though there were not lots of gardens outside. Today, green areas are almost forgotten.

S: Now finance is the most important aspect. How to make money. When it is possible to build an apartment with several units on a site, why should someone build a house with a garden?! The apartment can be sold to make money. People think more like this.

Now, about the façade. This is a house from the Pahlavi era with a decorated façade. And this is a traditional house “Tabatabaee house, Kashan” and this is the internal façade. The resident can see the façade and enjoy its beauty and attractions. But now think how many times will you see your outside façade daily?

S: the outside façade is just for others.

Although it is for others, it sometimes costs the most. How important is being related to the outside for you? Some people like to see the street and see the people in the street.

S: Can the others see him as well?

A friend of mine who is quite religious said she does not mind if people can see inside of her house in the UK. But she would not let it happen in Iran. She said she does not like people to know what she is doing.

S: it is good if you can see outside, but being seen is not good.

Your conclusion now with this situation in our society is that this kind of outward looking is not the solution.

S: it is not.

It may change in a couple of years from now.

S: I do not think so.

The next generation seems different. They do not care about things like what others might say or do.

S: so it might change.

For example, if you look at Facebook profiles you can see the difference between photos that 20-25 year olds share and the ones the generation before them share. Maybe they look at things differently. You have to accept when you open your house to the outside you are letting people see your house.

S: Maybe the new generation is different.

But anyway, if this was not a problem would you like to open your house to the outside?

S: yes. But now it is not common in Iran for a lady to sit on a balcony without wearing a hijab; everybody will look at her. If I go to the yard for a couple of minutes, I can see the neighbours are watching me. It is harder if the balcony faces the street.

It means this balcony is not going to be used.

S: no, it is not going to be used.

If we do not use it why are we building it?

S: it is true; I did not notice it. The balcony now is just for drying clothes, nothing more.

Yes, I remember once I went to the balcony to put the washing there. I did not wear a proper dress and I thought no one would see me, but one of my students was passing there and saw me. I was terrified. It could cause problems for me at work. I think in our culture the balcony should be in a more private place that cannot be seen by everyone. It can be more useful.

S: probably.

It means this type of balcony does clash with our culture.

S: not at all. Recently in the houses which people build outside the city for vacations they build a large balcony. I personally do not mind if someone can see me there, as nobody knows me there.

It is important who knows you. But anyway it may cause problems. In the past it was more religious and individual but it is now more political. It might cause problems for you at work. So we have to be careful about it.

S: that is right.

To be honest, it is a fact in our society. And by ignoring that, nothing will change. This is why the balcony changed to a useless space even though everybody likes semi-open spaces, for example porches in traditional buildings. It is lovely to sit in open space and watch the sky.

S: usually people cover the balcony with different materials.

The balcony changes to store room as it is needed. In western countries they put chairs on the balcony and spend time there. Now its function has changed, so it needs to be redesigned.

These images are from different traditional houses which I loved. I remember there was a pool room in my grandpa's house which was demolished when I was young. But I never forgot that space. It had a hole in the ceiling for light and ventilation. With a small pool in the centre of the room.

S: I cannot remember this space. But my mom told us about this kind of space.

There are still houses in the old part of Yazd which have been renovated and have this space.

S: do they use those houses?

Some of them changed to hotels as they were big houses. But they used to relate to nature in different ways. I was thinking maybe as we lived in the middle of desert we love the green areas very much, but I have seen people from the green areas who loved it too. Greenery, water and fire are all important. And this is not just for Iranians. Natural fire is more attractive but it is not easy. But we see people will make fire when they are outside the city and far from technology.

S: yes, but it is difficult. In the past there were maids in houses who had to make the fire and take care of it. But it is difficult these days.

Yes, this is right. But what is your idea about having water as an element in the house? I agree the items you mentioned are important and would be the reason for being used or not. Do not think about its difficulty if technology can make it easy, would you like to have it?

S: if I did not have to do things myself it would be great. But I'd rather have the fireplace with gas which is more convenient. It is not that important for me to work hard because of that.

It might be enough seeing that fire once in a year. And you are not a fan of it.

S: no, I am not.

Some other points in traditional houses had steps up and down for different spaces. Depending on the area and function of the space, they had different heights. Different levels with yards too. We almost do not have it anymore.

S: now in some façades, different levels have been shown in façades.

I believe it is more painting rather than architecture.

S: In Shiraz people use columns in their outside façades, which is nice. And there are some duplex houses with different heights in different spaces.

Yes, there are some differences, but only in special houses.

S: Now everything is going to be on the same level and height. The duplex houses that I mentioned before were built almost 20 years ago, not now. At one time the kitchen floor was on a higher level. Now it is on the same level as the rest of the house.²¹⁹

Some of them are constructing points. Financial, structural etc.

S: I prefer having a 2 floor building rather than a duplex.

I have seen builders who are not going to put a small difference in the levels because it may cost money. But they will spend lots money on the façade! Anyway, do you agree that it is not necessary to have all spaces with the same height?

S: it makes them better, depending on how much it may cost.

Different functions can have different heights; kids do not need a tall space or store room, and washrooms can have a shorter height and the space below or above them can be used for something else.

S: yes, but kids will grow.

And they will not stay forever.

S: today the best place is for the kids.

All over the world it is like this. Kids have the best care.

Yesterday we talked about the decreasing number of families which stay in one house for a long time. And with 2.30 m height a place is good and it is not necessary to have all spaces 3m high. Or it is not a big deal having a height of more than 3m. The point here is it is easier to build. But proportions are really important. Now you see spaces with a 10m² area having the same height as ones with a 50m² area. So it is not just about having nice spaces. It is more about being easy to build. These pictures are from large houses, but in small houses they had something like this according their budget. Niches were in all houses and some were more decorated.

S: niches were replaced by cupboards.

Yes, that is the point. Something changed and something was replaced. The relation between rooms changed during Pahlavi. A corridor became the path between spaces. Niches on the wall changed to decorative frames, which is a western style. In different periods the

²¹⁹ the builders used to make the kitchen one step higher than the rest of the house because

cupboards changed. They were removed in a period almost 30 years ago. And after a while they were added again.

S: for a while there was no wardrobe built in the wall and people used to buy separate cupboards to keep their stuff in. But now it is common to have them.

If you see, the inside of the house was more functional in the past and also they used to decorate their space as well. The walls and ceilings were decorated. Those decorations were related to the structure as well.

S: I think people now are not as patient to spend time and money on these.

Yes, this is right. But in traditional houses, walls and ceilings are related to each other. But today the ceiling is just a flat surface which may have some light. Without any design.

S: in the past they did not have different floors.

Did you say that because it is getting light from the ceiling?

S: The light and also the curved shape of the ceiling.

They had more than one floor and it was not just for the upper levels. Different ceilings had their own style.

S: it is now very expensive and time consuming.

We spend money on something else today. I have to mention that these were not just decorative, they were also structural and sometimes functional. This is very detailed decoration. You seem to like it. And in this decade people are more interested in decorating the ceiling.

S: yes, it was a flat surface in the past. Now it is more important and people spend money to decorate it in different ways.

For a while they were left blank and now they are going to be more decorative. I think it can be related to our traditional way too. Is there anything you would like to have in these pictures? Forget about money and technology.

S: yes, for example this is nice. Everybody likes these.

What about these traditional windows? These are lovely. I agree these belong to the past with a different technology and society. People now prefer wide and large windows. Would you like to have something like these in your house somewhere? Or would you like to have windows like this in your house?

S: *yes, it is good. Not exactly like these windows. One of my friends in the lower part of her house put colourful glass in the windows. Colours made her house lovely.*

Houses from the 1960s and 1970s have coloured glass panels in the doors, which became old fashioned after a while.

S: *now it is common again. I like it. It is nice.*

What is your idea about Orsi²²⁰?

S: *it is nice. Like Shahzadeh Garden, colours are great. There are still some in some houses. Not exactly the same but similar.*

Which one do you prefer: curtains or this?

S: *Does this completely cut out the view?*

If it does or could be controlled?

S: *sure this is better.*

People have different ideas. A friend told me that she prefers a large, wide, transparent window. I think views should be considered differently in different areas. When there is nothing specific outside, having a nice window is better. Also, as in our areas there is lots of sunlight, these kinds of windows could control the light too. As you saw, the traditional houses are not very bright.

S: *they spent less time inside.*

Now we need more sunlight at home. Anyway, you prefer having a nicely designed window rather than adding a nice curtain.

S: Sure.

Do you want to add anything?

S: *no*

Thanks.

²²⁰ The traditional windows. ...

Part 4

What are the main aspects for a new Iranian house?

S: do you mean about the spaces?

Materials, relation between spaces ... everything you think is important. For example, if you show the common houses which have been built recently to someone, there are no specific details to show where it belongs to. It can be located anywhere in the world. How can we say this house is just designed for Iran? I mean what makes this feeling that it is Iranian? These are some images from contemporary houses in Iran. Can you mention any specific Iranian points in them?

S: I think the most important aspect of the house is the stability of it.²²¹ Some of these pictures have a memory of the past, but they are not common now and are kind of old fashioned. Also, we do not have as much land as they had in the past.

Do you think that all the problems are related to lack of space? And having lots of land would solve the problems?

S: No, but making money is very important even though we have lots of land in Kerman.

How important is it for you that the house belongs to the culture which it is built in? Is it necessary for a house in Iran to have Iranian characteristics or not?

S: it is more or less important. Having large spaces and a large yard.

Do you think that Iranian spaces should be large?

S: Yes. In the past all houses had yards and their living and reception area was large.

In traditional houses the living area was related directly to open space. Do you like it?

S: yes.

Which spaces should be related to open space? Just visually related or the possibility of using the open space?

²²¹ Because of several earthquakes in Iran, this became really important.

S: the living area and reception should be related to open space. Relating bedrooms to open space is not necessary. As they are just used for sleeping, the darker the better.

These images are from some contemporary courtyards. These are not as limited as the traditional courtyards used to be. This is more an open space in the middle of the building which relates spaces visually to each other and green space and water.

This is what we are building. The land has been divided into 2 parts: one is a building, the other one open space. But that can be built different types. There can be different combinations. Or the traditional courtyard, where each space was related to the open space.

S: it is good. But I prefer the first alternative.

What is its benefit?

S: you will reach the open space before entering the building.²²²

You can enter from this side if you want in this plan. There is something in the middle and also you enter from the open space.

As you said you like to enter the house from open space, what do you want to see while entering the house?

S: grass, a green area and flowers.

Have a look at these images and choose the one you like. We can put them together later.

These are several houses designed by Iranian architects. The architect tried to make them Iranian houses.

This is a complex which was designed in the 1970s, but unfortunately it was not finished as planned.²²³ But anyway, the architect tried to use Iranian identity in this project. Materials, relations between buildings ...

This one is a complex which was designed according to Iranian garden ideas.

These are some images from interior spaces. Materials, shapes, floor...

Do you agree that these images have an Iranian character?

S: yes.

²²² Each house is separated from the others with walls.

²²³ Because of revolution and war with Iraq.

And again these are other examples. In these houses the architect tried to make the houses more Iranian. Which one do you like?

S: *I prefer having a wide, large window rather than having lots of small windows.*

In this one the roof is usable like the past. They did not use modern curtains; instead they used straw blinds outside to control the sunlight. Do you like it? And these are its interior images.

S: *I'd rather use curtains. It is nicer and more fashionable.*

From the other side it is possible to cover the window without curtains. Also, there are 2 different types of view: sky and greenery, with dividing windows into 2 parts.

S: *it is good.*

What is the function of a curtain from your point of view?

S: *privacy.*

It is not just privacy; it is now a decorative object too.

Now we are going to talk about the entrance.

You selected the images you liked; now let us combine them or cut the good part which you want.

S: *I like to have the entrance in a recess and first enter the yard then the building.*

Is this recess roofed? From which side will you enter? From the corner or the middle?

S: *in the middle. It needs to have a portal²²⁴. All on the same level.*

Can you make a list or draw what you want to have in this part while you are entering the house? Sitting area, water, greenery, roofed space ...

S: *trees on both sides of the entrance. It can be either inside or outside. In the yard: grass and flowers.²²⁵ Outside in the street: a box on each side for plants and flowers.*

²²⁴ A roofed entrance.

²²⁵ Because of the special climate, grass makes space more luxurious as it is expensive to take care of.

What is your idea about a wall which contains greenery in itself and also serves both the street and house? It is a common green space between the house and street. Do you agree with connecting the inside and outside like this?

S: it would be great if it could be outside too.

You do not want to make the inside completely separate from the outside?

S: no.

Isn't it a problem if it makes something inside visible from outside?

S: the green area is not just to pretty look at?

If you link the inside and outside green area, it may allow some visibility.

S: It depends. Normally the outside green area is not related to the inside one. But if there were not too much visibility it could be accepted.

There was a space in traditional houses where everybody was allowed to enter that part. It was roofed and had a sitting place too, like the one we saw before in Mr Javaherian's house's entrance. A place to sit in the shade. What is your idea?

S: I'd rather have a green space instead. There is no need to have a sitting area there.

Do you think this culture has been forgotten completely?

S: no, there are still some people who do that. The elderly or the jobless people. The ordinary people would not sit in the alley any more.

What is the problem?

S: I do not like it.

Imagine you are coming home with a bag and a box in your hand. You need to have a place to put your stuff and then open the door. Do you not think this can be used for this?

S: there is a place at home for them.

The part you said should be backward is roofed?

S: yes.

Do you want to have just grass or should it include trees as well?

S: outside just being green is ok and flowers.

How far back should it go? Enough for a person to stand there?

S: *no, about 0.5 m.*

Would you like to have a water feature at the entrance?

S: *no. I prefer to have a pool inside.*

About the façade of the entrance, do you prefer it all at the same height or different heights?

S: *all one height.*

The images you selected are like this.

S: *it would be good to have a bit of difference in levels.*

When entering the yard, which spaces do you think should be related to the yard? What do you need in the yard?

S: *I would like to have water and greenery in the yard.*

What about trees?

S: *they are nice but they make a mess, so I prefer a canopy.*

How big do you want to have your pool? Is it good like this image?

S: *no, I like to have a large pool for swimming.*

Do you want to put the swimming pool at the entrance?

S: *the rest is going to be a building.*

What is your idea about having a small pool when entering the building like image S4? If you want to have a large pool, it would have some limitations.

S: *it is good, but a different shape.*

How do you use the open space?

S: *if it was possible to have a swimming pool in the back yard or screen it with trees if it is in the front yard.*

A single tree or a row of trees?

S: *a row of trees. I would like to have a curved pool. Let me draw it.*

What is your relation with this while entering? Will you pass over it or beside it?

S: *beside it. It can be a large circle.*

Would you like to have it symmetrical?

S: *yes, I think that would be better.*

Let us make a list of what we did: we enter, greenery on both sides, then a row of trees, then a pool.

S: *trees near the entrance could be more decorative. The next row should make shade. Both sides should be connected on the upper level with flowers. The other side of the pool needs a bower.*

What is the bower for? For sitting under on special occasions, or something else?

S: *to use its shade in the afternoon and evening while sitting outside with family. Then after this open space area, it should pass 3 steps up to the building.*

Do you want to make the building on a higher level than the yard? Or do you want to have an upper level in the yard which will divide the yard then reach the building?

S: *both are good. An upper level and 2 parts.*

You can watch the whole yard from that upper level. Where should the steps to the upper level be? Middle or corner?

S: *the stairs should be in the middle and the building needs to be on an upper level too. We can change the pool shape to an octagon.*

An octagon is closer to Iranian culture; do you like it?

S: *yes, I do.*

Look at these images; in these yards you can see water and fire.

S: *just for barbeques, not more than that.*

You like to have a large yard. Think about having a small yard with a nice tree and good proportions. Like a courtyard, it is possible to make a smaller open space with a tree and water.

S: *it takes 20 years to have a tree like this.*

Now the part where we enter the building. What is the specific object you need there?

S: *a small veranda.*

The upper level surface of the yard is roofed? How are these spaces related? If we imagine we have 3 different types of spaces. The yard, which is a bit far, and a yard beside the building, and the building. How is the space which connects them? Roofed, open or closed?

S: *I prefer to pass a roofed space. P6*

This was exactly the system in traditional houses; the closed spaces were not connected to the open space directly. There was always a roofed space in between.

S: *I would like to have 2 large windows.*

What is the space beside it which needs these 2 large windows? Where do you reach from here?

S: *there is a corridor while entering, not a specific space.*

List your desired spaces and their relation to the open space.

S: *living area and reception and also kitchen is good if they can be related, which is not possible. Is it possible to make a duplex?*

Which spaces will be up and which down?

S: *kitchen and one washroom on the ground floor and bedrooms upstairs. It will separate rooms as well.*

So we will have the kitchen, a washroom, the living room and reception on the ground floor and the private parts upstairs.

How do you like the stairs?

S: *a staircase in the middle and completely open.*

Imagine this is the part where you enter the building and this is the entrance area. Now we pass the open space and reach the building. How we are going to have this part? Directly reach the living area or a semi-closed space which leads us to different parts of the house before entering the house completely?

S: *like a small lobby?*

Like our traditional vestibules.

S: *no, I do not like this. I prefer it to be more open.*

Having a space like this will help you at the entrance to go just to that part of the house which you need to - private or public - instead of passing different spaces to reach a specific space. Without this kind of space, people will see residents from private and public part and will be seen too. Is that ok with you?

S: *yes.*

Do you not think a specific entrance lobby would be needed?

S: we can have this if we have all spaces on the same level. But I prefer to have them separate. But I prefer to have the private parts on a higher level than the public parts.

The staircase which is going up should be completely open into the public space?

S: yes.

What is the relation between the kitchen, living area and reception? Beside each other or far from each other?

S: it is better to have the kitchen and living area beside each other.

Are the reception and living area 2 different spaces?

S: Guests will be served in the reception.

It means there is still the old separation of spaces?

S: the living area is the part where we sit in daily life. But the reception is a space beside it which we use for serving guests.

If there were some moving panels in the reception, could this be good?

S: it seems it would make it lovelier.

In traditional houses there were 3 rooms which were connected by doors. It was possible to separate or link those spaces. This image is a modern version of that. What is your idea?

S: It could be useful sometimes, during parties.

This will give the space the ability to be multipurpose. Can this be useful?

S: not necessarily. Also, it is not necessary to have such a high ceiling.

Its benefit is it can help to separate spaces and prevent hearing the other side's sound, and link them when needed.

S: it is good.

How this can be useful in today's life?

S: it is good for separating spaces, and also for making changes in the size of spaces. But when the house is large it is not needed.

What is the relation between the living area, reception and kitchen? Should the kitchen be placed in a corner of the living area? Does it need to be closed or open?

S: it needs to be related to the living area and also near it.

So in your opinion there is a reception area for guests, then the living area and kitchen. How are you going to separate them? With an obvious boundary or just an invisible boundary?

S: No, probably I small step would divide them.

Now how are you going to relate all these to the open space? Just a visual relation or do they need to be connected physically?

S: the visual relation is good.

Would you do part of the cooking in the open space? Or would the guests be served in the open space?

S: Yes.

What is the relation between the kitchen and private part? In daily life isn't it a problem having the kitchen far from the private part?

S: No, the bedrooms are just for rest and sleep.

The most use is in the living area.

S: Yes.

Are there any specific things you want to have for bedrooms?

S: No. It is a space for sleep and does not need anything special.

This is an image from the entrance of the yard to the building. The architect had a look at the architecture during Gajar to create it. As you see, there are stairs from 2 sides which reach the upper level. Could something like this be good for you?

S: I do not like this kind of closed space.

Images

Is it necessary to have an open or semi-open space added to the bedrooms?

S: if there could be enough space yes.

Can we make a list for an Iranian house according to our conversation and the images you have selected?

Materials like: brick, stone, wood, tile, cement and ... which one makes feels you more Iranian?

S: I like stone.

Why?

S: because it is always clean. Bricks will be dirtied by rain and after a while.

Please write the materials you like on one side and the ones which you think are more Iranian on the other side.

S: stone and white cement which can be painted again. I have seen an apartment from 20 years ago which is always new because once in while they paint it. Brick, wood and tile.

Coloured windows?

S: I prefer a wide, large window.

Floor?

S: stone and paving.

What about decoration? Now there is more variation in furniture and appliances inside the houses, and the house design is more uniformed.

S: it is possible instead of making buildings traditional, make the equipment and furniture in a traditional style because it is possible to make changes inside the house but changing the building is very difficult.

I remember that in the last section you said you do not want to sit on the floor at all.

A brief report of drawing: we enter the building. There is a kitchen on one side and the reception on the other side. We can relate the kitchen by opening a wall to the reception if needed. Then the living area.²²⁶

S: add 2 walls here.

What is this corridor for?

S: this is for separating the entrance part.

What if we move the staircase to the upper level to this area as well?

S: A big staircase beside the wall? No.

Is it not important if the person who is coming down the stairs can be seen by people in the reception area?

S: such a complicated plan! I do not know what to do with the stairs.

You need to consider that having an open plan will have this privacy difficulty.

²²⁶ An architect was helping me draw the ideas we were discussing with archi cad. And she said a brief report of that at the end.

Do you want to open a space in the wall to enter the reception area?

S: yes.

Do you want it in the kitchen too?

S: no.

Does it matter that the staircase is far from the entrance?

It seems like a luxury staircase.

S: yes, it is more decorative. And a washroom should be on the lower level. It should not be located beside the entrance. But I do not know where it should be.

This is a kind of diagram so there should be some problem which is not important. Do you have anything else to add?

S: no

Thanks.

Appendix 6

Interview transcript A

part 1

In this part we are going to talk about the houses you lived in. Please start with the house where you grew up, everything you remember.

A: The house I remember from childhood is my grandparents' house. The image I have of this is a small pool in the centre of a court yard. And 2 trees: one pine and a pomegranate. It is still in my mind.

What made this house so memorable to you?

A: I played all my childhood games in that court yard. Playing around water beside those 2 trees. Shade, fresh and cold weather and nice playing which I had there is always in my mind. There were tall trees. The court yard was surrounded by buildings on all sides. So there was always shade in the court yard. It was nice and I enjoyed playing there. These were my grandparents on my father's side.

Do you still spend some time there?

A: We were living in a residential complex which belonged to a steel factory in Zarand²²⁷ until I was 5. As it was a complex the houses were not divided with walls on the outside. There was grass in front of the house. All the neighbouring kids used to see each other.

Was that a public green area?

A: There was a public green area in the middle of the street. The sidewalk was wide. There was a hedge between houses which showed the boundary of the houses. Kids used to play in their own part. The court yards were not private but there were pleasant places, so I always remember it.

Can you remember anything from inside?

A: No, it was just an ordinary house. And as it was safe outside we used to spend most of the time outside. We just had a quick rest or sleep at the house. So I remember more the outside space.

What about after that?

A: Then we moved to the city, to a one floor house with a court yard. It had a staircase to the roof and in the upper level there was a closed space which was a good place to play. My things were there and it was a calm place to play without parents' supervision.

²²⁷ A town near Kerman which is depends on extraction of Iron.

Did you play on the roof?

A: No, no. the staircase had a space to go to the roof with almost 2x3 m area. There was a window towards the court yard and street. ²²⁸ I think kids will remember the spaces where they spent more time and usually played.

Can you draw an image of that?

A: it was nothing special.

A special elements or corner which had been saved in your memory. How long did you live there?

A: we lived there 2 years, until I was 7 years old. Then we moved to the house where my parents still live. I lived there until I got married.

A: this is my grandfather's house.

Is it still there?

A: no, unfortunately it has been demolished. The most important thing is there was a small pool in the court yard which had a stone boundary around it and there were lots of fish in the pool. It had a nice stone fountain too. The water splash from the pool when it was overloaded to the boundary around it. ²²⁹

Did you play in the pool too?

A: yes. There was a flower bed beside the pool with a pine tree in its corner, and a pomegranate on the other side. I do not know how to show this. The pomegranate was planted while I was being born. My grand mom had been planting it on my birth day. I remember that they used to say this is A's tree. I liked that as we were the same age.

Was a tradition planting a tree while a baby was born?

A: it seems traditional families would do that if they had a space for that. They used to plant a fruit tree with the name of the baby on it. Everybody was responsible for taking care of his tree.

A: about the staircase in our house which I mentioned before. There was a door from the entrance which led to the staircase. There was a door at the top of the stairs to reach the upper level space. And there was a door to the roof from this space. As it was a separate place from the other parts of the house, I liked to play there.

²²⁸ It was common having a space upstairs in 70-80 decades which was generally used for store room.

²²⁹ Pashoyeh: ...

Why did you like to play there?

A: *I had a big basket full of toys, if I wanted to put them in the living area I would fill all the living area and it was annoying for the others. I used to go up and freely do everything I wanted.*

Did not you have a bedroom?

A: *yes, I did but there was mess too. I used to ask my friend to come up too. I preferred to be in that space.*

A: *We moved to the next house when I started school. My parents still live there. I usually liked cosy spaces.*

Did you want to be in a silent space or be free of the others' supervision?

A: *Both. I was very curious too. I remember from my grandparents' house – on my mother's side- there was a basement which I loved with lots of memories. It was located under the kitchen and another room. It was always a question for me what is in it?*

You were not allowed to go there?

A: *no. it had a large door and got light from the courtyard. Also, it was always cold. There were old goods there. Also old boxes and some food. I loved to go there and see what was there.*

Was it always a store room?

A: *yes. The only time when it had another function was the time I had to study for my university entrance exam. I moved there for 2 months. I used to study there, I was nice and cold. Sleeping there was very pleasant.*

You used to sleep there for the university entrance exam?!

A: *yes.*

A: *about my parents' house. I did not used to stay in one bedroom. I always had my own bedroom. The house had 7 rooms and except for the store room at the end of the house, I moved to all of them for a while. Once I said my bedroom is small and I moved to the guest room (reception). It is difficult for me to be in one space for a long time. I moved to my parents' room which was bigger than the other room too. I spent 6 months there then I changed my mind. By the way I like the store room at the end of the house. As it is nice and cool. It is beside the backyard and has a window towards the backyard. And a door to the rest of the house. There is also a corridor at the end of the house where the washrooms are.²³⁰ It is a calm and silent space*

²³⁰ It was common having a washroom in a corridor in that period's houses.

when the door is closed. It would have a gentle cool breeze from the window too. The backyard is at the back which is beside the neighbour's court yard and the only sound could be birds and winds from trees. I would rather to go this room if I go to my parents' house now.

How you ever been in that room for a longer time?

A: No it has always been used for food storage as it was cooler than the other parts.

Do they still keep their food stuff there?

A: yes, there is fridge in it also some other food.

How is it related to the kitchen?

A: kitchen is here. And there is a storage room beside the kitchen with a window to the backyard. It has a door into the kitchen. Extra pans - also tools related to the car - will be kept there. This is my father's house plan. There is a corridor here. A room with a door here. Another room and its door. Master bedroom here. Here is my room actually most of the time was mine. Here is a corridor. The reception for guests is here with a large door. Store room, kitchen and doors. There is a small window between the kitchen and guest reception room. Patio, backyard and another storage room. A corridor for washrooms and the backyard. Living area. There is a room beside the store room with a skylight in the ceiling. The room beside that gets light from the patio. All the other rooms have windows to the court yard. The house area is almost 300m², which is 18x12.

As you lived in all the rooms, which one was better?

A: this is the room I used more than the other rooms. It gets a lot of shine and also it has air conditioning. The problem is, it can be easily reached. The best were these 2 which were in a corridor and far from access.

Were the windows from the floor to the ceiling?²³¹

A: yeah, all 3 spaces which were related to the court yard had this kind of window.

Have you ever shared your room with someone?

A: yes, with my brother. I used to live in this room with my brother and also alone.

Can you talk about good and bad things in this house? Things you remember, memories or ...

²³¹ This kind of windows called door-window. Image.

A: in my grandparents' house a pleasant thing for me was in traditional houses generally the court yard was in a lower level and the flower bed was always in a lower level. There was a basement there. There were not lots of cars like now. There was something which was scary for me, the entrance was a small door from the kitchen to the court yard. It was not possible to come with a car and it did not have a large door. There were no parking spaces for the car. There was a sense of limitation which was bothering me. But I liked the form and the atmosphere of the court yard. The rooms were in a higher level and I liked that too. But as we had to enter from the kitchen I did not feel free there. The house was very old. It still has a stove there in the kitchen. There was another door at the other side of the court yard and from another alley which was narrow. The stairs to the roof were located there too.

Did any problem happen there or were you ever locked there?

A: not that I remember. There might be something, because still I prefer the house with its entrance in the court yard rather than the building. I have feeling of freedom and you can easily escape. Houses with entrances to the building make me feel stifled.

You prefer to enter from a large and open area.

A: yes. I do not prefer to enter to a closed space. In houses which you have to enter to buildings you have to go directly from the street to closed area. But in the other one there are some steps to go to a closed space. First you enter a private court yard then to the building. In our traditional architecture like Shah Nematolahe Vali ²³²it is really pleasant that there is a hierarchy for reaching different spaces. It makes you ready to enter the next space step by step. You reach a large court yard with flower beds and trees and rooms around it, then you go to another court yard which is smaller and then the building. I like it from childhood until now. Also about the mosques I prefer the ones where you go to the court yard first. I have had this feeling from childhood. In my grandmother's house the entrance from the alley was directly in to the building not through the court yard. Although it has a parking space and court yard I did not like it. You should pass the storage room to go to the court yard. As it was not related to the court yard directly I did not like it.

Did you play in the alley?

A: yes.

Maybe you wanted to go there easily.

²³² He was a saint ... years ago. Now his tomb is holy space for some people and also because of its architecture a special interest for other visitors. Image :

A: also as I used to make my dresses dirty in the alley I needed to clean up before coming to the house. In the past houses had a large width and a smaller depth so they had a narrow court yard. Also most of the houses were 1 or 2 floors. In my grandfather's house the bad thing was a 5 floor building has been built in front of the house beside the court yard. It makes the court yard always shady. If the weather was a bit cold as there was a pool and sunlight could not reach in, it was too cold. I liked that house as it has light from 2 sides with tall ceilings, it was very good in terms of light. But the windows of the front building were directly to the court yard which makes me feel bad.

A: about the other house where I lived from the age of 5 to 7, there was a staircase that I liked and the light was good there too. But it was located at the corner of 2 alleys. The sound of cars was annoying. Now I sleep more deeply, while I was a kid that bothered me. Otherwise I liked that house. During the night the noise of the car horns or when they braked used to disturb me. In the last house there was not a pool in the court yard but it had a nice flower bed. There were always vegetables there also grape vines. It was a nice place to play. It was really a good place to play if it was not possible to play in the alley. The guest's reception was a large separate space which is now old-fashioned. We used to play football there during winter. It was almost 12x4 or 10x4m. It was lovely playing there. The only thing which was bothering me, was a way to the roof. There were no staircases to the roof. We had to use a ladder in the backyard to reach it. I liked to go up to the roof but I was scared of ladders since childhood. It was not really safe. I always thought during childhood I will build a staircase when I grow up. The washrooms were in a separate space which was a good point. This house was built about 40 years ago.

Did you build the house or just buy it?

A: no we bought it. After marriage we moved to an apartment. It is now almost 15 years (from 25-40) we have been living in this apartment. It is a flat with 90m² area. The most problematic part of this house is its very small kitchen. Otherwise as there is no common wall between houses so there is not a problem about sound. There are 45 block of apartments, 8 units in each block. 2 units in each floor. These 2 units do not have a shared wall either. The only shared wall is between store rooms which are outside the house in the landing. And there is a distance of about 3m between different blocks. But there is another problem. The forms of the blocks are like this. The entrance is in this side and then the stairs because of this 2 corner (this is Qibla so this is north.) Each unit is 90m² in area and L shaped. There are windows in 3 sides of the flat. This house was built 20 years ago. Because of the block shape, in the corners of the building when it is windy it makes a sound like 2 cats are quarrelling. It is kind of scary for our kid. The windows make a noise which is annoying. This is something which needed to be

considered during design period. Also maybe planting some trees may solve this problem. I have heard pine trees were a symbol of good luck and people used to have them in their houses. There are several pine trees in Shah Nematolah as well. There was a pine tree in my grandfather's house as I know this tree because of its shape and ... is a kind of natural soundproofing it can reduce the sound around. Generally, in Kerman in old houses they always had a pine tree as well as other trees.

Commonly the pine tree is kind of useless.

A: it is common to say it is useless but it is always green also lots of birds cannot live in this tree. And it is a disease-resistant tree. There were lots of trees more than 50 years old which were cut by the city council as the trees were ruined by diseases but there were no pine trees among them.

Any special events in any of these houses? Also I want to ask you why you just mentioned your grandparents' houses not any other families.

A: because I was more connected to them.

You spent a part of your childhood there.

A: yes, also as I was the first grandchild of both families my uncles and aunts were still living in my granny's houses until I grew up. My uncle moved to another city after marriage. Also my aunt lived in Tehran and I used to see my granny's house. So all my memories are from those houses and my parents' house.

Any special events and so on?

A: there was a wedding party in my grandparents' house (my aunt's wedding). It was common in the past, and was not a special thing. Also they had weekly or monthly religious gatherings which was also common. These were kind of their daily life and nothing special. We used to see all families and their kids during religious gatherings. There was something in the past which I really loved, the relations between people were less complicated and more peaceful. I think until about 20 years ago. People were closer and we used to have gatherings with my uncles and my dad's cousins in a house. For example, at our house on Friday we had barbecues in the court yard. In that large guests' area which I mentioned before there was a big space ready to eat on the floor. We were almost 40-50 people there. I still miss those kind of gatherings. Now people will go out 2 or 3 people and have fast food and finish. Also these things from my granny's house too. It was common in my grandfather's house once in a while inviting lots of people and they used to cook meals in the house and it was not common going out or preparing meals from restaurants. But it was very friendly and memorable. Now because of the new lifestyle also types of the houses it is not happening any more.

Is there any house you have seen in the past and you wish to have the same house for your own?

A: *in childhood?*

No any time, a house which you really loved and wish you could live there.

A: *personally I am hard to impress, and there was not a house which I completely loved. But there were some houses which I loved a part of them. For example, last year we wanted to move to another house so we saw different houses. There was a single house which we both loved. I would definitely do the same thing if I want to build a house for myself. The master bedroom had everything you need in it. You did not need to go out for anything. You had to go several stairs down then it had a kind of pre entrance which was designed for a TV and there was a nice fire place too. A small book case and space enough for 2 people to sit. It was almost 2.5x3.5m. Then a stair divided this part from the sleeping part. The bed has been designed there.²³³The light could be controlled easily while lying on the bed. There was enough space to put a small fridge beside the bed. It has a cupboard near the bed too. It has its own washroom. Sometimes when you come home you are very tired and do not want to be disturbed with anything and anybody. Or there is a guest in the house and you want to stay in your room. This was a complete suite to stay for a while without needing to go out. I think this really helps to be calm. It is a completely private space where you could spend days on end without going out. This is a very important option for me. Which I have seen rarely.*

As you said you moved house three times during childhood but then you were settled in one house. After marriage again you were in one house all the time. How do you feel about it? In this situation you have a series of memory in one space in different times. Which one do you prefer: to stay in one house or to change the house in different periods?

A: *It depends on culture. There is an expression which says your neighbour is closer than your brother. When you have this culture the neighbour is a priority like the house itself as well. So people would rather stay in a place where they know their neighbours. Now the one floor building and single houses are rarely built in Kerman. It is more common to build apartments. When you live in apartment it is now a different situation. In apartments if I can afford it I prefer to move every 2 years. Because now I see neighbours are always changing. For 20 years I lived in my parents' house, during these 20 years just one of the neighbours changed twice. The rest were all living in the same house. It means for 20 years there were several families in the*

²³³ It is not common in Iran to build bed in the bedroom and people used to have their own bedroom.

neighbourhood who lived together and knew each other and loved each other too. It makes you feel safe and secure. You prefer to make changes in the same house rather than going to another one. But in apartments as you have shared parts and spaces you cannot change things easily. Every day the building system is changing. It was common to use wallpaper in a period in the past then for a while no one used them. Again there are lots of fashionable wallpapers which now have been used. Or I could not imagine that we could have tiles as strong as we have now, stronger than stone. People like to go with technology and use the new one. In apartments I prefer to move after 2 or 3 years in order to use new technology.

Can you still go to your granny's houses?

A: The house of my grandparents on my father's side has been demolished but my mother's mom still lives in the other one.

How do you feel about it? If one day, they want to demolish it or sell it what would you do?

A: I would definitely buy it if I could afford it.

Will you buy that because of your memory or something else?

A: yes because of my memory and the feeling I have there. I will buy it and renovate it.

Can you remember the time the other house was demolished?

A: yes, I was really sad. I still sometimes go to that area.

Do you still like it?

A: yes.

Do you have this feeling about your parents' house too?

A: not exactly. But I prefer if they want to change their house to renovate this one rather than moving somewhere else.

Would you please tell me what is the meaning of home from your point of view?

A: it is border which separates the outside living from the personal one. It helps you be calm and feel fresh for another start. Home is a place where people are more kind to each other. They are more honest.

You talked about a master bedroom and how you like it. Is there any other thing that you want? Think about when you enter the home and the rest.

A: The next thing after bedroom depends on whether you have an apartment or a house with a court yard.

Which one do you prefer if you can choose?

A: Definitely a house with a court yard. But relation between spaces is very important. It would be good to have a kitchen near the entrance, in order to reach the kitchen without going to the living area and other parts especially when there is a guest. You can go to the kitchen without being seen with everything you have in your hand. I have seen a house which was good from my point of view. The builder put the guest reception and bedroom beside the court yard to use the best sun shine. And put the kitchen in the other side. He had left a 1.5 or 2 m space between the neighbour's house and their building as an open space – which people believe it is a waste of useful land. There was an access to a store room behind the kitchen and there was a staircase to the basement from this part. Also it was good as you should not carry rubbish or other things through the whole house to put them outside. The garbage can go out from the back door which is good. But from financial points it is not good as you are not using a large part of the land which could have been built. But I believe it is good that you can have the ventilation of washrooms here too. It can help with ventilation of the kitchen too. This was for the house with a court yard. In apartments, having a good and large balcony which can be used not exactly the same as a court yard but similar is very necessary.

Court yard as an open space? Can you explain what do you mean and what you expect from a court yard?

A: I mean an open space. There are some goods which need to be kept in open space. They need fresh air and sunlight. The most important ones are clothes. It is really different to dry clothes in shade or sun shine. There are some places like the north of Iran which are always cloudy and rainy. So they do not have any other choices. But in Kerman we can use it. I think this is mistake to not use sunlight. Also it is not like the past that you can let your kid go outside and play because of security. Having a semi open space which can be supervised by parents is very good. A space with almost 20 to 30m area. Another important option for me is having a washroom at the entrance.

Why?

A: because in lots of flats the washroom is directly open to the living area. In our culture it is not a clean area. It needs to be in a part which can be seen rarely and also so its smell cannot bother the rest of the house. Also it is common to make bathrooms very small in apartments. There is not a proportion between area and spaces. I like to have sunlight in the bathroom. It helps the ventilation and makes you feel better. A small fan cannot help a bathroom for ventilation. In toilets it is not necessary having sunlight as it is

just for 3 or 4 minutes. But in a bathroom you may spend 1.5 hours. So it has to be place which makes you feel calm, not makes you stressed. It would be good if it can have a tub as well a shower. It needs to have a toilet to be completed. You should be able to sit in the middle of the bathroom if you want. Unfortunately, most of the builders make the washrooms smaller to make the living area larger. There are some things which should be considered with the area of the house. You cannot have carpet sofas in an 80m² area apartment.²³⁴ Carpet sofas have 30cm handles on each side. By using the more informal kinds of sofa in a space which with carpet sofas 3 people can sit, 7 people can sit on the less formal sofas. These are some conflicts. Everything needs to match the structure. These were some points which I could not find in several apartments we have seen. So we decided to build our own house when we can afford it.

Thanks.

part 2

I have listed some activities done at home. Please talk about them, how you do them, or maybe there are other things you want to talk about your daily life.

For example, shoe polishing. Do you think it needs a special space? Or when do you usually do that? Now we are going to talk about them one by one.

While entering the house or leaving the house will you knock on the door, or use your own key? What would you do if you were carrying something with you? Do you think you need to put it in a special space? Or can you open the door while carrying that? What about shoes: where would you take your shoes off, inside or outside? Which items of clothing will be kept at the entrance? Imagine this is the first part of the house which you reach, what do you need in here?

A: *shall I talk according to my house?*

No, you can talk about your desires.

A: *as I like to have or I will use if possible.*

²³⁴ It is a kind of luxury sofa which is covered with handmade carpet. They are usually very big.

Please talk about what you normally do first, and then talk about your ideal way. Please feel free to draw or write on the images.

A: generally, in the flat we used to live in, we passed the stairs. There was not any special space to put your stuff or take your shoes off in front of the entrance door.

But did you prefer to have it or not?

A: I will explain. We have to carry our stuff and open the door or knock on the door at the same time. Or sometimes we have to put stuff on the floor to open the door. Inside our house there was not a special shoe rack at the entrance. We added a shoe rack and we used to take shoes off inside and put them there. And in front of the entrance of that there was a hanger to put clothes like coats or scarves etc. Some people take their shoes off outside of the entrance door as there is not a place inside or it is very small. Also some people prefer to leave them outside because they are not clean and might be smelly. For me personally there are 2 important things: shoes should not be taken off outside the house also they need to be separate from the entrance. Shoes should not be taken off in the shared area. You cannot make a space outside your flat in the shared area, but it is possible to make a small bench there to put your stuff on. I think this is very important, but in almost 90% of houses there is no such thing. But in traditional houses there was always a bench which could be used by residents and passengers to put their stuff there when needed.

Inside I mean the entrance corridor should be divided into 2 parts. They can be separated with one step up or down. In the first part you will take your shoes off and also some of your clothes. But the next part is the clean part of the house. You can have special slippers there or maybe nothing. You can take your shoes and your socks off in the first part. You may need to wash something so a washroom should be located there so anyone who is coming home will be clean before coming inside. A cabinet can be placed in the first part for shoe polishing stuff too.

In your opinion shoe polishing will be at the entrance?

A: that is the best place, because shoe polishing always makes a smell. You can sit on that one step and do your job. Also, by keeping the washroom door open it would help to ventilate the space. It is not a long job and usually one person in a family would do it for whole family. It can happen once a week in the entrance and shoes will be returned easily to the shoe rack.

You mentioned a separate space for shoes and as you said a clean part and another one. Do you think that it should have a different floor material? And how much does it need to be close?

A: it is not necessary to make it really a separate part, having a small difference in level is enough? Or as a door which can be designed especially for here. Imagine you enter here with a different level. Here you have the entrance door and the washroom door is here. Also, there can be a door here.

I believe it is important, if you need to have a washroom at the entrance or not? Your point about foot washing was interesting for me.

A: let me draw a plan. Imagine this is the entrance door. Here is the separation part, which can be a step. Washroom and shoe rack. Maybe having different levels may cause structural problems so it might be a door just to separate the spaces.

What about material?

A: as you reach this space with shoes and in our culture it is very important. Because of some religious and hygiene beliefs most people do not like wearing shoes which were worn outside in the house. They would take shoes off and wear slippers or special shoes inside the house. In my opinion this part should be washable. Shoes polishing may make it dirty too. It is not necessary to have a rug there as it will always be full of dust. Having different levels will help to make that place easy to wash.

How washable? Do you want to wash it with water or just clean it?

A: yes, the materials are washable you can use a hose from the washroom. It just needs to have an outlet.

As I know, you believe in religious regulation and you are familiar with washing orders. Today there are lots of cleaning methods with different antibacterial materials without using water. Can you talk about this from a religious point of view?

A: it needs to be washed with water. Although these anti-bacterial products will kill the bacteria, according to religious regulation ordure will be expanded while using these tissues. You may clean the bacteria but not the ordure. In order to clean it you have to pour water.

What about large surfaces? For example, holy places like mosques?

A: In those places there is always an outlet.

According to this the entire house needs to have outlet!

A: yes. In those places where there is not water, they will have another solution. Can I draw it?

Yes, sure please draw it.

A: The holy spaces would always be covered with carpets so there is no slope there. They will make a close boundary with some tools. And rinse that space, if there was a water way they will easily clean the area. If not, they will use pumps to dry the space. Also, when a part of a carpet needs to be cleaned it might be hard to wash it all. So they will put something under the carpet and pour the water onto that specific area. Everything which is called ordure should be washed with water to be clean.

Why do you believe it?

A: this is really important for me. It might be an obsession but I do believe in this religious regulation.²³⁵

I think this is more belief.

A: yes, I really believe it. In our house the floor is hardwood which is not washable and I really feel bad about it.

What about that time it was covered with a rug?

A: it was possible to take a part of that and wash it, dry it and then put it back in its place. I have done this before. But according to Islam we should not be curious about this thing. If someone tells you this is clean you have to accept, if you say I am not sure and I have to make sure this is obsession. If you did not see any ordure somewhere you have to presume it is clean. You have to see it yourself or someone has to tell you that there was ordure here.

You said you do not like this floor. What is your suggestion?

A: you have seen that I used to wear slippers in the house. I always wash the slippers when I go in the bath. Also for praying I will have my own mat or I pray on the part of the carpet which I am sure is clean or can be washed.

Is it just for prayer or something else too?

A: I used to be sensitive about it, in all cases.

I remember once we went to someone's house and she said you do not need to remove your shoes; we do not pray in this room.

A: some people do this.

Now you solved the problem with these slippers?

A: yes. But if you want to know exactly what is the religious regulation according to Shiism I have to say if you come with shoes on the carpet it makes it dirty not ordure. It will make it ordure just while it is wet. Sunni people are easier going in this part. I think if the floor can be covered by stone

²³⁵ It might be necessary to explain this participant is not very religious.

or tiles it is better. Rugs will absorb dust and you have to take them and wash them once in a while. Stone is cleaner and easier to clean. If we can make this part completely washable it is great. Having a washroom at the entrance has different advantages. First you can wash your face and hands while entering the house. Also it is not in other people's vision. Culturally it is impolite to go to the washroom and make sound.

Some people are embarrassed to go to the washroom while other people are sitting there.

A: putting that at the entrance will help in this case too. Also, if possible, having washrooms beside an open space for ventilation is the best. When it is like this people like me who believe in these religious regulations will wash their hands and face and also their feet and then wear the slippers and enter the house.

So you will wash your hands and face when you enter the house?

A: yes, yes.

You will not change your clothes first?

A: no, and people whom I know who were religious prefer to wash their hands first. I may not do this always but I think these things need to be like this. I take my coat off first. Another important thing is having a place to put some small things while entering the house like keys, ring, and watch and so on. Usually people put keys somewhere while entering and they do not remember where they put them. But having something at the entrance for them would make them organized. All keys can be kept there.

A: another important thing is having a tall mirror at the entrance. It can be at the second part of the entrance or at the back of the door. So it is possible to check yourself before going out and coming in. Sometimes it helps you remember you forgot something, for example glasses. I cannot say anything more for the entrance. I should mention again that I would definitely relate the washroom at the entrance to open space or have a wide shaft for light and ventilation.

Do you want to have natural light for the entrance?

A: no, the entrance does not necessarily need sun light. If it can be it is good but I meant that for the washroom.

You mentioned you will take your shoes and socks off at the entrance. Is it necessary to have a space for dirty things too?

A: No, they can be kept on the shoe rack. There are always different rows in shoe racks, so the clean and dirty can be divided there. Also many people wash their socks while washing their feet.

Do you have anything else to add to the washing?

A: in dish washing because of our special washing style we need to be careful. The sink needs to be divided into 2 parts in order to clean the dishes with dishwashing liquid in one part and put them in the other part to rinse them in running water. Those sinks that just have one part make it difficult. I think this is more vital than the stove. It does not matter how small the kitchen is. It always takes time to wash dishes so it might be good to have a window towards the court yard. Also, if a small surface can be added to the cabinet under the sink to put one foot on that for a while and change the foot once in a while would help backaches and so on. It is common to have a washing machine in the kitchen or in the bathroom. I think both are wrong. It is dangerous in the bathroom. It would be good to put it on the balcony in a roofed space and keep the washing machine there.

If you put it in the outside, it is hard to use it in the cold weather.

A: there or in a separate store room. For example, in our flat there is store room outside beside the entrance. There is a window there which helps ventilation. It is cold but not freezing. There is also water and electricity plus an outlet.

Why do you want to have ventilation for a washing machine?

A: It is always wet and it may have bacteria. Another thing is how to dry clothes. Now there are different types of dryer but I have seen that drying clothes in sun light cannot be replaced with anything else. So it is necessary to have a balcony on that side of the house where direct sunlight can reach. Sometimes people put air conditioning on the balcony. Also I think there should be 2 balconies in every flat. One beside the kitchen and the other one beside the bedroom for drying clothes.

Why can't they use the balcony beside the kitchen?

A: it would be better to have them separately because usually bedrooms are placed on the side of the house which has the best sunlight. It is common to have the kitchen as a less important area and at the back. Also the cupboard is in the bedroom so it makes it easier. The balcony beside the kitchen can be used for some food or rubbish. I prefer to have 2 smaller balconies rather than a bigger one.

Please let me ask you about where you usually keep dirty clothes and washed clothes?

A: I think the best place is bathroom if you have a 2-part bathroom.

Like it was in the past?

A: yes the clothes can be there and be taken to laundry from that place. As they are not clean it is better not keeping them inside.

Where do you put your clothes when you change?

A: in the bedroom. You have to change in the bedroom and have a basket there to keep clothes to be washed. But a changing room beside the bathroom is the best idea.

A: about ironing clothes. In the past they used to put a blanket on the floor and do ironing. But it was hard; now with the special tables it is easier and faster. It would be good to have a fixed one in a store room beside the bedroom, for example. It is better than always moving it. A fixed space with enough space for the person. I like to iron my clothes myself but as there is not a fixed space and I need to move things and find a space for that, I prefer to take my clothes out to dry cleaning. It would be good to have a space which does not bother the others while ironing.

When do you usually iron them? After washing?

A: I usually hang clothes after washing and drying. And at the weekend I will iron some of them for next week.

Do you think ironing boards can be placed in the same room as the clothes have been kept?

A: it can be in the walk-in wardrobe with a fixed space for that.

Do you prefer walk-in wardrobes to the normal wardrobe? And why?

A: yes. Because it is easier to access. But it is not completely accepted in Iranian culture.

Why?

A: because we used to cover everything. Ladies have hijabs. We put covers on things in order to avoid dust. Our grandmothers used to put clothes on the box which was closed but it needed to be covered as well. In our culture people do not like others know what they have. For example, a lady does not like her sister-in-law see her cupboard or maybe her bedroom. I think in Iran people rather have a walk-in wardrobe with its own door. Also it is common to keep lots of things. Although there are all luxury things in the living area and reception, in the cupboard it is always messy.

A: I like to have everything in my sight. I used to wear different clothes every day.

Will you wash clothes after you have worn them?

A: it depends on the day. Sometimes I may wear a garment 3 times at parties then wash it. Also I may wash it after an hour.

A: sweep up: it is common to have a central vacuum cleaner in residential complexes. But I do not like it as sometimes I have found things which were lost in the vacuum cleaner and it is not possible in a central one. Also because of the maintenance. When it is shared it might take more time to be fixed if any problem is caused.

Will you use traditional sweeps?

A: not at all.

Dust up?

A: I have never done that; my wife usually does this so I do not have any idea.

What about other regular arrangements?

A: I will organise my own things and sometime when there is heavy stuff that needs to move I would help. Otherwise it is my wife who arranges things. It is most like this in Iranian culture.

It was common in the past to gather in someone's house and make lots of food and so on. How do we have it now?

A: it was very nice. It was necessary in gran's houses. It was common for example buying boxes of tomatoes and making lots of tomato sauce and so on. But these are not common any more. In the past ladies were more housewives and there was not communications technology. So they had these gatherings to help each other and communicate too. They sometimes fought there too. Now lots of old ladies will spend a lot of time watching TV series. But now a lady who is working outside does not have time for these things. Also, in the past houses had their own court yards and it was possible for them to do those things, which is not possible today in flats. It was nice but it is going to be forgotten. Everyone remembers those days as good memory. But you can buy everything easily so it not necessary to do that.

I just remembered that you did not mention how you would like to wash other spaces?

A: in places where we have water like the kitchen and washrooms, they should be washed completely once in a while. Floor, ceiling, windows, all need to be washed. Recently in some houses the builders do not make outlets. In order to prevent those places from being washed. I completely disagree with this.

What about the bath with tube?

A: they need to have water way outside the tube for washing.

One of the problems my sister had when she moved to Canada was there was no outlet so she could not wash the bathroom and it was really difficult for her.

Now about sleep. What do you need when you want to sleep? On the floor or bed, dark or having a small light?

A: I like to have a phone beside my bed, radio and TV. I like listening to music before sleep. Having a soft light is good. Peaceful and soothing colours like blue, light violet and light green are good. As it is a private space a place for some personal stuff. A small bookcase to keep several books and CDs to use before sleep. It should be near the bed so easy to reach. Also a water cooler and a small fridge beside the bed.

Which one do you prefer: sleeping on the bed or on the floor?

A: As I fall asleep very easily I do not mind about whether I sleep on the floor or bed. But I should have fresh air. Sometimes I have a feeling in the bedroom that I need more air so I will move to the living area.

Why? Because the bedroom is small?

A: because of the area and also I need to get fresh air. I will open the window with heating on. I need air circulation in any space, small and large.

What about sleeping alone or with others?

A: as I can sleep easily it does not matter. Sleeping in a king size bed with someone else is nice. But I can sleep on a hard surface like a stone as well.

Is there any special time for sleep or not?

A: no, any time I feel tired I will sleep, usually 12am to 7am.

These are some other activities. Do you have any special idea about these?

A: no just I prefer to have a bathroom in my bedroom.

We talked about changing dress. Do you want to add anything?

A: Coats, hats and similar things at the entrance and the rest in the bedroom. But as we have a small cupboard in the bedroom and it is not possible to keep all clothes there I put mine in a cupboard outside the bedroom. But I prefer to have a walk-in wardrobe in the bedroom.

Do you think that walk-in wardrobes can be a shared area between whole families?

A: it does not matter. But having a shared place with kids has its own restrictions.

A very important thing. Storing things.

A: we have 2 different types of things that need to be stored. First things which are large and not used daily, like suitcases. But there is something which needs to be in sight. Almost always there are storage rooms for flats outside the flat in the basement or parking but most of the time builders refuse to build them.

How many types of store room should be in a house from your point of view?

A: each bedroom should have a large cupboard in it. But it depends on the house area. For a studio or one bedroom flat it might be hard to have store room but for flats more than 2 bedrooms, they should have 2 store rooms. One for things which might be dirty like ladders or cars parts. Another one for the other stuff near bedrooms. This is store room for the whole family. This store room for a 100m² house needs to be at least 2x2m.

Houses from the 1960s and 1970s had these store rooms but they were removed in the next generation of houses. And it causes problems.

A: yes, they were removed because of the area but it made problems.

Can they be replaced by cupboards?

A: no. When you enter the store room you can go through it and see everything. So you can have everything you need. But in cupboards you have to open each door separately and cannot see everything at the same time. In storage rooms you should be able to see everything organized and in sight.

What is your thought about these external wooden cupboards?

A: I prefer the one on the same level as the wall rather than the one which has been added. There is always lots of dust and rubbish on top of these cabinets. You can see one of them here.

Vacuum cleaner and so on.

A: all houses have a vacuum cleaner and also the old one which was a handy one. They need to have a fixed space in a house during the design process. They can be placed in the small storage too.

Washing tools?

A: On the balcony behind the kitchen. Each place's washing tools need to be kept in separate spaces. First the kitchen, second the washrooms and third the other spaces such as the living area and bedroom which are shared.

What about extra sleeping stuff?

A: each house needs to have at least 2 extra sleeping sets. They must be kept in the store room.

Shoes and bags, the ones which have daily use or not. Where do you keep them?

A: I prefer to put all shoes in a shoe rack. But if there was no space I would put them in a walk-in wardrobe, but I prefer not to put them in the same place as clothes. Bags can be kept in walk-in wardrobes or in a cupboard in the bedroom.

What do you want to put on display or not? Now you have some books and some dishes here. How do you select them?

A: books are nice and can be decorative, as well as you have read a book and when you put on display someone else may read it too. Other decorative things are related to culture.

Some people keep everything on display some people do not. What do you do?

A: I do not like bare walls. But I do not like to have a family album on the wall.

Would you please talk a bit more about photos?

A: it would be good to have 3 or 4 photos on the wall. But having lots of photos in different situations is ridiculous.

As you remember, it was not common to put family photos on display in house. And recently, in the last 2 decades, it became common. In the past there was just a photo of a grandfather or father.

A: it was bad putting photos on display religiously and culturally. Maximum a picture of their son. They would never put a picture of their daughter there on the wall. But it is different now. Also some old and antique things can be nice.

Also another thing which is recently common is having a table with lots of photo frames so you see the process of their life. It is also kind of showing off.

A: I do not like it personally. Also, I think it is good to see your album once in a while but seeing your younger face every day could be depressing. It is better to have something which cheers you up or has deep meaning.

About keeping different types of dishes. Dishes for guest or daily use will be kept in the kitchen?

A: no. There should be a place in the store room to keep special dishes. It is common to have the best and most luxurious dishes for guests. We keep a very expensive set of dishes which might be used once in a year. It is really important in our culture how and on what kind of dishes the food will be served. Sometimes the dishes are more important than the food itself.

I have seen in a British TV show that they had this situation 100 years ago.

A: we have something like this so we need to have a special store room for them as they should not be easily accessed. The stuff used daily should be kept in the kitchen. As kitchens are getting smaller and smaller the rest can be kept in the store room.

Let us talk about cooking, as you are one of those people who cooks himself. Talk about cooking generally, not just a function especially in the kitchen. Talk about the process.

A: traditionally Iranian cooking takes time so the one who is cooking will spend a long time in the kitchen. Also most of the cooking needs to be fried or has fried onion. I prefer to have a 2-part kitchen, a part for cooking with the oven and a powerful fan. It would be helpful to put this part beside the open space in order to keep the rest of house from the smell of cooking. The shafts in the middle of the building just spread smell in to other flats. This part needs to be related to the open space. It needs to be closed more than to be hidden in order to keep the other spaces from the smell and other mess in that part. So it would be more pleasant to have a meal in the other part of the kitchen.

It means you will have some meals in the kitchen?

A: yes. I prefer to have it as when you have your meal in the kitchen you do not need to clean the living area every day. Also in the kitchen everything is in access and easier to reach. If we can have a space for family dining in the kitchen at least the cleaning will be less.

What about the other people? A guest or a friend? For example, me or your mom.

A: if possible I do not mind having 6 to 8 people in the kitchen for a meal.

Is there any difference between people?

A: yes. Some are more formal guests so they have to be served in the reception room. Other can be close friends who can be served in the kitchen. But I prefer to have meals with closer people in the kitchen.

In your opinion the kitchen is a place for cooking, serving and sitting. You prefer to have the part of cooking which makes sound and smells in another room.

A: if it can be possible to place it beside an open space and prevent other spaces from getting the food smell, the food would be more delicious.

These pictures show different types of meal eating. You can see the process of changing style. What is your idea about all these?

A: I believe there is nothing more pleasant than sitting on the floor or around the table with the whole extended family and having a meal.

I think as everybody could see the others while sitting on the floor around the dining space, it was one of the good points about the traditional system.

A: yes.

But today especially with self-service people would sit 2 by 2. Or when there are 4 people on the floor then they can see each other. Is that a value?

A: Yes. I think that is a kind of empathy and intimacy.

There are differences between the traditional system and the new one about sitting and serving food.

A: yes. As you said, everyone would take his own meal and sit somewhere. But in that system people used to all sit together. Another point which I think is important, in the past people used to be careful about how much they ate. If there was not enough food from one type, for example, people used to keep it for the others. But in self-service this cannot happen.

Sometimes when it is self-service people say hurry up, it is going to be over.

A: It is an unconscious social behaviour. The grandfather who was sitting up side the table would ask the others to be served first and it was a dedication lesson. I believe it was nice and no longer exists.

What was the most influential in this: fashion, or comfort of table and chairs? Although dining tables have become a problem now. It is a large item which needs more area than its function.

A: I prefer to sit on the floor if I do not have a knee problem.

How do you feel about it? Is it related to the past?

A: I feel more comfortable. There is more intimacy in sitting on the floor rather than on a chair. When you sit on the floor your feet touch the floor.

All the body is visible. But behind the table the feet are hidden under the table.

Which one do you prefer: sitting on the floor or sofa?

A: I feel more comfortable sitting on the floor with a back rest.

How do you make tea: Instant tea or traditional?

A: Both.

What is your opinion if the kitchen and living area and reception have no borders?

A: it is ok. Especially in a small area, it would be very useful to have a moving kitchen. When there are guests in the house the kitchen could be smaller and living area could be larger.

How do you use TV? Do you have one TV or does everybody in the family have their own TV? In some families a TV is something for gathering the family together.

A: The TV is now an important part of the house. We have 2 TVs: one in the bedroom and another one in the living area. Usually we watch TV in the living room all together. Especially during holidays, I lie down on the floor and watch TV series. Most of the time the TV is under the kids' control. Also it is common to have some exercise tools in the house. I like to have an extra room for this. But we have to keep them in the bedroom now. Also I would like to have a study room. It can be used for work which needs concentration. But usually when there is not enough space people used to have small tables in the bedroom instead. Also, in houses there are several spaces; people have different options to spend their time. A cosy space for depressing time far from everything. But unfortunately this is not the case in apartments.

Why do you want to have it far from everything? What do you want to do there?

A: study, pray, etc. In an apartment someone might be in a bedroom and a kid in the other one. The TV is on too. Finding a silent place is hard in flats. It can be that room which I mentioned before for studying, praying and practising. There is nothing more that I need a special space for. Usually there is not enough space in the apartment to have flowers so it makes the flat boring. Having greenery on the balcony would be great. The balcony behind the bedroom can have a small greenhouse.

Do you like to have a pet?

A: I do not like to have pets, especially in apartments. In a big house with a large greenhouse having some birds with the flowers would be nice. Or having an aquarium is enough. I do not want to keep a dog and cat.

Why? Is that because of religious beliefs?

A: this is not only religious. I like to have a dog in a garden but not in the building.

What about playing as a way to pass time during family gatherings? Do you need to make changes for this?

A: some families will sit separately, men and women, but we do not. We usually play cards which does not need anything.

Do you usually play in the living room? Do you think it can have a special room?

A: in the living room and I think a separate room is not necessary. Generally, I think having a special room in the house separate from the bedroom for extra work. I have to do my extra work in the living area which is not good.

Do you think that your bedroom is too small for this? And if the bedroom could be larger, would you want to do your work there?

A: I prefer to have a separate space from the bedroom.

Can you explain more? Do you want to have an office or have a private room in the house?

A: I prefer not to mix work with family and home.

Do you want to have a shared working space or have 2 different spaces for the husband and wife?

A: I prefer to have separate spaces. Actually this will make a 2-bedroom house 4 bedrooms which sometimes is not possible. But anyway, having a space of your own is good.

I was in a mansion in England, which probably belongs to the 19th century. I am not sure. The couple had separate rooms. Do you want this?

A: Not at all. It would be ok to have a private space for those times that you are not in a good mood or have serious work to deal with and need to be alone. Otherwise couples should be together.

Do you see your clients at home?

A: no, but in this case clients should not be able to come into private parts of the house.

Traditionally it was common to go and see someone who was sick in his house. People used to sleep in the main living area during times of

sickness and others would see them. As you can see in this picture. How is this happening now?

A: usually a bed will be set up in the living area for the patient and people will meet him there. I rarely see someone stay in his bedroom and people go to see him there. I should mention that in the past the room which the patient used to sleep in was not a public room, it was one of the private rooms.

Another point in traditional houses and families, men and women talk in different spaces.

A: they can hear each other. It is not like this anymore.

Also, in the past, rooms were related to each other as you can see in the picture. We cannot see this anymore. What is your idea about it?

A: the ways of living and culture have changed so I think this is over too.

Do you really think this should be removed? Because it makes spaces more flexible?

A: ways of living now are different. In the past people needed to see each other to communicate, today there are many ways to communicate over distance.

There is another point here, imagine these were 3 rooms beside each other. They had the ability to be one large space if needed or 3 separate rooms. Do you think that could be useful?

A: in the past, people used to have 5 to 7 children. In the extended family there were always many people in a house who ate together and so on. But it is not like this anymore. Also in the past, the reception was a separate space with a door which was used just for guests. A long time ago that door was removed and the living area and reception became one space so it would be useless.

Because of the building technology they had their own limitations but today we can have larger. But you prefer not to have it?

A: yes.

Social interaction in the court yards in the past. Also having Green area and Geranium.

A: very nice. I would really like to have this again.

Which one do you prefer?

A: first greenery then water. These are really peaceful. I have seen in some apartments that they make a common open space and they sit there and

have fun. It would help people to have more interaction. I remember from childhood we used to have a common green space but unfortunately after the revolution, because of some political point, they had been separated.

As you mentioned political points, do you think this can happen?

A: I think so.

These are some events which people used to do in their house in the past. How do they do these today?

A: the ways of living have really changed and these are some things that rarely happen.

People used to sit in the room and look at the courtyard. Do you use your balcony to do this now?

A: rarely.

It means these 2 do not have the same meaning.

A: this is not just privacy. Another problem is greenery which is really ignored these years. In the past people had trees and small pools in the court yard. Now what can we see outside from the balcony?

What if you can have a balcony with a nice view? Also people cannot see you from outside.

A: sure it would be used. Some people care about being seen but there are lots of people who do not care anymore.

This is not just a religious point. But as you said the young generation do not care about this.

A: yes. Anyway some people like to see streets and people. My aunt lives in an apartment in Tehran alone. Her house is 40 years old, but she likes to stay there. It has a nice view and she said that if she opens the window she can talk to people or shop keepers outside. And if she needs to she can ask them for help.

Would you use a balcony if it was large enough with a nice view?

A: sure. We have a small balcony. It is hard to sleep there but I do as I like to see the sky.

Do you like to sleep in the open air?

A: yes.

People used to bring lots of things outside into the yard and sit there for a long time. Do we have this still?

A: no, people were more patient in the past. And people are busier these days. In the past they did not have fast food. Everything took time in the past. Now you can do everything quickly with new technology.

We used to have different levels between rooms and the court yard. They used to take off their shoes outside in a roofed space.

A: they used to send water from everywhere to a small pool.

We cannot use small pools like that anymore.

A: but we can have that as a symbol.

How much is this kind of cooking still being used?

A: very little, just in special religious ceremonies.

Now those ceremonies are going to be outside of the house. Also they are less common than in the past.

A: yes, as the houses became smaller. Also, in the past in an extended family there were lots of people who used to help with these events. Now those kinds of relations do not any more.

In the past they used to sit around a heater like in this picture. Can we have this or fireplaces now?

A: no. In the past they had a special room for this. Making a special space just for sometimes is not wise. Also now we have different types of heating system which are more safe and convenient. In the past people did not used to have hot rooms and they used to wear warm clothes in the winter and use heaters to help a bit. But now people want the rooms very warm in order to not to wear warm clothes at home.

Would you like to have a fireplace in the middle of your house and see the natural fire in the winter and also use its heat?

A: it is lovely to have natural fire, but it has some problems such as making breathing difficult after using it for a long time. But it is good to have it once in a while.

Anyway these are some things we used to do in the past but not anymore. These activities in the traditional courtyard, we would not do them anymore.

A: I wish we would. Now we do all our work in closed spaces and artificial light. We lose sunlight and moonlight.

For more than half of the year it is possible to use the outside, which is not too hot or too cold. This is the sleeping type you like.

A: this is lovely. It is very nice to sleep during summer in an open space with fresh air. I think those people who have large balconies and court yards and do not use them are wasting their gifts from God.

These porches and semi open spaces in front of the rooms were spaces where they used to sit and do their work. Do you like to do this?

A: it is very nice and I would definitely use it.

There was a wooden day bed in the court yard. They used to sit there or sleep there in the past.

A: they used to sleep there in the past because there were lots of insects in the desert, they had some trick to avoid them from coming up. Also it was an upper space and when someone would come, seeing them in an upper level will have made them more respectful.

There were some day beds which they used to have in the pools or covered the pool with them.

A: it was helpful to make them cooler when it was on the water. Pools had different levels and the outer layer was designed to have the extra water from the main pool. Sometimes used to keep the stands of the bed. Having them in the water also helped keep the bed from insects too.

part 3

These are pictures from traditional houses in the 19th century and houses during Pahlavi. The transformation of houses can be seen in these images.

This picture shows the traditional urban planning and contemporary urban planning. You can see the differences in relation to streets, open spaces and closed spaces, and the shape of the houses and streets. As you see, in the past there was more variety in shapes and typology. As you lived in both of these urban planning eras, please tell me which one do you prefer?

A: I should say it depends on how you want to see this. If you want to see this just for your own satisfaction it would be different to if you are looking at the whole city and all other people as well. We have to consider population and technology; I cannot say I like this. Now population has increased

compared to the past and there have been lots of other changes, which makes it impossible to go back to the past.

I don't mean it. Was that a right answer in that period?

A: yes, it was good for its own period.

Look at the traditional urban planning and the contemporary one. Do you have the same feeling? Do you think that the new solution is the right one?

A: I think when we look at the traditional urban planning we are looking at long history and experience, of more than 2500 years. But the contemporary one is almost 100 years old. These 2 cannot be the same.

What happened to those 2500 years? Actually 8000 years of civilization?

A: after 8000 years because of technology and an increase in population it changed completely to a new, modern approach.

It seems Reza shah planned the new city. He tried to modernize and westernize everything in the country. There are other countries which are still related to their past.

A: I agree with modernization, but now we have something which we cannot ignore. We have had lots of changes in the last 100 years. People used to live in a different way in the past. Everything has now changed. For example, in Canada and America.

You have to consider that Canada and America are countries with less than 300 years' history. They almost had to build from the beginning. It seems that our new approach in designing houses and buildings is more American. And you cannot see this disconnection between different periods in Europe.

A: I mean although it started in a wrong way we cannot ignore it. We have to do something with this. We have lots of economic problems.

People who emigrated to Canada and America had their own history and culture so they started to build there by their own approach but it was possible to have new ideas and changes without being worried about its influences on the traditional things. Shall we really ignore the 8000 years of history and architecture?

A: there should be a relation but it has been cut.

One solution is to go back and try to find some relation, while considering the new ways of life. We cannot live as our grandparents lived. I would like to live in one of those traditional houses but living there needs some changes to make it closer to the way we live today.

The point is how we can link our new ways of living with our traditional culture and architecture.

A: now there is a mixture of many things. I do not know what we can do.

Now we know that those were not right, so we need to change the approach.

A: I think although we are not going to use the old technology anymore, we can use the traditional atmosphere and shapes. Why is there only one Shah Abbas Hotel in Iran? We can have forms of the traditional buildings for schools and so on. The green areas and water spaces can be used. At least we can use their appearance.

Actually those are not just some forms. They had their own philosophy or concept.

A: the wind catcher can be redesigned and could be used in different buildings such as universities.

Open space and semi open space was an important part of people's life but they are not any more. These pictures are from outside of some traditional houses. As you see, the only decorated part is the entrance. But the entrance had been carefully designed for different people: the one who is passing the alley and wants to take a rest and the one who is coming to the house in different ways. Suddenly in Pahlavi the windows became in the ally side. Everything has an outside appearance.

A: I had a feeling that this is French architecture.

Which one do you prefer: having an inward-looking house or an outward-looking one? How much is the outside appearance of the house important for you? Forget about the limitation.

A: I prefer to have it simpler. Something changed.

The one who built that could make other things too but he wanted to be outward looking – it is about Pahlavi buildings. Now maybe there is no other way, but the one who built this had more options. And he decided to have windows outside, to add the balcony and so on.

A: what is it in front of the building? Is it a street?

The urban planning changed too.

A: in the past, the alleys were almost private, but when it changed to a street with lots of shops, these are different.

In the past, buildings were decorated inside, now they are decorated outside. It is a different look. How should they look now?

A: *maybe consider inside and outside the same.*

The person who is living in a building, how he can use the façade?

A: *nothing. There is an old expression which says people will never go inside a house just when the door is open, they will go when the host is open. It was not common in the past to make things lustre. It was more important what is inside rather than the appearance. Women had a black or white mask and it was not obvious what was inside. I know in Yazd people used to wear very distinguished clothes with an expensive fabric called termeh.²³⁶ They used to wear chador on that and no one could see that except in the house. But now we are careful that the outside of the car is clean but it does not matter how dirty it is inside as no one can see it. And this is something which deeply and culturally has changed. So we cannot go back just with the change a building.*

We do not want to go back.

A: *we cannot, we can maybe make something better. It is not just construction; the whole society needs to have changes. Also, as you see in the street, the girls do lots of makeup - more than western people.*

I think that is different. People need to show themselves and because of wearing a hijab, doing make up is a kind of attraction.

A: *it is not the only reason but it would help. Simple things make me feel calm. Also it is when you are going to enter a house that you do not know how it is. This is a kind of mystery. You will pass a corridor and reach the court yard with different colours. Also it was a unity in the city if the buildings had the same materials. Now there is chaos in the city. Each house has its own colour and material without being related to its neighbours. There was harmony in the past in the city. Different architects graduated from different countries in the first decades of the 20th century and made buildings according to their education so there is different style. But if it can be started from universities and shopping centres it could influence the rest of society.*

This is a courtyard and you can see that people in these houses were related to nature. This is something which we do not have anymore. Would you like it?

A: *sure, I mentioned before that I would like to have a terrace with greenery.*

Maybe this is not exactly what I am talking about, but as you know the pool room was common in this part of the country. What is your idea about this?

²³⁶ Termeh: A luxury handmade fabric.

A: it was common in the desert part of the country. They usually had a wind catcher in these rooms too with the water in the middle. Sometimes it used to be a washing space. Also sometimes there were benches beside the wall and people used to sit there as it was nice and cool. This is the best way to make a space cool in the desert. But we do not have that anymore.

In traditional houses they used to have different levels in different scales. The courtyard was on a lower level from the rooms. Rooms had different levels and heights. Not like today when there is a flat and one level ceiling for all spaces. Also they used to have everything around the courtyard. But from Pahlavi it changed to a corridor which all spaces are connected to. Their walls are decorated without having function but in traditional houses they were decorated and had function. Also ceilings were built in different types. Different ways of getting light.

A: sometimes they were covered by glass, sometimes they were open. It made space different as it was related to outside and had natural ventilation. When you want to sleep you will have a look at the ceiling and it is nice to see the sky rather than a flat box.

What is your idea about traditional windows which are called Orsi²³⁷?

A: very good. Different colours and other things are great.

Do you like to have all spaces like this or just a special one?

A: it could be all the windows. Also I like to have a large Orsi in Saloon with traditional forms.

I am not sure but the reason that they have these large wide windows in the west is because they have lots of green space to see. As there were no green spaces outside they used to have different colours in windows.

What is your idea about having different heights for different spaces? Forget about the structure and its limitation.

A: they can be different.

What about having a small space over the other one. One of them could be shorter in height but have function. They had a space with high height and other spaces with shorter height. This is not very complicated.

A: I have seen in a small house that the architect made a column in a part of the house and made a moving floor for kids. It could be up near the ceiling

²³⁷ Orsi: Traditional sash window.

or come down to be used. Also I saw another thing which made the bed movable.

It is nice if you give me some photos of what you want.

In the past there was a special part in the saloon which was called king's space. Can we have this anymore? In parties' special people have their own spaces.

A: no. we do not have that culture any more.

One other thing which changed during Pahlavi is the staircase. Stairs became an important symbol. As you know it was not like this in the past. Which one do you prefer?

A: I prefer the new one. In the past the stairs were narrow and they were not comfortable. These are more comfortable.

In the past stairs were located in a corner and not in sight of all people.

A: the upper level was not as important as the ground level. The upper level was for servants or sometimes store rooms. In Shahzadeh Garden they built a special space in the upper level for the prince so you see there is a good staircase there. But usually in the past the basement was more important than the upper level. The stairs to the basement are more comfortable than the one to the upper level.

Is there anything else in these pictures you want to add?

A: no.

Thanks.

part 4

These are some buildings which tried to be Iranian.

These images are from a house built by Faryar Javaherian. As you remember, last time we looked at traditional examples but in these the architects tried to make new things while looking at the past.

The other one is by Dr Alami who tried to use Iranian garden concepts in her design.

The other images are kind of Iranian. There are some images from courtyards in countries other than Iran which were recently built.

These are several Iranian symbols from the past. Do you think having these symbols in the house would make it Iranian?

Please select those pictures which you think are good then we can talk about them.

A: in these new buildings there is a sense of artificial not real. You do not feel that these are old. For example, in this picture there is water, bricks and traditional orientation but the most important thing, which is a tree, is not here. There are some flowers, but in traditional houses the old tree was more important than water. In some houses different generations lived for 100 to 150 years. There were always one or two large trees in the houses which made the place calm and peaceful. You cannot feel that these houses are old.

We are not trying to make them old.

A: we want to get that peace.

We want to have something which is related to our culture. One of the problems that we have today is that most of our buildings can be located in every other part of the world. I showed some decent designs to my supervisors which were designed with an architect you know. One said these are nice but they can be everywhere. What do they have to make them Iranian?

AB: in this case we have to find the Iranian architectural aspects. But when we talk about Iranian architecture there is always a link between Iranian and Islamic architecture.

This is a problem that we have now. Globalization is also a very important aspect in architecture today. But lots of people still think we need to have something related to our culture. It seems we do not have anything from the past. Have a look at some countries like Japan. This is a picture from Japan today. They are connected to the past. I saw a book of different designs in Japan. There is not furniture in the spaces but there is personage in them. In the past we did not used to have lots of furniture like now. Something which was interesting for my supervisor was the way our houses are furnished. Every piece of furniture is beside the walls. In some Arab countries it is the same. We did not have these kinds of furniture in the past and we used to put the sitting stuff beside the wall. So we are doing that again as we want to have a larger area in the middle as we used to have.

AB: this is because of some limitations.

There are always limitations. But we have to accept that this is our nature. It has changed in the past and will change in the future; there is no way to avoid these changes. One of my architect friends in England talked about building a complex for a specific nation, maybe Pakistan or Maghreb, I am not sure. There was a corridor in every house that all families closed because of some cultural aspects. The cultural issues are something which needs to be considered during the design process. You mentioned a building that tried to have traditional forms and materials. As we discussed before, this is not the best option but this is a lot better than some other options which seem to be modern. Or that house in Alghadir, you said that it has a good feeling. Maybe they are not the perfect answers but these can be discussed and be used for the next changes. One of the other participants mentioned that material needs to be related to that region. Or she mentioned that when you splash water on clay it has a nice smell but on stone there is nothing.

A: in the past they had adobe. The clay was easily reached in this part of the country, and different types of brick which are being used today were almost the same. But granite can never be like that. If this courtyard is covered by bricks like the past it would be good but covering this with tile makes it different. So maybe material is more important than having large or small windows or the entrance. I think materials and their combination is more influential than shape or having different levels.

MA: but the proportion is really important. You never have a window as wide as this in Iranian architecture. So no matter what the material is it will never be like Iranian architecture. Because in the past the proportion of spaces was something specific. The proportion of open and closed space as well. Or in this picture: we never had a window this high in our architecture. Maybe a non- specialist cannot see these details but it will not have the same feeling anyway. The proportion which used to be in the traditional architecture should be used, not these arches. I think this is really important in that house with wide windows. If you make it with clay that will not give you that feeling either. These are just memories. For example, in this one, which windows have been divided and you cannot see the outside completely and we see this classification. This is the thing that reminds us of the traditional architecture. We used to see the outside in a frame in our traditional architecture, in the alley or houses or everywhere we moved.

Why is it like this?

MA: this is the aesthetic which leads to framing everything.

Is there any other cultural aspect about it?

MA: I do not know the philosophical points. But we used to see these closed frames in the traditional architecture.

Have a look at the rest of the pictures and select the one you need.

A: I am thinking that we have to describe being good. For example, if we studied history 10 years ago we would say how cruel they were in the Achaemenian period. Because people were categorized in that period according to their job. You can see in the traditional bathroom that this room belonged to clergy men and so on. I think it is really important who is going to live in a complex for design. These can all be good but in which case. For example, this climatically building or design which was naturally in our traditional houses needs to be considered. In most cases they are just drawing and colouring, not exactly making an architectural plan.

There is no fixed way and different people have different ideas which they are testing.

AB: we are not going to design a fixed item.

Sure, we are not.

A: I think the culture which is related to the government is really important. In Japan they did not have different religions and cultures. But in Iran there were lots of changes. It is complicated to find what the real culture is!

There are other countries like Thailand which had the same transformation, but it seems there is not this chaos.

A: this is a part of our culture now. When someone goes to Tehran, for example from Kerman, he tries to talk with their accent. We have this in all other aspects of our life. There were lots of changes and there is not a fixed idea about what our identity is.

Considering all these, what is your suggestion?

A: having something from the past will help it to feel better.

How much can the open spaces be important?

A: that was a good idea especially for religious people. It could be a space to keep shoes off, for doing some chores and it could be easily cleaned and washed. This is one of those multi-functional spaces. In this picture the privacy and pool remind me of traditional houses. But we did not have a pool with one level; they all had another level around them which was lower. For washing and other things, water was used from this in order to not make the rest of water dirty.

Maybe as the function has changed and water in the pool is no longer for washing. Anyway, washing in the pool will never be the same.

A: *also as MA said we do not have this kind of view in Iranian architecture although it is nice, but it is not Iranian.*

MA: *also in this wide opening there is no privacy.*

These are some new courtyards from other countries.

A: *there are buildings on just one side or two sides around the courtyard.*

These are not exactly the same but they are similar.

AB: *we have to remember that we cannot have courtyards any more.*

I am not defending the courtyard. But I saw many buildings around a court yard which were built recently and they were lovely. They could have built a row but they built it around which in my opinion had a better result.

AB: *they cannot have the same light on all sides.*

MA: *if it is a residential complex it is far from the idea of a courtyard. In the courtyard each side has a different value.*

We do not need to have the same meaning now.

MA: *this is just one form of courtyard. In our courtyard each side has different values. But in a residential complex all houses have the same value. They used a form with the wrong meaning. This is very important.*

This is something that is different in different cultures. In the west they did not have this meaning in the past.

MA: *I am saying the sides are not the same, but as you want to keep that form you are forcing people to have houses with different values.*

This is not about keeping a form. This is not the traditional form in Europe. Also, many modern buildings have courtyards. I just want to say that this is not an old form that we cannot use anymore because it is old fashioned.

MA: *this is right. It needs to find a solution.*

We cannot expect the same meaning. Also we cannot say that now we should have just the row buildings.

MA: *I always say we cannot build caravanserais²³⁸ anymore. But the concept of the caravanserai was a cheap space for travellers to rest at night for a*

²³⁸ caravanserai: Inn in the roads.

short time. So we can build a new one with this concept. Also if we find the concept of courtyards we can build a private court yard with new elements.

Anyway it was a public open space which had different functions in different cultures. Now we have lots of small open spaces with no function. I think the form we have now needs to be changed. All over the world there are contractors and dealers who build the residential complexes. And in lots of them the residents are the less important part.

AB: the financial part is now more important.

Now in Iran a house is more important as an investment rather than a home. I think this is not the same in other countries.

A: when we moved from Zarand to Kerman, we wanted to buy a house. There was a house with a shop on the ground floor and a flat on the first floor. It was cheaper than the one we bought. But my dad said "I have 2 sons. They want to play in the alley." and the house was beside a street so it was dangerous. Also, the cars sound is annoying. They bought a house in an alley which was not busy so it was calm and quiet. Now after 30 years with that property you can buy 3 houses like my dad's. Now, because of the financial situation, people want to have a house which can be sold easily. Having this kind of material makes it easier to sell and so on. No one thinks about comfort of the residents, just the ones who can easily spend money.

Do you think this is a general situation in the whole of society?

A: I think this is a reception and that would never be furnished like this. In 5 metres of height they say it is possible to make 2 floors. But having a reception with this light and height is really nice.

We are going to have some sketches from different spaces of homes. So pick any of these pictures you think can be useful. You can categorize them yourself. Entrance, open space, public space and living area, kitchen and dining room, something special about bedroom if you find any. Anything about façades. Store rooms and windows.

This is a complex in Shoshtar.

A: I heard it is abandoned.

It has a special situation and we cannot call it a successful project. But it could be. Select pictures from these as well.

A: about the entrance, in the past, when there was no car, there was a door through the stable and a large door for carriages like the garage we have now. Most houses had their entrance through the building not the court yard. And the entrances of all houses were almost the same.

Is it good or bad?

A: in my opinion it is good. Because it has harmony. I think this an alley from Shoshtar. When you pass this alley there is nothing unusual and annoying. Now in a street you may see different materials and colours beside each other. It is annoying. I do not want to say everything needs to be the same. But they need to have a classification and be compatible.

Being compatible, now what are your suggested materials?

A: any material with clay is great for this region. The best stone will ruin after years. The other materials like aluminium and wood are not good for this climate. Sometimes the difference in weather is 40 degrees Celsius. They will lose their attraction and colour after a while. But the houses with bricks after 50 years are still good and with a light cleaning it would be same as the first days. Another point, look at these miniatures²³⁹. This kind of painting is linked to our culture. It is a colourful painting with no edges. We had more curved shapes rather than the cubic ones. The colourful windows are from more than 400 years ago. I like to have a colourful window through the yard. This picture I think this must be the Kahayam tomb in Neishabor. Maybe it is not possible to have something like this in a flat but we can have these things in other buildings.

You mentioned ceilings in a flat. There was a period when the ceilings were completely flat. But now people care more about the ceilings and design them. This can be related to our traditional ceilings.

Now we want to sketch an entrance outside a house. How do you like it? Backwards or coming from the front?

A: like this: backwards with a roofed part and a sitting place.

A friend said this is old-fashioned, sitting in the alley. Maybe some addicts sit there. What is your idea, can this help to make the city livelier?

A: it is not important who will sit there. They used to have this in the entrance in the past, not just for residents. It was also for pedestrians who wanted to have a rest. Also it was common to put a water tap outside the house for people who passed the street. A friend of mine recently built a house and added this. The resident of the house used to fill the water tank in the house, which was connected to the water tap outside, daily. It was a culture of helping others.

²³⁹ Miniature:

Last time you mentioned you prefer to come to the court yard before the building. Ok, imagine you are entering. There is a threshold which is backwards and it is roofed. Then what do you have after that?

A: *(He mentioned an old house entrance and described it.) EnI. In the entrance hall there were sitting places on both sides. It was a kind of semi-closed roof, with a big hole in the ceiling for sunlight. It was not possible to see the court yard or the building while entering the entrance. The door was located on the same level as the rest of the house walls, but I prefer the one which is a bit back. It had a stone bench which came forward on both sides. Then it reached the court yard with several steps.*

A: *In my opinion I prefer to have a step back façade. Then a corridor which would reach the court yard with several steps. It is not important how much it goes back. Someone like the postman who comes to the door, although it is facing the court yard, it is not possible to see inside. I like to have a stone bench on one side and a flower box on the other side. But the most important part is the corridor. It is semi-open space which is roofed and there should be one or two stone benches to sit down on. The water meter or electricity etc can be placed there.²⁴⁰Someone do like the others can see inside their house but I do not like this.*

What are those 2 stone benches for?

A: *2 stone benches, one as a flower box and the other one for sitting. Also I think there must be 2 separate doors in the court yard for cars and pedestrians. I do not like having just one door for both reasons. It would make the home more convenient if it can have a portal in the entrance.*

A very important thing which is now forgotten is trees. It is common now to have grass and some flowers for greenery. It is nice but having trees, like a pine tree which is always green, will add a sense of freshness for the place in the desert.

Do you want to add anything to this drawing?

A: *have a roofed corridor while entering which is not straight. And it would be better if it turns in order to limit the sight. In the court yard there should be trees and water as a symbol which help to make the atmosphere fresh and nice. We do not need a pool like in the past but having a small fountain or something which makes the water sound would be great.*

²⁴⁰ In Iran, electricity, water and gas are under governmental control and it is common that someone comes to check their meter every 2 months. People prefer to keep them outside of their building.

Is there any specific thing which you need while entering or going out the house?

A tall mirror in this corridor and a place for shoe cleaning. A small cabinet can be there in order to put some shoe cleaning stuff. It can help the guests while entering the house to check on their dresses and also the residents while going out. I like to do this in semi-open space.

I personally prefer to enter to the court yard rather than a building because I feel you are not going to a closed space directly and you have relation with outside. The Hierarchy makes it calmer for me. (He mentioned in previous part a traditional sample of Hierarchy, shah nematollah.)

Now let us see different spaces of a house according to your opinion about their priority.

A: it depends on how many people there are?

Imagine for your own family.

A: it depends on what their job is. If the lady is a housewife she spends lots of time in the kitchen so the kitchen will be an important part. In this case, the first priority is the kitchen then the living area and reception. Then bedrooms.

Would you please write it down?

A: 1-kitchen 2-living room and reception 3-bedrooms, for a family with a housewife. But when there is a family where both parents are working outside they will not spend lots of time in the kitchen, so 1-living room and reception 2- bedrooms 3- kitchen.

The kitchen is less important!

A: because in most houses, the extra activities that the couple want to do, such as reading or searching on the net, will be in the bedroom. It needs to be a calm place also being connected to the other parts of the house too. There is someone who cooks for them or they will have ready meals. So the kitchen is not very important.

Please explain what are the options that the spaces with more priority have?

A: It is very important to have a good balcony in a flat. It would be multi-functional. But unfortunately in most flats people do not use the balcony.

Why? Is that because of the insufficient space?

A: it is one of the reasons.

What about the place where this balcony is located?

A: yes. Anyway, we need 2 balconies: one beside the kitchen and the other one beside the bedrooms. The priority is about sunlight and the area. The balcony behind the kitchen can be small but the one beside the bedrooms needs to be large enough to be used for different purposes. It would be better to be beside the master bedroom as parents use that more. Also, it would be better to be far from the living area and reception in order to make it more private.

It means you are not going to use it with guests?

A: no. For a large flat with 4 bedrooms it is possible to have 3 balconies. Then one can be used with guests. But I think generally people cannot afford large flats so it is not needed in normal flats. There is a residential complex in Kerman which is not really good but has 3 different balconies for each flat. And that complex is well-known because of the balcony that can be used in summer. As we have a shared area for the living room and reception today it needs to have a nice light related to all other spaces.

A: I have seen a house with movable bed which I think can be good.

I thought about something like this. For example, a dining room can be multi-functional space. We should have a dining area today. Can we remove it?

A: no.

As you know, especially in small houses the dining table is always a problem. As this not something for all day use it can be movable with different details. What is your opinion?

A: it depends on the area. Also, for example in our house because of the lack of spaces this dining table has lots of usages. Also it is not easy to install the movable things.

Imagine if this table could be changed to different sizes. So you can have more room around this table and you can also change it to a bigger size.

A: the space around it is useless. I think this table is not a very important part to be changed but having an extra bed which can be used when guests come is more appropriate. A bed hidden in the ceiling which can be used during the night without changing the decoration.

Also for some people a bed is a kind of decoration. They do not like to hide it. What is your opinion?

A: as I said it depends on the situation.

For some people a dining table is a decoration and for some it is just functional. What do you think about it?

A: I just say instead of moving furniture move the bed which is just for sleep time.

That is right. But I am asking you this, because generally when I asked people about how do they describe an Iranian house? They said a large area. As I said about sofas: that we used to put them beside the wall in order to have more space in the middle. I have a large dining area which has been used for guests and also for some special job projects. And most of the time it just wastes the space.

AB: a friend of mine wanted to cut his dining table.

A: I prefer to have more space.

It is common in most houses to have a small dining table for the family and a large one for guests. The large one is used rarely. But it is now a part of the fixed furniture in houses. A couple who want to start their new life had a list to prepare such as: bed, sofas, dining table, fridge etc. Do we need all these?

AB: these are needs and should be in every house. We used to furnish the plan and see how they will be in the spaces.

I do not think so. Things are not always being used that are needed and useful. It was common to have cupboards fixed to the walls in the past. During a period, people removed them and they were replaced with external ones. Recently they are again becoming a fixed and important part of homes. What other things do we have like this which can be a part of homes during construction? Or having different levels. Or storage rooms in upper levels. Why do we say this is not nice so we have to remove it? There are some spaces in all cultures which are needed. For example, in the past people used to have the toilet far from the house as it is not nice. But now this has changed. If we should keep the dining table, why we are not making this during construction?

AB: these are not external these are needs. We are supposed to do what people need.

I mean there are things like cupboards which became an option in design.

AB: sometimes these lead designs.

We cannot build a house without bedrooms and washrooms.

AB: now we cannot build a home without cupboards.

Yes, it is an important point today. Let us think about dining tables and furniture like this. Can we fix them or should they be movable?

A: *no they cannot be fixed.*

We did not have this much furniture in the past.

A: *no, but we cannot force people to be like that again.*

No we cannot. But still we want to keep them back and make the space larger.

A: *yes, we want this. We want to use space more effectively. People prefer to move the sofa and dining table so if they are fixed it will make it like the military.*

You mean you prefer to have things more flexible.

AB: *it is hard to install and pack them.*

A: *it can be just for the game room.*

In the past we used to have everything portable but they are now all fixed and people seem happier with this.

A: *I think this cannot happen for other furniture.*

What about beds?

A: *maybe. But some people like to have a decorative bed.*

For example, beds can have specific place in the room with a lower height. In this case under and above the bed can be designed to be useful. So we can fix the bed. We have to keep some things flexible and some things fixed. Also the walls can be something more than a border. They can have a function. We had this in the past. There were niches in all walls. We may put the kids' bedrooms beside each other and make a space for beds in the wall on 2 levels and use that part of the room which is always useless. Or make the upper space a store room. What else can we have?

AB: *in some main spaces like bedrooms and dining areas we should not do this and ruin them, because people should be free in their home. We will ruin all peace in the house.*

If we do not want to do that then what should we do?

AB: *It is not good to have a short height space on the bed. Sometimes when the house is really small we have to do that. Now we are not designing that. If we do that it will make the house a dormitory and there is not enough comfort any more.*

Look at this from another point of view. Imagine the bed is a fixed part in a house. Is it an element that can be fixed or needs to be replaced?

AB: A bed is one the main elements in bedrooms, a sofa in living areas and also a dining table in dining areas. Now we are designing according these items.

A: A bed is one of the main elements but not the fixed one. Some people do not like to change things but most people do prefer to move things. These are not the points which make you comfortable. They may make you feel you are forced to do this and you do not have any option.

AB: anyway, one location is the best one. You can make changes without moving them, by changing the colour for example.

A: It makes you feel bad when they are fixed.

I am one of those persons who always moves stuff. But I always have this feeling that there is something wrong. Maybe if I can manage them in a proper way I do not need to move things.

AB: If you cannot organize it well there is a problem in design. There is always one composition which is better than the others.

A: I mean when you force someone to do things it makes him sensible. It is not good to feel you are not free to do what you want.

This is important.

A: my point is this is the best place for the TV. But we decide it. But if we buy a house and they say this is the only place you can put the TV it is annoying.

There are other things which are fixed and everybody accepts that.

AB: for example, in bathrooms, no one can move things. You accept that there were some reasons that the bath is located here. The shower also. They had been designed for your comfort. This is not related to freedom. Why do you want to move everything?

I do not mean that someone decides instead of every other person and says I think this is good so you have to listen. But it can be asked what your points in bedrooms are. What are the main points for you in bedrooms?

AB: also we are designing a house for you. And you already said that's what your desires are. You said you want to have the table here and we designed the plan according what you said. After thinking, we decided to put the TV here.

But you should remember that the TV is now fixed on the wall in many houses. We used to put the TV on a table and move it to different corners. But it is now fixed.

A: *yes, but they will have the option to install the TV on this wall or the other one.*

I want to say that maybe after 10 years we will decide this is not right. For example, having fridges fixed today. I remember once in a while the fridge was moved from one side to the other side of the kitchen. Now it has been accepted that there is a fixed place for that.

A: *that is right.*

AB: *I think as each space is designed for a specific function, moving them may cause problems. The ceilings of dining areas are designed for dining rooms. The living room is designed according to its function. And the only thing we can have in these moving is having variety.*

And this can be reached by the other things.

AB: *now you have changed the colour of the wall and changed the curtains. But the furniture is as it was in the past.*

A: *yes, that is right.*

So we are going to this side.

AB: *everything needs to be clear where it must be.*

Just people may have different desires.

AB: *it has been designed according to the resident's desires.*

Another participant said that he wants to have his living area in a better part than the dining area. As most of the guest they receive come for dinner and there is nothing to see in the night or use of sunlight. But he uses that space daily.

A: *that is again something personal.*

Yes. The points you mentioned for a housewife or a wife who is working outside the kitchen were different.

A: *it is necessary that the designer and resident communicate during the design process.*

Now when people want to buy a house the option they mention are x bedrooms and y area. Nobody is not saying that I want a living area like this etc. There is nothing about quality of life.

A: *now there are lots of jobs which have things to do at home. It means the bedroom or study room would be the first priority.*

People used to clean and wash vegetables in the house and work outside. Now people are buying their vegetables ready outside and doing their jobs at home.

A: Also green areas should really be considered. Trees and flowers. I know an old builder who builds just one floor houses. Before starting the construction, he plants a tree and flower. After finishing the construction, the tree and flowers make the house's atmosphere really nice. He mentioned that he always sells his house very quickly.

Thanks.

Appendix 7

Interview transcript M and SH

part 1

I have talked with all the other participants alone. But as you have common memories from childhood I decided to talk to you 2 together.

Please talk about the house you were born and grew up in. Talk about the things you remember or draw them.

M: I know I was born in a house in Zaboli Street in Kerman. We used to live there until I was 2 years old. I cannot remember anything .Then we went to Manjil²⁴¹. I remember there as we lived there for 7 years. Then we went to Shiraz for one year and finally we came back to Kerman again. The most memory I have from my childhood is from Manjil.

What can you remember from that house?

M: We used to live in a residential complex which belonged to the government. There were several small 2 bedroom houses. The houses were around a circle with a circular pool in the middle and several small pools around it. The pools were not deep. The houses had a yard in front and another one at the back.

Was the back yard private?

M: No. Both yards were public and all houses were detached houses. Here was the front door of the house and this was the back yard and there was a hill at the back of the houses. There was a school bus for all the kids. We used to play in that circle in the middle, which was safe, with all the other kids. It was related to the military and strangers could not come in. We used to run on the hill. The kids were all friends as their fathers were co-workers and their moms knew each other. We were happy there.

What about trees? Was there only water?

M: There were not any trees in the middle of the circle but around the houses there were lots of olive trees. We used to play with those olives and throw them to each other's face. Some people had animals in their back yard. We had ducks and goats there.

What can you remember from inside the house?

²⁴¹ Manjil : A town in north of Iran.

M: They were not large houses. Imagine here was the reception and dining area and here was the living room and it had 2 bedrooms here. And here was the washroom. It was a windy place. There were lots of insects outside, like scorpions. And the entire household had covered their windows with special nets indoors to keep the inside safe from the insects.

What about you, sir?

SH: I cannot remember the house I was born in. The house I remember from childhood was a house in a garden. My granddad loves my mom, and built her a nice house beside his own house. It is now demolished. The building was located in the middle of the land and on an upper level from the yard. And there was a basement but it was not in the ground. On both sides of the building were yards. This yard was beside my granddad's house. And around that was a garden. It was in Sepah Street. Water passed the houses. There was a place in the basement which was called "Payab" which was a place for washing and it used water from the underground canal. There was a very nice garden with lots of flowers. There was a hall with access from 2 sides with 2 staircases. The hall had tall columns. There was a large rose in front of the hall. There were also lots of trees. As I remember, we were really happy in this house. In the building there was a large living room in the middle which had doors on both sides. When those doors were open it was nicely cool. It did not need a cooling system. I cannot remember anything about the bedrooms. This side had nice sunlight in the winter. The kitchen was down the stairs. Here were grape plants, but then my dad demolished them. I cannot remember these rooms as we used to sleep in the living room. Here was a store room then another room. After a while my dad built a kitchen and washrooms at the back of it. The washroom used to be in the garden and it was scary for us as kids. My uncle says that they used to go by bicycle to the toilet as their yard was very large. I did not go to toilet alone. We had servants so we could go with them. I remember at noon my dad splashed water over the pergolas which were covered by grape plants, and also on the walls which were made of clay. The floor was covered by bricks and when it got wet it was nicely cool in the summer, as we did not wear slippers. Also, the smell of wet clay was lovely.

What was the function of the rooms?

SH: I do not know. I remember we used to put our bed stuff in the living room and sleep there all together. When I grew up this was my room and this was my parents' room. This was my sister's room and I cannot remember what the other one was.

M: We used to sleep in the living area in the winter.

SH: *I cannot remember the heating system at that time.*

M: *They put a heater in one of the spaces. They did not heat the entire house. The heater worked with oil. As it was hard to make all the spaces cool and warm they used to sleep in the same space.*

SH: *I remember as here was a nice sunshine in the winter we used to sit here in the winter to use sunshine and get warm.*

Do you know when that house was built?

SH: *There was a tile on top of the building with "besme alahe al rahmane alrahim" which means "in the name of god ..."²⁴² with the date 1958. This was the year the construction was finished. My uncle says that my granddad did lots of work to build this house.*

How long did you live there?

SH: *I was there from my childhood until I was in my first year of high school. We moved to another house for 4 years and again came back to this house. My dad made some changes in the house. He changed the floors and covered the walls with wallpaper and also changed the doors and added curtains.*

What do you remember from that house?

M: *We used to go to that house a lot. I remember it had a large yard; I took time to pass the yard. It was nicely cool. The toilet was in the garden with a scary hole in the middle.*

SH: *Here was a water tap. And I remember in winter without warm water my mom would do washing there.*

M: *I remember when we slept overnight in this house in the summer we used to sleep in the other yard. Because sunlight reached that one later.*

Where was the entrance?

SH: *The entrance from the alley was here, which is now Sepah street. Here was a door by the end of an impasse ally which has now changed. There was still a water system in the city. There were several carriages which brought drinking water for every house. I remember my dad changed the lower level rooms to a space where there were workers who made lemon juice.*

²⁴² In the name of god:

Did you have a pool in the yard?

SH: *Not at first but my dad then added a pool. We did not have a bathroom in our house.*

M: *None of the houses had bathrooms. People used to go to public baths.*

SH: *My granddad's house had 2 bathrooms. He was rich.*

M: *It was a special house that had bathrooms.*

How were these 2 houses related?

SH: *My granddad's house was here. My mom used to talk and send things over the wall to her mom. I remember there was a door in this wall which was sometimes open and sometimes closed. My granddad's house was a very nice house. It had a large hall. All around the house were boxwood plants. There were 2 big pine trees in the middle of the house and also almond trees. Then my uncle had a house on this side.*

The whole extended family used to live together?

SH: *He wanted to build houses for the others but he passed away when he was 52.*

How did you have water for the toilet?

SH: *We used to carry water from the water way to the toilet. My dad moved the kitchen besides the building to make it easier for my mom. There was not an oven and the kitchen was not covered with tiles. The second time we came back to this house new washrooms had been built. When we moved from that house my cousin lived there for almost 10 years. He built new washrooms. And my sister lived there for a while too.*

What is the main thing you like from this house?

SH: *We used to play here during childhood. That pergola during summer when it was wet and the clay and its smell and the cool weather. My cousins would come and play. There was a large pool in my grandfather's house. We used to swim there when we grew up.*

M: *It was a large pool, like a swimming pool.*

What did you usually do in the hall?

SH: *It was a roofed space with high ceilings on a higher level than the yard. It had tall columns. There were lots of trees and flowers in front of the hall.*

M: *It was nice for sleeping at night too. As it was roofed the sunlight reached it later.*

SH: *In houses with high ceilings there is a sense of glory.*

Is there any other house which you want to talk about from during your childhood?

SH: *My grandfather's house was really special. We used to go to the basement to find treasure. The basement was really cool. They used to keep food there. There was a stove in my grand mom's house and she used to bake bread. I remember they had a washroom beside the living area. I do not know when it was built.*

What was that large pool's function?

M: *They kept water there for washing and also for the garden.*

SH: *They had chickens and sheep at the back of the garden. I remember the door knockers. There were not locks like now; there was something called "shab band", which closed the door for the night. It was a wood which kept the door closed.*

Can you remember any special events?

SH: *I do not remember, but my mom says they had a united family which they used to gather weekly on Wednesdays. As in that time there were not any communication systems this was the way they used to get the news. They helped the ones who were in need and so on. They had a shared tomb with the name of the group.*

Where did they have their meetings? In the hall?

SH: *I do not know. I mostly remember the space which was nicely cool and the smell of water etc.*

Water is very important for people in Kerman and similar regions, as you mentioned before.

SH: *I still love this. I have several flowers in the yard. I water them in the morning and evening. Also, I sweep the yard then splash water on the wall and ground. This makes a nice and fresh environment.*

M: Water is really valuable in the desert. There is not much rain in this region so making the weather a bit wet makes it pleasant.

It really makes a big change.

M: The house he mentioned was his mother's father's house. I want to talk about my dad's mom's house, who is the grandmother of both of us. It was a rectangular shaped house. Here were rooms. There was not a yard at the back. A large pool in the middle and trees. The living rooms were here. Here were rooms and behind the rooms were small rooms which were storage rooms.

SH: Can you remember before construction there was a corridor from the entrance which had a sink there.

M: No, I just remember the pool.

SH: Here was the pool with a sculpture of a cat made out of stone. It was not deep. They had a terrace and a basement.

M: Here was the living room. Most of the houses did not have curtains. They had large doors and liked to have sunshine in the house. It was very useful for winter. And, as the angle of sunlight was different in summer, it was not annoying. They used to sit under the sunlight. My grandmother used to tell us to sit in front of the sunshine and comb our hair; this is beneficial. The old houses had lots of light. Almost until 10 sunlights would reach almost the middle of the living room so they used to remove or cover the carpets from direct sunlight as it affected their colour. And sometimes it was obvious which part of the carpet was under the sunlight as it had a different colour from the other side. One of my problems in our house is that the living area, where we used to spend most of the time, does not have direct sunlight. Instead, the bedrooms have direct sunlight. I like that time when the doors and windows were wide and could be opened to change the air and also there was lots of sun light. The bedrooms were at the back.

Did the room catch the light from ceilings?

M: Sometimes they did not have any light. Those small rooms at the back were completely dark even during the day if the door was closed.

Were they store rooms?

M: Yes. They kept their clothes there and it was completely private. You had to pass several spaces to reach them.

SH: They used to keep their money there too.

M: My grand mom has one for clothes and another for food.

SH: They put a semi-transparent fabric on the windows which was like curtains. They were attached to the doors and had a strips up in order to close them or open them.

As they did not have curtains like today, what about the possibility of being seen in the rooms?

M: People did not use to change in the rooms; they always used the store room. Also, people had proper clothes in the house. There were always people in the house or the houses had someone as gomahste.

Today curtains are a luxury element in houses. It was not like this in the past.

M: In the past people did not hide things from each other like now.

It was more about religious opinions and privacy rather than hiding things.

The rooms in the basements were all store rooms?

M: It was used for storing food, but as it was cold in the summer people use to sit or have their siesta there as well. I remember in the afternoon people went to the basement for rest.

Where was the kitchen?

M: Here beside the door. It had a stove for bread baking. The kitchen was always far from the other spaces and the smell of food did not come to the other spaces.

What did they do in the winter?

M: It was not cold as there was a fire, and also old houses keep the heat more for a long time.

Did they eat in the kitchen?

M: No, and as they had to walk a lot they were not so fat. Today people should go to the gym. Also, people were healthier: they did not have this many backaches and knee problems. Almost all houses have stairs. One member of our family had his toilet downstairs. It was dark and scary.

SH: Another reason that the toilets were scary was they did not have light. Although it was difficult I have lots of good memories there. After that my dad built a new house and moved to it. But I have bad memories from there.

M: There was a sense of freedom. Kids were playing without special attention. Now the houses and flats are small and people are always in each other's sight and everybody tries to control the others.

SH: Yes, she is right. We would spend the whole day playing outside the building. We did not know what our mother was doing. We would have our meal and leave the building again.

So it was easy for the m to have more children rather than today. Is there any specific house which you have seen and desire to live in a house like that?

M: One of our family had a house which was different to the other houses I have seen. There was a courtyard in the middle with a pool and rooms were located around the courtyard. This was the entrance which was through the kitchen. All rooms were on a higher level than the courtyard and could be reached by 2 or 3 steps. 3 rooms were here which were connected. They had a space called "sleep in spring" - bahar khab. They used to live in this side in the winter and this side in the summer. The house had another entrance which was from another alley far from the street. The family who were closer used to come from the entrance through the kitchen²⁴³. The other entrance had access to the yard from a corridor.

What was the thing you liked at this house?

M: I liked the pool that we used to go around. Also, the rooms were different from other houses, they were not deep and there were not store rooms behind them. They had a good sunlight with wooden doors which had those specific kinds of curtains. This was the house which I mentioned before where the toilet was on a lower level and scary. It also had a basement which was nice and cool in the summer.

SH: In traditional houses people were simple and there was empathy between them. Now this is no longer true, even between siblings.

M: They did not have lots of things in the house. There was sleeping stuff which was in the store room. Maximum they had blankets on the floor and backrests with them. Now there is lots of furniture in a house. Kids cannot move as they may hit one of the pieces of furniture. People need to be careful all the time.

²⁴³ This house had been described by another participant too. He mentioned different aspects.

Than what was this large house for?

M: *It had nice weather and a good atmosphere. Also, kids and parents used to walk a lot. Now we have to go out for walking.*

Also, people had more interaction in the past.

M: *Yes. It was not a big deal serving a guest. I remember in the afternoon people came to my grand mom's house. They might bring Lettuce with them and eat it with others in the courtyard.*

SH: *I remember in my grandfather's house we went there and so did my aunt and uncles. We were all together with intimacy. Maybe that was the main reason for the good memories. We used to eat any cookies that my gram had in the house with tea. She was not worried that she should prepare fruits and different cookies for people who were coming. Everything was simple. The adults used to talk and the kids would play around the courtyard or reception. My house has an area of about 250 square metres. I think 100m² of that is useless. I wonder why they had this large house with lots of empty rooms!*

M: *Children used their energy outside or by running around the house. They did not annoy the parents and vice versa. Children grew up naturally. There were some rules that kids were told such as respect to the grown-ups. And they found their own way of life. People were different: some would have education, some would not. It was up to the person whether to go or not to go to university. People were able to select their job as they wished. Now everybody should go to university, and most of the time that is not their own wish so it makes them nervous.*

I was thinking about you saying that other people could not go to the store rooms behind the rooms. It means they were able to come to the rooms.

M: *Everyone could come up to here. The residents would sit in the rooms with their children. In the summer people would mostly sit in the courtyard and sleep on the roof. Other people were able to come to reception which was public.*

Did you like to sleep on the roof?

M: *Yes. But I never slept there because I had to wake up early in the morning.*

SH: *We never slept on the roof. The roofs were curved.*

M: *They were curved but they had a flat part as well.*

SH: Anyway, we did not sleep there. But when we were young and moved to the other house our neighbour used to sleep on the roof but we just slept there once. We did not have a staircase to the roof. A staircase to the roof is one of the best parts of the house for kids. We used to go to the roof of my grandfather's house.

About your own house, what are the good and bad points?

M: We moved to this house after marriage it mean 25 years.

Did you build it or buy it?

M: We bought it. I remember while I was a student at high school a friend of my dad had a 3 storey house here which was very nice. I asked my dad to buy that house and he said he built this himself and we cannot afford it, it is very expensive. So I asked him to buy the house in front of that. And when my husband showed me this house to buy after marriage I just remembered that I wished to buy this house. Our house in terms of area, compared to new houses, is large. Not so large but it is not a small house and it is larger than normal houses today. It has a lovely yard with trees and flowers. But it is not a modern and fashionable house. There is lots of useless space in it. I think our traditional architecture was more functional. They wisely put the rooms for winter on one side and the rooms for summer on the other side. But after that it became a composition of western architecture and ours. So there are lots of problems. As I mentioned before, our bedroom gets good sunlight but the living area is dark and need to have electric lights even in there during the day. Bedrooms would use less. It is good that they have sunlight but I prefer to have sunlight in the living area. I always think if I wanted to build a house for myself I would make a living area full of sunlight like my grandmother's house. I may change my mind after being in that space and blind the curtain to avoid the light but now I like it.

SH: It is annoying being in sunlight.

M: There is also a small back yard at the back of the building. When the door of back yard and the front doors are open the circulation of air will make the weather nice and cool. Although it is a good house, it was built almost 40 years ago and it is old.

SH: But it has a strong structure.

M: It was good enough for that time. I think according to new regulation about earthquakes it is not good enough now. But it is still strong. There are some problems in it, for example the doors need to be replaced.

SH: *There is a roofed terrace when entering the yard in front of the reception which is lovely. The outside façade was built from small tiles which are still in good shape after all these years. I prefer this material to stone.*

M: *It is easier to clean. Bricks' colour will change after a while.*

SH: *My father built his house after this house and the façade was made of stone but they had broken.*

As you spend a long time in one house, what is your idea about it? Should we stay in one house for a long time or not?

M: *As we have spent 25 years here, it has a sense of belonging. Moving to a different place can be nice too. But we made some changes in this house according to our needs. Trees we planted here, sometimes it think how can I leave these trees!*

SH: *We made an office for the lady. When we think about moving this is a point too.*

So you have thought about moving?

SH: *Several times. But we like this parish and the neighbours. We are afraid if we move we will have bad neighbours.*

M: *It has now been 15 years. Once in while we decide to move and try to find a house but in the end we think we cannot get a better house by selling this, so the only option is building a house for ourselves.*

SH: *Once we decided to rent this one and rent another place for ourselves. We found a 2 storey building where the landlord was on the first floor. The landlord asked how many people are you? How often do you have gests? How much do you use water? Our lady said I do not want it.*

M: *It was weird. There was a large yard on the other side of the house. She said this is ours and you cannot use it. Actually she was the landlord but I could not bear it. I thought we are more comfortable in our own house and we do not have to answer to anybody about our behaviours.*

SH: *Recently most houses are duplex, and my wife does not like it. My daughter likes it.*

M: *It is hard to go upstairs for bedrooms all the time.*

What is the problem of it?

M: *I have a knee problem so it is hard for me to go upstairs. Also, our daughter will leave our house soon so we do not need a large house. A large house for 2 of us just needs lots of cleaning without being used.*

What is your idea about sense of belonging?

SH: *I do not have any. I just want my family be comfortable. If I could find a place where they could be safe and relaxed, I would easily move. Until now we have not found a better parish and neighbours than here.*

M: *We have 10 neighbours in this alley. Everybody knows the others. All houses are one floor. When you live in the other parts of the city you have to live in apartments with different people that could be different.*

It seems for you neighbours are the main point.

M: *Not the only point, it is as important as the house. Both should be good.*

SH: *Someone may say I can go anywhere if the house is good. You see that in the countryside they had built large and luxury houses. We prefer to have a smaller house in a better location with good neighbours. My sister is a doctor. She wants to get a house in a residential complex which belongs to university professors. She mentioned that she wants her kids to communicate with people from the same level in society. I do not like my neighbour's boy to disturb my daughter. Or someone to disturb my wife or crash into my car. Or make noises at night. Here none of our neighbours disturb the others at all. One of our family moved her house near to their daughter's university. They had to do that. We do not have this problem. A friend used to say if you cannot go to America bring America here. We tried to make everything we need here. It is not luxury but we prefer to live simply.*

Can you please tell me, what is the meaning of "home" in your opinion?

M: *Home is a safe and comfortable place.*

SH: *I wanted to say this too. First safety then comforts. You may feel comfortable in a pergola but do not feel comfortable in a luxury tower. Home is where you feel safe and comfortable.*

What do you mean by safety?

M: *It means you can feel free there without being worried about anything. It can be people or animals - anything which may harm you.*

SH: There is a bonded land behind the house and we may have a thief at night. The neighbour is a drug dealer. My niece was afraid of the electronic door as it was the only door of the house. She was afraid of what would happen if the electricity was gone. It was not right because there is a key for this situation but she was scared of this.

Thank you very much for your time.

part 2

These are some pictures of daily life activities. You can add to these if needed. For example, about entering and going out of the home. Please talk about your own desires and ways of living. And talk about things you need to add or remove here. These are about an apartment but as you live in a house please talk about your own house. Please talk about the limitations you have or talk about suggestions.

M: we have a video intercom so we can see who is outside the door.

What is your opinion about this video intercom?

M: it is good to know who is outside. It needs to be easily open by key in case the kid wants to use the key.

Please talk about yourself and your home. These pictures are just reminders.

M: we have to enter the yard before reaching the building. This is good sometimes when you enter the yard and pass the trees and flowers. But on the other side when you directly enter the building it is easier and you don't have to walk through the yard. Entering from the yard has some good points and bad point. As we used to put clothes in the yard to dry, when someone came though the yard he could see them. Which I do not like. I always think that houses with entrances from the yard should have a hidden space for clothes drying.

SH: you can use a drying machine instead.

M: clothes need to get fresh air anyway. Also, we are in a climate with useful sunlight so why should we use a drying machine? I think it can be considered during the design process. There is a back yard in our house but there is no sunlight during winter.

So you need both air and sunlight for the washing.

M: also there is not a garage for the car either.

SH: recently people added a parking space in the basement, but as our house is a bit old it does not have one.

Why do you need a closed parking space? Is it because of the cold weather in the winter?

M: *it is cold in the winter and hot in the summer.*

Can this be solved with a canopy?

M: *we have trees which create shade, but they will make it dirty as well.*

Would you like to have something outside the door, like the benches we had in the past, to put things on while entering the house?

M: *yes. Those benches were nice and useful for sitting and putting things on. Now you have to put stuff on the ground.*

SH: *I saw several houses with a recessed entrance for people and another one for car.*

Do you prefer this one?

SH: *yes, I like this more.*

Could all people come into your yard? Or is there a limitation about the ones who can come in the yard?

M: *a stranger cannot come inside the yard at all.*

For example, the postman comes to your house. There was a space in traditional houses which we do not have any more. Can this be useful today? I think there is still someone who comes to the door and you need to talk to them there.

SH: *it was good in the past that there was a specific space at the entrance and inside the house could not be seen from there. Now when the door is open the entire house is visible. When we moved to this house the boundary walls around the yard were not tall also the door was short. Once in the morning we were sleeping in the yard and I saw someone who was looking inside. Immediately I made the walls taller. I do not like that others can see inside my house. There are several reasons that this is bad.*

M: *there was a curve which keeps control the view. But now once the door is open the entire house is visible and this is really bad. I remember several times I was going out from the bathroom with a towel, and at the same time my husband opened the door in order to park the car. Everybody in the alley could see me. It was really bad. There was a corridor in the past which was really good. Now if someone comes to the door for a quick chat, it is hot in the summer and might be raining in the other seasons. There is not any place to keep him there. Sometimes there is a canopy over the door which is good. Also we have trees at*

the entrance which is useful for the summertime, but it is good to have something there.

As you go in your house you have to enter the yard first and then enter the building so you need two types of entrance. What would you take to the building and what would you not?

M: generally, we take shoes off outside and carry them to the shoe case inside. Although there is a roofed space it is not good to put shoes outside because there is sunlight in there too.

SH: I do not like to take my shoes inside but I have to. I'd rather keep shoes outside as they are dirty. My daughter comes inside the house and this is always a problem.

What if there can be another space with different floors for keeping shoes. Do you know why your daughter does this? It is because it is easier or?

M: I think the corridor is narrow and sometimes there are other shoes so she is more comfortable with coming inside the living area and taking off her shoes.

SH: -he called his daughter- why do you take your shoes off inside?

Daughter: because it is easier. And I was not forced to take my shoes off outside.

SH: I am always telling you do not do this.

Daughter: that's different. I would never do this in my friend's house as I know her mom is very sensitive about this.

Do you think if there was something at the entrance like a bench to sit on and take your shoes off, you would not do it anymore?

Daughter: no, it does not matter. I do not think today anyone would bend to take shoes off. Everybody use their foot to take off the other foot's shoe. I like to take my shoes off inside the house.

Do you keep all shoes there? What about bags?

M: there are several pairs of shoes which are more formal which we keep in the wardrobe. But it is always a problem as there are many shoes. There is a shoes case at the entrance. We used to change shoes in different seasons, but there is still lack of space.

What is your idea about it?

M: *I do not know. Maybe a large shoe case at the entrance to keep all shoes there. But it is not good to have a large shoes case at the entrance.*

Do you want to keep some shoes near the dresses to match with them, or you can put them all at the entrance to just wear and go?

M: *it is good. I prefer to keep all shoes together. As the wardrobe is in the bedroom, and shoes are not clean I prefer to not keep them beside clothes. It is possible to have a space behind the bedroom as a wardrobe, but not for shoes.*

SH: *I like to take my shoes off even if they are clean. I used to take my shoes off when going to other houses.*

M: *as those shoes which are for parties are not worn in every place they are not as dirty as the daily shoes.*

What else do you think you need in the first space you enter the house? Also talk about being open or closed too.

M: *I'd rather have a mirror there, and a hanger for clothes. I prefer it to be closed. As you have to take your coat and scarf off, it is good to look at the mirror and then enter the house or the party.*

SH: *why do you want to see yourself at your own home?*

M: *It is for the guests.*

SH: *I like to have a luxury mirror and table there, but I do not like it to be closed.*

M: *this is good for the guests and you should think about the guests during design.*

What about you?

SH: *I prefer it to be open.*

M: *I'd rather a space with a door to take off shoes.*

SH: *it is not possible. Now in every house you will enter the living area and reception when opening the door. I think people will laugh as it is old fashioned.*

M: *my friend's house is like this. There is a separate and closed space at the entrance. In that space it was possible to hang the clothes and there was also a mirror. I remember once I went there and we had a quick chat while the inner door was closed. During changing clothes, it was completely separated from the living area and reception. I am always confused when entering a house and there*

are other guests sitting there, if I should first say hi to them or first take off my coat and scarf! Sometimes you have to go to the bedroom to change. And I like my friend's house which has a specific space for that before coming into the home. This is a problem for ladies in our society.

SH: my cousin, who lived in my childhood house, added 2 short walls to the living area. One at the entrance and the other one in front of the bedrooms in order to control the part that can be seen.

Did you like the new changes?

SH: we used to live there for several years and there was not any problem.

Where do you usually do other things like shoe polishing? Do you have any suggestions?

M: we used to do these at the entrance beside the shoe case.

Do you think this space's floor should have a different material?

M: I would like it to be completely washable. When it is beside the yard and you are washing the yard you can wash this too.

SH: It would be better to build a bench outside for this purpose.

Do you want to add anything else?

SH: people have different desires. Some are old fashioned. My mother-in-law wants to add a door into the corridor. It is always cold in the winter and she has to have a thick curtain behind the door. But it is funny these days to close this part, and spaces should be all open.

It is important in energy saving too. I saw in England that they had a door for corridors which was interesting.

M: really?

SH: it would be old fashioned and funny here.

M: I believe it must be a separate space and its door can be closed during changing. Also it helps with energy saving. My father-in-law's house does this.

SH: it is an old house! In new architecture this is not common.

M: this should not happen.

It has changed, but we need to consider if that was right or not! There were things which have been changed wrongly and caused problems. For example, it was common to have a store room in every house. This was removed in a period and caused problems because people still have things which need to be kept in a store room.

SH: *my mother-in-law's house has this store room.*

Is it useful or it is not necessary anymore? Where should things like bedding or suitcases be kept?

M: *now in new architecture²⁴⁴, a new space is added which is a small room for clothes. It is similar to traditional store rooms at the back of the house where boxes which contained clothes were kept. And people used to change there.*

As you mentioned it is now modern. But in one period it was removed completely.

SH: *sorry for interrupting, but in a period people opened their kitchens according to fashion. After a while they added a small hidden kitchen at the back of this luxury one for making the mess there. It is not good to have the food's smell in the whole house.*

M: *it is annoying having two kitchens, having one fridge in each part! It needs double the cleaning work.*

Are you disagreeing with this?

M: *yes. I believe home should be a comfortable space; it is not something for posture. You can do it with other things. We saw a house that first had 3 steps up then 4 steps down! I do not like it. I want to be comfortable at home. Why should you go 10 steps up to reach the bedrooms? If there were a lack of space it would be acceptable, but we have lots of land and this is not the case. Also, why should we open the kitchen? What are we going to show to people?*

Do you think that the only reason for an open kitchen is showing it to others? I think for those families who have kids it is good to have an open kitchen, as they can watch their kids while they are in the kitchen. Also, it makes it possible to be in touch with the people in the living area while

²⁴⁴ It was interesting for me that this couple had an idea about the new built houses in Iran as new architecture.

you are in the kitchen. But about having it all open or just a part of it is another point. It is confusing.

M: when you have a close guest he can come and sit in the kitchen with you. Also, I used to put a carpet in a corner of the kitchen for my kids to play in my sight, while I was cooking. You do not need to have an open kitchen; unless you want to see the entire house. It is just for 2 or 3 years that a kid needs to be watched. You cannot change all spaces according to that specific time. You can have a nice and modern kitchen and if your friend is close enough that you leave him for cooking he can come and sit in the kitchen.

Except for the food smell what are the other reasons for not having an open kitchen? Is it annoying for you that the other can watch you during cooking?

M: yes, I do not like to be watched when I am in the kitchen and tasting food or washing dishes etc. There are things you do not want guests to see.

I believe in the past the privacy was more religious, but now it is more hiding things from others. People prefer that others do not know what they are doing. Was it like this in the past too?

M: it was more so in the past.

SH: but people were not as nosy as they are now.

Anyway, these cultural points are really important.

SH: now people are curious about what is in your house and what you are doing. People used to stay a step back from the entrance and did not look inside the house when they were talking to someone in front of his house. But now they want to see everything.

Was it like this in the past?

M: it was in the past too, but people used to have interaction with people who were in the same range of society. The interactions between people were different. The financial part of life was not as important as it is now. Rich people did not want to be separated from the other people. Also, the ones who were wealthy did not aim to disturb the others with their wealth. But now people want to show how wealthy they are. My mom talked about a very wealthy family and she mentioned when we were going to their house, we did not think that they were different from us or that they had something which we did not have. Now people will keep the expensive things to show to the others but in the past if

they had something the others did not, they kept it for themselves in order not to make the others disappointed. But I think the culture has changed; now money is a very important part of life.

As we talked about the kitchen would you please talk about the cooking process? Any item which you need specifically.

M: it is really important for me to have the sink and stove beside each other.

Why?

M: during cooking you need to use it. Now my stove is far from the sink. I prefer to have room on both sides of the stove so that I have space to put things beside. The most important part is the floor. It should be suitable, not slippery as it is always getting wet. Also with a colour which does not need wiping all the time to keep it clean. Our kitchen floor is covered with white tiles. And I have to clean it a lot. So I covered a part of that with a carpet. It keeps the floor warm in the winter and also it is easier to clean. The cupboards should be designed according to people's height. It is annoying that they are too tall.

Do you keep all dishes and food in the kitchen?

M: I keep all things in the kitchen but they are classified, -dishes, food, pots, spoons etc. The store room is far from the kitchen.

Would you like to have a store room beside the kitchen?

M: yes. Usually we put things like sleeping things and pickles which need to kept for several years. But if it was beside the kitchen I could put other things there too.

Do you usually buy things for the whole year?

M: no, generally 1 or 2 months. I did not get a big fridge because I do not want to freeze things for a long time. There are some things which are seasonal; I just keep them for the rest of the year.

You are not going to buy lots of vegetables, for example, and prepare them with others' cooperation, like in the past.

M: no. I will buy some and there is someone who will come and help me to prepare them. Also, I prefer to buy them ready to use from the stores. If I trust the store I'd rather buy them ready to use.

Sir, do you have any suggestions?

SH: *I do not have things to add for the kitchen.*

Do you cook?

SH: *yes. But I do not have any problems with all these things that she mentioned. I think it is ok as it is now.*

Recently things have fixed spaces in the kitchen. What is your idea about it? In the past there was a space between upper and lower cupboards which now is sometimes covered with the rest of cupboards. For example, people used to keep the microwave above the cupboard but now it has a fixed space in the cupboard.

M: *I like to have things like microwaves fixed in the cupboard. I have to put mine above the cupboard which I do not like. I think having a part of cupboards like this is good, but there must be some spaces over the cupboards to put things on during cooking. It is not nice to have all the cupboards as a wall.*

SH: *keeping pots is always a problem. Also, there are some pots which cannot fit in the cupboards.*

Can you remember how people kept them in the past?

SH: *there were some alcoves in the wall where pots were kept in the lower part. But I cannot remember exactly how they kept these. Anyway, it is always a problem keeping and using the pots without making a mess. For a while my wife put them on top of the cupboards but it was not easy for her to take them down.*

Any other things with the same problem?

SH: *pressure cook or rice cooker. Our china is in the reception, but if we wanted to keep them here it would make it more complicated.*

Do you keep the dishes for guests separately?

M: *yes. The dishes for guests are in a cupboard in the reception.*

SH: *dishes, glasses, spoon and forks... everything for the guests is in the cupboard in the reception.*

Isn't it hard?

SH: *I think it is.*

M: *no, as the dining area is beside the kitchen it is easy.*

Is it good now?

M: *yes. But after a while the dishes will get more and lack of space will be a problem.*

Where would you keep them if you had enough space in both the kitchen and dining area?

M: *I'd rather keep them in the kitchen.*

SH: *it is easier to keep them in the dining area as they are beside the table.*

M: *but dishes should be cleaned before being used for guests. These dishes will not be used daily; they may be used 3 times in a year. So they need to be cleaned before use.*

SH: *a good point in open kitchen is, it is easy to move dishes between the kitchen and dining area.*

You said you prefer if no one can see you while cooking. What about serving time?

M: *this too.*

These pictures show different ways of eating food. Which one do you prefer? What is your idea about them?

SH: *it is hard to sit on the floor for eating now.*

M: *eating on the floor has some good points such as, it is easier to serve more people and you do not need to have lots of chairs. In the past people used to sit on the floor but now it is old fashioned and most people have sofas in their house. So people are used to sitting on the sofa and chairs and it is hard for them to sit on the floor. In the past people did not know how many guests they would have for a meal. They knew approximately about the numbers of people. It was not really predictable and it was common to have more people with you. So people used to cook for more people than they had invited. But today people will be prepared for an exact number of people. Also people cannot sit on the floor any more.*

SH: *but during religious times, people still sit on the floor. In Moharam and Ramadan, especially where there are lots of people, they will sit on the floor and eat.*

Which one do you prefer?

M: *we sit at the table.*

SH: *It is hard for me sitting on the floor, but I prefer that type. That one is friendlier.*

M: *it reminds you of the past.*

What about washing dishes, do you prefer dishwashers or washing by hand?

M: *it is better to wash by hand. But as I am allergic I have to wear gloves which are annoying. But when there are guests a dishwasher is very helpful.*

Would you like to have a specific thing to see or listen to while washing dishes?

M: *yes, it is very good to see a good view. My aunt's kitchen has a window to the sea, which is amazing. A friend of mine has a green space in front of the kitchen. She keeps birds there as well. It was nice to see that too.*

What about music or TV in the kitchen?

M: *we had a TV in the kitchen in the past. Now we have a radio.*

SH: *it is good to have light music.*

Why do you not have a TV in the kitchen anymore?

M: *it was an old TV. Now these LCD TVs need to have a specific space. I haven't seen TVs in the kitchen in new designs!*

It is kind of personal. Some people like to do their work with TV.

M: *I prefer to watch TV while I am working. As I am alone at home, I used to turn the TV on in the living area. If I had a TV in the kitchen I would watch it. The morning programmes are usually about families or cooking which are good to watch in the kitchen. Sometimes I bring those works which are possible to the living area and in front of the TV.*

About washing clothes and where should the washing machine be?

M: *our washing machine is now in the kitchen but in new architecture where there is a laundry, the dirty clothes and washing machine are in the same place. We have a basket in the bathroom for dirty clothes. They are carried to the kitchen to be washed and then to the yard to dry. It would be good to have a laundry near the bathroom. I think it is better not to be in the kitchen. Its sound is annoying if you want to do something at the same time in the kitchen. Usually*

when I turn the machine on I will go to other spaces until it has finished. Or I do it late at night.

Do you still wash clothes by hand?

M: yes. There are some special clothes which cannot be washed by machine.

Do you have anything in the bathroom for washing clothes?

M: no, but I always think it is good to have a space to wash clothes. I do not like to wash them in the washstand. Sometimes I wash them in the kitchen which is not good either. There can be something in the laundry for this.

Will you keep dirty clothes in the laundry?

M: it should be kept in the laundry. But we used to take them off in the bathroom. My mom used to put the clothes in the bathroom and me and my sister as well. In the past bathroom had a separate part for clothes.

When will you iron them or put them in their place?

M: I went to a house which has a small room for ironing - that was good. I prefer to iron them then hang them but sometimes there is no time for this and I will hang them. I think it is good to have a small space for the ironing board which cannot be seen by others and which is a fixed space.

Would you like to have it in that small room which you mentioned for clothes?

M: it is ok. But usually there are clothes around the rooms and a mirror. So I think there is not enough space for it. If it can be there in a fixed space that is good.

SH: as I remember, people keep this table in different spaces such as a store room, bedroom, or study room.

M: I have seen on TV there is a table in the wall which can be set up for ironing and packed again. That is good.

SH: I think this is again like the kitchen, it depends on how much time you need for it? If you need much time you have to put it in a space with a nice view and make it less boring.

M: it is not like the past when people used to iron everything. People use dry cleaners and also the fabrics have changed now and most clothes do not need

to be ironed. One of our family said that there are things from heaven and one of them is an iron.

SH: people used to iron all sheets. But no one would do it now.

M: they believed when they iron the sheets it helps them to keep clean longer. People used to go to the bathroom once in a week in the past. So they would iron once a week. Today people go to the bathroom every day. It is hard to iron clothes every day.

Do you usually use a vacuum cleaner for sweeping?

M: Also I want to mention that in the past as the lady did not work outside they had to show their abilities by these things. It was very bad for a lady not to iron the sheets for example. But there are lots of other things for a lady to do.

SH: so they do outside work and have a housekeeper to do this work. I always prefer to have a comfortable house rather than a luxury house. Recently lots of houses' floors have been covered with tiles, which is nice. But they need to be cleaned with a vacuum cleaner and then wiped. Also if it is slippery I think it is useless. People used to have functional materials rather than luxurious. It is easier to clean a floor covered with a rug, but again recently some hygiene problems appeared. It is possible to wash the carpets but for rugs we usually use the vacuum cleaner.

SH: I rarely sweep. But I used to sweep with a dump handy sweep²⁴⁵ after using vacuum cleaner on the carpet. It makes it cleaner.

There are some machines for that too.

M: no. I think that is not good enough. It needs to be washed with water. Also they just clean the surfaces not the whole thing. Also they may be dumped for a while which helps bacteria to grow there. So I think that is not a good way.

What is your idea about washing?

SH: I also think it is good to be washed with water.

M: this is something in our culture.

SH: also religion.

²⁴⁵ dump handy sweep:

Where do you keep washing stuff? Each space has its own stuff?

M: *this is always a problem, where to keep these things.*

What is your idea about houses without carpets?

M: *People from Kerman should have them. My granddad that was in Canada had a large Persian carpet there.*

SH: *it is a kind of prestigious in Kerman having handmade carpets.*

M: *but youth prefer the new fancy carpets.*

SH: *in new culture people would not spend a huge amount of money on handmade carpets. They will get the new and factory ones.*

Which one do you prefer: sleeping on the bed or on the floor?

M: *people used to do everything on the floor and now they have all changed. People eat at the table and sit on the sofa.*

SH: *I prefer to sleep on the floor rather than the bed. But it is hard to set up and pack every day.*

That is a problem. What about setting it up and not packing it and leaving it?

SH: *in our culture it is bad.*

M: *I do yoga classes. They say you have to be connected to the earth. I sometimes sleep on the floor for an afternoon nap. Sometimes when I am very tired I think laying down on the floor will help me more. But with these knee and backache problems it is hard to get up from the floor. I went to Canada 16 years ago. I remember I was bored of sitting on the sofa and I said I want to sit on the floor sometimes. I think we maybe do not notice but there are times in a day when we sit on the floor or do something. This is still in our culture to be connected to the ground.*

SH: *there are many good points about sleeping on the floor. I remember my dad used to sleep beside different trees in different seasons. The corridor beside the living room is a very cool place in the summer and great for sleep. But it is hard to bring stuff every day. It gives you the opportunity to change your place when you want.*

M: *it is good that you can change your sleeping place. One side in the winter and another side in the summer. But in bedrooms it is a fixed space.*

SH: it is really nice sleeping under moonlight.

Would you please talk about sleeping space and its needs? Do you want to listen to music? Watch TV?

M: I like to listen to something but the problem is it will be in my mind during sleep and I feel I did not have a proper sleep. Also I am always worried about turning that off. Maybe if it had a timer it would be useful.

SH: my problem is; I can sleep with its sound but this sound will wake me up again. When I want to sleep I ask my daughter to play the piano for 5 minutes and I will be asleep.

Would you watch movies? What about darkness?

SH: I do not. But my wife used to turn a lamp on for reading before sleep.

Then you will turn it off?

M: it would be good if it could turn off automatically.

SH: I just want to sleep when I am in bed.

M: he can fall asleep easily. I read and when I want to sleep it wakes me up again turning the lamp off.

Do you want to sleep in darkness?

M: yes. I have a fabric which I used to put on my face.

SH: I do not like to close my bedroom door.

M: me too. I do not like to close any door. All the doors in our house should be open.

What about brushing your teeth and drying your hair, where do you usually do these?

M: in the washroom. I usually dry my hair in the bedroom.

SH: in the washroom.

Would you like to have a separate space for changing and makeup and things like this except the bedroom?

M: this can be in that room which is for clothes. Also, if the bedroom has a bathroom of its own it can be there too.

What would you put on display and what would you not?

M: *I like to keep things in the cupboard. Just some nice perfumes will be on display. This is one of my jobs once in a while, to clean and organize them.*

SH: *it is now common to have a sleeping set in the bedroom, which is a bed and a table and a mirror. I remember that my mom would never do make up in the bed room.*

M: *in that time this table and mirror was not common yet.*

SH: *my mom has one like your mom, but I cannot remember whether she ever did that in the bedroom.*

M: *people used to brush their hair outside in the yard.*

Why?

M: *because it keeps inside clean from extra hair and also they believe it is better for hair to have air and sunlight.*

SH: *I remember this too. Also, in the past they did not use to do make up in front of men. I have never seen my mom do it. I thought that these make up things are very personal lady things and men should not see them.*

M: *they did not even do that in front of their husband! It was very bad to do make up in front of men.*

About storage things.

SH: *in the past there was a cool place or basement where people used to keep food. They would keep things for a year.*

M: *My mom used to keep rice for more than a year, as it is better than fresh rice.*

Do you think we need this anymore?

M: *no, it is not necessary. People keep things for 1 or 2 months' maximum. But instead a room for clothes has been added. People did not use to have lots of clothes like now; they had 2 sets for summer and 2 sets for winter. Now it is not common to wear one outfit several times at parties. You paid a lot for that so you cannot throw it out and you have to buy new ones. It is a problem in all houses that the wardrobe is full and people need more space. It always takes time to organize them and after a short time you need to do that again.*

Yes, it seems the wardrobe cannot cover it anymore and they need to have a room. Also, there is the same problem with shoes and bags.

M: *yes, bags and shoes. Also, in the kitchen there are lots of pots and dishes etc.*

They are a lot more than the usual needs.

M: *people used to share their dishes for their parties. There were few people who had lots of dishes. But now people will rarely borrow things from others. Everybody has lots of spoons and forks. A similar situation for clothes is about dishes too. I bought this set last year, so I have to get a new set for this year. These all need more space, more cupboards and more cleaning.*

SH: *people used to have one set of sofas. Then it became 2 and now people who have space will add them to 3 sets.*

M: *these all need more cleaning.*

We talked about the old store room where we used to keep sleeping things and suitcases. Do we need it anymore?

M: *we still have it. We have a large store room for all these.*

SH: *it was a bedroom that we changed into a store room.*

M: *but now I have seen in new architecture that they will put a cupboard for sleeping things. Or there is a store room in the basement.*

SH: *it is a problem, especially in apartments now. People should throw things out or not have them at all. We sent our sofa to be washed and the house was empty, I had a very positive feeling when the house was without lots of furniture.*

I have a British friend who is married to an Iranian guy. She said that it is always a question for her mother-in-law why you do not have lots of furniture! And it was a question for her why do we need this much!

SH: *for a while the big sofas were called old fashioned but now they are being used again. They occupy lots of space.*

I am sorry if I made you tired.

SH: *no, it is nice to remember the old memories.*

Please have a look at these pictures which are some activities and talk about any of them which you want. For example, as you see in the picture this woman has a specific space for praying. One of my family had a small

store room in the basement which she changed to a place for praying. She had books and other things she may need and she could be alone there. Is this common?

M: some people are very strict about it. They have a specific space to pray. There are some limitations about the places where you can pray. There should not be a picture in front of you or a mirror. Also, there are special things about being clean. My mom used to have her carpet which is especially for prayer in a specific space. And she would not move it. There is a place in the study room where I used to pray. I never did it in any other space.

Is it your own bedroom?

M: no, it is an extra room which is multi-functional. My painting stuff is here.

SH: there is a bookcase and also a sewing machine. There is a spare bedroom for guests. I have a desk there too. I used to pray on the desk as I have backache.

What about watching TV?

M: sometimes I do knitting in front of the TV. Or sometimes I sketch with pen but I always paint in the other room when I use colours.

Do you like to have a specific space for painting?

M: I like to do my work beside the family. I have a studio in the yard but I prefer to be with family. My daughter is the same. She used to study beside the others. I do not like to go in a separate room and close the door.

Is this why you do not close the doors, to connect every space together?

M: yes. We do not have a completely private space. I do not have a special cupboard which would be locked. One of my friends says that their bedroom door is always closed. My kids will never come into our bedroom. If needed they will knock and then come in. But our bed room door is always open and my daughter will come in without knocking. It is strange if she sees the door is closed and she will ask what the problem is. She also likes to be with family. And she does not close her door either.

What about having monthly gatherings at home?

M: there are several friends who we used to see every month.

Will you change anything when they are coming?

M: we used to say guests are a blessing for the house. When you want to add or change something you may postpone it, but you will do that when you have guests. You would learn a new meal or desert. Make things more organized. And these are all good points.

I notice in our gatherings no matter how close we are, especially when we are more than 5, people will be separated into men and women. What about you?

M: it is the same. One of my friends always says you made it men and women separated again! Women will talk differently.

What is your idea? Do you think that a special space is needed?

SH: there is a special space for smoking in some houses. Do you mean this?

Not really. I thought you may have a special entertainment plan.

M: no, just sometimes having music and dance. There is more chatting, as it is not a long time, and at first people will have tea and cookies then dinner and desert. This is more eating, and talking.

SH: we use to have gatherings with cliques. And we could talk for a long time. But now mostly they are my wife's friends with their family. And there are not lots of common things to share.

M: I remember that as my dad was a colonel we used to have interaction with colonels. I mean men would decide who we were going to interact with. But I think now this is more dependent on women.

SH: it is easier and you do not have to explain anything when you have your wife's friend at home.

Thanks for your time.

M: it was nice as we talked about some things we never talked about before together.

part3

Another 2 participants whom I talked to before you did not like traditional houses as they have never lived in them. They did not have a good feeling about traditional houses. As you lived in those houses you may have different ideas. These images show traditional and contemporary urban planning in 2 cities. As you lived in these parishes would you please talk about these from your point of view?

M: the new one seems more geometric. But the old one is like music which has ups and downs. There is not a specific geometry but there is rhythm there. Access in the new one is easier. And probably the old one had difficulties which caused these changes. But from this picture I prefer the traditional one.

It has more variety.

M: each alley or street had its own form in the traditional one but they are all similar in the contemporary one. Not only in this map, but also in other cities and countries too. But this special urban planning makes us different from other places.

Have a look at the forms of the building in site in the past and now.

M: although it is common to think people are now wiser than in the past, I believe that they were wiser then. They had functional architecture in the past and they did not just make some ridiculous forms without any reason. They used to live in different sides of the house in different seasons. But today, because of the population, houses are becoming smaller and smaller. People used to live together and share places. The extended family lived together. Kids could play in the courtyard all together. They had a shared reception. They used to have their houses according to their needs. People like to live alone rather than living with parents or in-laws. So they will have more problems there. The elderly used to live with the whole extended family and there was cooperation between them. And they could take care of them. If someone had a kid the others helped him.

You mentioned that you can see this type of urban planning all over the world. There are some countries without ancient civilisations, so they started almost new countries. We have 8000 years of civilisation, but suddenly in the 20th century they were all ignored and a new way started. What is your idea? Do you think there must be a connection to the past or do you think that is over and we have to start a modern style?

M: I believe we have to be modern; we cannot live like 100 years ago. Although I believe in traditional architecture, we should change our architecture according to our needs. Not just because they are building this in the west we have to do that. We have to improve our architecture according to our climate and culture. Now it is more a copy of western architecture.

It is common in all civilisations to make changes and improve the previous technology and so on. But they were upgrading the previous one not ignoring it.

M: for example wind catchers in the centre and south of Iran were a symbol in their architecture. You would never see this in the north, or materials which were used. People in the north did not use clay for their ceilings because of rain, and it was common in the desert as it was good for this climate. But now you can see everything everywhere. It does not matter whether it can survive in this climate or not.

You mentioned an interesting point about the materials and how they might be related to a region. It can be as an identity. Do you think this could still be useful, or is it over now?

M: almost all people wear jeans today even though it might be annoying in the summer in hot areas. Building materials have the same situation. Clay is not just an identity for desert regions; it is also a very good material for this climate. In traditional houses which were built with clay once you made them wet it changed the environment. But now in these brick houses you have to wash the bricks several times in order to make them cool and then they can make the weather pleasant. These are all small points which make the quality of life. All these small things make you feel pleasant.

These are several images from different traditional houses. You have seen them before surely. There is just one point that all these houses that remain now are large houses, as they did not make houses to remain for different centuries like mosques for example. So there are just some special houses which remain from the past.

M: but in the past they used to live in a house for different generations. Not like now when after 30 years they say this must be demolished as it is old.

This is one of the aspects in Iranian traditional architecture. This has changed in the 20th century.

M: *there is something which I really like, the benches we used to have at the entrance. Having these in the street or alley would help the elders and others to have a rest. But we do not have them anymore.*

It helps to keep the city more alive.

M: *I really like them, especially the ones with an arc in front of them which is a shade. A main problem in the summer in this region is the hot sunshine. Someone is at the door and you need to talk there. These small points would annoy people. They were considering the small points which could help improve their quality of life. People are very nervous these days because there are lots of small things which make them nervous. For example, imagine you want to go out: there is some rubbish in the staircase, a lot of car horns, and different things like that will disturb people in a day. We have the same things in architecture as well, the rooms that you live in. We wanted to get a new house. All the houses we went to see had different levels. If you want to change your clothes you have to go upstairs. This is harmful for the body. You should be comfortable in your home; why should you have your bedrooms upstairs? You can take your guests upstairs as this is one time. You have to keep the best part of the house for yourself. It should be bedrooms or kitchens, not for the guest that will come to your house sometimes, which is most of the time at night. People in the past were more careful about these things.*

Some houses had a bedroom upstairs for the guests who come to sleep over.

AB: *some of these options are forced. For example, you have to build duplex houses because the site is small.*

M: *I mean we can put the private part downstairs and the public part upstairs.*

AB: *what is the difference? You can live upstairs?*

M: *you have to go up and come down.*

AB: *do not do it.*

M: *you want to come home and go out.*

Ab: *I was thinking about apartments; you are right in a house that is true.*

Although that might be because of the site's area, but in most cases it is the fashion which is important.

AB: *when you want to build a large house you have to build it on different levels.*

M: *that is right, but we saw a house yesterday with 5 bedrooms and 5 washrooms. I asked him who has 5 kids these days. He said one is for the valet. It was strange having a luxury room for a valet in the private part of the house. And it was on 3 levels. I think this was useless. It was more than 400m².*

AB: *sometimes it is fashion but as a small part. I think as it costs lot of money people care more about their needs than the fashion in housing. The most important aspect is comfort.*

How many people are going to live in a 400m² house?

AB: *they have guests, which is a part of their needs.*

M: *how many times in a year will people have lots of guests?*

AB: *it is different for different families. They like to have a large house. That is, it.*

M: *that is right. It is about the ideology, where you do not think about your own comfort but you think about a party once a year.*

AB: *people care about guests a lot.*

M: *which is related to fashion.*

AB: *it is now common to build a luxury guest's bedroom. Maybe once a year someone would sleep there.*

SH: *I think this is for being high class.*

M: *I think this is because of fashion. -It is about the large house. – I saw a house where the owner changed the room which had the best sunlight to a garage. I asked him why? He said I do not like to go to the basement. He could build a garage in a corner of the yard instead of making the best room a garage.*

SH: *in this house just the living area and reception were located on the ground floor and the rest of the house was on the first floor.*

M: *it also has an elevator for the first floor.*

SH: *my sister has 3 kids so she wanted to get a house with at least 4 bedrooms.*

AB: *it is logical; also it depends on how old they are.*

M: *kids will grow up, and you have to think about 10 or 15 years not 2 years.*

SH: my dad is living in a 500m² house. There are several vacant rooms. I think an apartment will be more useful for them. They just use the living area, one bedroom for each of them and one for the valet. The house which we saw recently had luxury bedrooms but they did not have sunlight. My wife says that in new architecture bedrooms do not need sunlight because they are just used for sleep. Having bedrooms at the back will keep them dark and better for sleep.

AB: no, it is not a regulation. It depends on the site and the priority of spaces. They may have sunlight or not.

M: we talked about it yesterday; I said it is good to have a dark space for sleep. But I see my daughter open the windows to the yard in the summer and use the sunlight in winter. If it was not like this, we would always keep cooler. Dark rooms will make you depressed.

AB: you mentioned some aspects about the new architecture, which are not really as you said. There are other options which will help to decide about the location of spaces. The bedrooms are the second priority compared to the living area and reception.

M: how much do we use the reception?

AB: I mentioned the living area and reception together. If we imagine them separately the living area is the most important one. First priority in terms of light should be for the living area then bedrooms then reception.

M: but it is the opposite now.

AB: no it is not.

M: now in new architecture the best part is for the reception.

AB: if the living area and reception were connected this would happen.

M: but there is another private part in the houses.

AB: no there is not.

M: TV room or private living area.

AB: I believe in Kerman maybe 10% to 15% of clients want this.

M: but almost all new houses have a TV room or private living room or cosy room - something like this. Also, they put some cupboards and kitchen stuff there too.

Does this cosy space have a nice view?

M: *no.*

So what is this for?

M: *also it was funny that the car should pass the yard to reach a roofed space which was designed as a garage. The car would make the entire yard dirty when passing it.*

I think you mention a good point; we are not clear about the living area and bedrooms. Everybody should have his own bedroom. Although he is doing all his work there we keep saying that is just a place for sleep and there is nothing else to do there. People used to say we do everything in the living area but that is not true.

M: *I believe sleeping itself is very important.*

AB: *they do not spend a lot of time in the bedroom as they are outside of the house most of the time.*

What range of ages are you talking about?

AB: *every age.*

Actually it is not like this that all people will be outside most of the time. If it is so when they come home at night the living area or bedrooms are similar in terms of the view and light at night, so there is no priority.

AB: *the difference is, when the space is located on the good side it can absorb the energy during the day for the night.*

SH: *for several years' people changed their kitchen to an open one like western types. But now they are adding a small hidden room at the back of that kitchen which is the main part and the open one is just a show place.*

AB: *It is just a part which occupies the space.*

M: *also it is a useless space which needs cleaning.*

AB: *maybe as this open part of the kitchen became a decorative part in the house it is now one of the fixed parts in houses. The luxury cupboard and decorations with a special arc at the front. Now people are decorating the rest of the house too, such as ceilings and fire places etc. It is now an element in interior design and could not be removed, but as it was not functionally good, a separate room was added to that to make all themes there.*

Why did we not remove it?

AB: maybe because people wanted that showing space, and it needs a proper replacement.

M: *this is exactly what I mean. The architect should have created a space as a showing space so that it was not necessary to make the kitchen a showing space, something which was easier to take care of, such as a fire place.*

SH: *In the past the kitchen was outside and a distance from all other spaces. After a while the kitchen was moved into the home and beside other spaces. Also the washroom was outside and it has been moved inside. For a while people used to have a large reception with lots of furniture which was used rarely. It was a large space and it was always cold. In new architecture something changed and the reception and living area connected which is very good. And the kitchen is in a better location than the past. But it needs more improvement.*

AB: I believe although fashion and showing is important more than that people need to cause changes.

SH: *that is right. It was a necessity, but we used it wrongly or changed it to a showing space, and this is our fault. In my mother-in-law's house the reception was a separate large room which they connected to the living area and it is more convenient now.*

M: *I think may be the reason that you feel more comfortable in traditional houses than the new luxurious ones is the relation between spaces.*

SH: *I saw a house which had damp in some parts, so it is hard to trust these buildings! Is it really necessary to have a swimming pool in a house?*

How we are going to answer the needs is very important.

M: *a very important aspect in traditional houses was colour. They would never colour a wall brown or black. They were always light coloured, with coloured glass windows. They believed that light colours make the spaces feel bigger. But in new architecture they use darker colours. I think that is terrible. The last house we saw had a puzzled wall which could be removed and be washed. But it was horrible with dark colours so what is the point here!*

SH: *20 years ago someone designed our office, and he explained the benefits. But we just use half of that and the rest changed to store rooms as they are not good enough to be a waiting room.*

AB: time will change the needs.

M: *it is right. In the past they used to think about spaces for a long time and then they decided what would be the best result. Now we make models and draw 3d images, but after 10 years we understand the problems, when there are lots of other houses like that. And unfortunately we do not want to accept that was wrong.*

SH: *20 years ago when that architect designed the office I believed that he was the expert and I had to listen to him. But now I will say to the designer that I want this and ask him to consider my desires.*

AB: *that was the main problem in the past. In order to have a good result there must be cooperation between the client and the designer.*

SH: *sometimes when my wife wants to make changes in our house, I would say this is an old house by changing the floor and having the old form it will be ridiculous. You said this too, and I said no, but I would definitely have listened to you if 20 years ago you told me that. It is now common to have an aquarium in the house or spaces for flowers. I do not like it.*

M: *there was an aquarium in the house I talked about before; it was a vertical aquarium which separated 2 different spaces. That is funny because fish will not swim vertically regularly. There was a flower bed without sunlight! And he mentioned they will use special lamps instead of sunlight.*

We used to have a small pool in traditional houses. Do you think this aquarium can replace that?

M: *it is hard to manage.*

SH: *cleaning that is a huge problem.*

M: *they used to have water in the basement or pool room and it was used in the courtyard. I was in a garden once where they had built a small pool at the entrance and also several alcoves that had water. Kids were going into the water and their mom kept telling them not to do that. That was something useless. We cannot do something just because it is nice. It makes a problem having water in a space where people are sitting.*

SH: *I always saw saunas and swimming pools outside or in the basement. Someone made one on the second floor. It is hard to trust that building I believe.*

AB: *these are fears you have when you want to choose a house. It can be about every part of the house, structure ...*

Actually it is interesting for me. I wanted to know your ideas about having green spaces and water like in the past in the house.

M: *I like to have a small pool in the yard, that will not cause problems, but having that inside the house could cause problems.*

SH: *people used to have green spaces in houses in the past, but it has been removed because it made problems such as damp and insects. I agree that it is needed and people in the past were aware of it too, but we have to be careful about the consequences.*

People used to have a courtyard with a small pool and garden in it. After that people wanted to have it again.

SH: *this happened for the kitchen as well but in some cases they had problems.*

Have a look at these pictures. You can see greenery and water in these. These are new houses which try to have traditional symbols.

M: *we liked to have water in the house, so we made a large aquarium. We were always worried about what we should do when we wanted to go for a trip. If that was in the yard it could easily be taken care of without asking someone to come inside the home. It was possible to ask someone to come to the yard and look at that. Finally, we decided to remove it.*

Why do you want to have water in the house?

M: *it is nice to watch water and fish. A friend of mine had a large aquarium. Suddenly because of a small hole all its water got out and the fishes died and also the living area was full of water. But it is good to have water. It makes spaces calmer.*

It is important for me to know if the aquarium will bring that calm to the house which you feel when there is a small pool.

M: *no it is not.*

AB: *there were some decorative things in traditional houses like coloured glasses which were nice and peaceful. I think aquariums and open kitchens are from that category.*

M: *These decorative things in traditional houses were useful not annoying. But now we things nice but they are disturbing too. The wife would be nervous in an open kitchen when there were guests at home. It may create tension in the house. These are the reasons that the new generation is nervous.*

It is important to have a peaceful environment, especially at home.

M: in developed countries everything helps you to be calm and here everything helps to make you nervous. Why would you leave your country and go to a -30 degree place? Just to find peace. Things are in order so they should not be worried about what would happen tomorrow!

Things are related. Their society and their house are in a specific order. But we have the same chaos at home as we have in society.

AB: I believe if we want to build a home in Iran, expect those climate aspects you mentioned before, there were needs which shaped the different typology in different areas. But now climate is not the first priority. The cultural and social aspects are more important.

Would you please tell me if this is what we have, or what we need to have?

AB: We have it. For example, when you have to put bars on your windows to keep your house safe from thieves it means the social aspects had influence on your buildings. It is not safe there so you have to take care of that. People do not want that anyone can watch inside of their house. So these are their needs which are making buildings.

M: there was robbery in the past too. But they used to build tall walls.

It was an important aspect in their house to keep the house safe from thieves.

M: they had small windows outside and tall walls. Now we have fences on the walls and windows like a jail. It is depressing.

This happened in schools too, especially my daughter's school. I was in a school which had a very nice view to the sea from the second floor. It had large windows which were covered by bars, which ruined the view completely. Is it the only way to make it safe? Sometimes financial aspects are more important than cultural and social aspects.

M: they were very careful about financial parts in the past. But now people waste money a lot. They would think about the consequences of using things before using them. But now people do things without thinking about the consequences.

SH: my wife wanted to cover her studio's floor with tile. But I said it makes it hard for you to clean. It needs more cleaning.

There are lots of spaces in Europe which are covered by rugs.

AB: *because they do not have this much dust.*

That is not the point. Because there it is always raining and it makes more mess. The main point is we are covering the entire house with hardwood then we cover that with carpet! So what is the point? It would be better to cover it with a nice rug.

SH: *also the carpet moves all the time over these kinds of floors.*

AB: *you are right this is not logical.*

SH: *we went to a friend's house and they kept telling us to be careful, it is slippery. She said she tried different things but the carpet keeps moving! Our neighbour used marble; stone to cover the floor of his entrance. It is very slippery in the winter.*

M: *I was in my aunt's house in Canada. One of their guests went to the toilet. It was slippery and he fell. He made a suit against them. But it is not like this in Iran, no one will answer about such things.*

AB: *this will just be in our imagination.*

No, things will change gradually. It might be difficult in some points but they need to be considered. Also although they did not have windows to the street and any decoration outside and they just solved the thieves more logical. And they had decoration inside instead.

M: *also they were not annoying. There is a building which is covered with glass on 6 floors. It is always dirty and I do not know why, if you cannot take care of this material, you use it! At least turn the light off so they will be hidden. The traditional walls were very simple but they were not dirty. These aluminium façades which have reflections in the summer while driving are terrible. As residents of the city we are responsible for this.*

AB: *Have you seen the new building which tried to be traditional style? Do you like it?*

SH: *not at all, it is funny.*

M: *it is funny but it is not annoying at least.*

In Pahlavi buildings changed and they had outside windows. Then curtains were added. Is it logical to have a large window and then cover it all the time with curtains? Or we have to consider about where we should put the windows!

SH: *I saw an office with large windows which was nice and did not need curtains as it was on the upper floor.*

AB: *for the office it can be, but residential buildings need curtains for privacy.*

M: *they can use reflex glass.*

AB: *they have problems at night. Because the light is on everything inside is visible from outside.*

SH: *so, curtains are one of main points in houses.*

It is something which needs more study. Why we made a wall with large windows and then covered them again with different layers of curtains?

SH: *people had seen kings' palaces and wanted to copy that.*

M: *my uncle's house in Canada had a large window on the second floor but it was to their private yard and no one could see that, so it did not have curtains, and it was really lovely.*

SH: *I remember in the past after finishing an apartment the builder covered the windows with nice curtains to encourage buyers.*

AB: *now they make large windows and say look how nice these windows are. Anyway, we do not have inward-looking buildings anymore, so what is the solution?*

We have seen in past 100 years that these balconies towards the street do not work. But we still build them!

SH: *there is a house in front of our house which has a balcony on the first floor. They never use it.*

M: *when they were building that we were worried that they could see our entire yard. But they just clean it once in a year, and they do not use it at all. They do not feel safe to sit there. People can see them from the street.*

SH: *also, it should have a good view. There is nothing attractive in the street to be watched from the balcony.*

People used to have a large terrace on the first floor which was like a yard for them, but these small balconies are useless.

SH: *some people like to have rooms beside the street in hotels, but I like to have the one which is at the back, as that is cosier. I like to have a house in an unpassable alley.*

AB: *As we cannot have that inward looking like the past what should we do now? We cannot have the traditional relation between spaces; also there is some regulation about buildings which would not let us do that. You cannot go outside to go to other rooms.*

In the past, spaces were just related in a different way.

AB: *they did not use a part of the house in a season!*

M: *these villas that you build out of the city, how often are they used? Also they are very luxurious; I think they need to be more normal and make people feel free from the city and technology.*

M: *I like to go to the villages to see nice views.*

One of the main reasons people used to build courtyards was to make a paradise at home.

M: *in single houses you can choose how you want to make your house - inward or outward looking. Or residential complexes can have shared green areas. I know in Canada in tall buildings they have guest suites which people can use when they have guests and everyone does not need to have a single room for guests. There is a party room in the building as well. We have to make spaces like these, not just have the best part of the home for guests.*

We want to have everything in our own house so it makes it difficult.

AB: *I think traditional houses had some good points, which made you feel tranquil. Especially those houses with a garden in front of them.*

There is something interesting: people who lived in traditional houses like to have the same things. But people who did not live there do not like them. They say no one will buy this house and these are old fashioned.

AB: ok, we agreed that home is a place for tranquillity. We have to find the items which we need for this in a house. We have to find the things which are disturbing and control them. Also, about the privacy, people spend money to have a nice window, and then, because people may see them, they cannot enjoy it. Imagine we can have a courtyard. Can this work today?

M: *we cannot have a house like the old ones.*

AB: something simpler. I think that relation with space won't work today.

What is your idea about the relation between spaces in this house?

AB: the relation between spaces is right but it is not comfortable.

M: *they had a large house, not for one or two people. There were many people who lived there and each family had its own spaces.*

AB: imagine a family with 2 kids which needs 3 bedrooms. Let us plan it in this form, I believe it is not possible.

M: *the architect must to do that.*

In my opinion the solution we have now is the simplest and the easiest way which that could be. Culturally we do not like our house to be seen from the outside, but it is happening now!

AB: I want to say if we do not have any finical limitations for building the ideal house, the ideal house which is designed by the architect would not convince the user. Users prefer this current situation, because of the relation between spaces. Kids cannot be separated. All spaces need to be connected; we cannot have spaces in 2 different parts of the house.

M: *it was not like this in the past. Kids were living with their parents. Sometimes there was an extended family and each family had its own space.*

AB: everybody should have his own private space. We need 3 bedrooms -for the family we imagined before- a cooking space, washrooms, a living area and space for receiving guests. You have to keep these all beside each other. Imagine this is the bed zone, this is the cooking zone and this is the living area. It makes their relation complicated so we have to keep them together.

M: *the space should be designed in a way that makes them comfortable.*

AB: it will increase the distance between spaces. When you put spaces around the site we have to pass these ways.

M: *I think we cannot say that as we felt comfortable in the traditional houses we have to make our house like them. We can find the concepts they had for their designs and use that. They thought for centuries and made them but now we just use the easiest way. In the past, parents and kids slept in the same room, but as they sleep in separate rooms now they should be beside each other.*

AB: so we have to find a new form, and the old form is not suitable any more. It is correct that form can influence the comfort of the people who are living in a house.

In the past, they wanted to have peace in their house. People who were wealthier could live more comfortably. But they were thinking about their own comfort first, do not disturb the others with showing off. Someone told me the façade is the most important part of the house as it is hard to change it later. But how much will the residents use this façade? Now this is a common idea in society that the façade is the most important part.

M: *people used to have shared areas, but now it is not the case. We may have shared receptions for example. We are living in the 21st century and we should have more comfortable houses than 100 years ago, but I believe that we do not.*

In the past they used to serve their guests in their houses. But now almost 50% of gatherings are outside.

SH: *Now my cousin is having her engagement party in a hotel, which was not common in the past. They should have been in their houses and it was bad not to do them there.*

There are some occasions which used to be in the house but which are going outside. Or for sudden appointments people prefer to go out rather than visiting at home.

SH: *my niece has her birthday in a garden in Mahan, 30 km from the city.*

Yes, it has changed. My friend wanted to have her son's birthday outside and she wanted to find a place where they would take care of everything. We are doing this outside, but in the design process we still think about this part like it was used in the past. We should make this clearer.

AB: I believe everything is related to its own time and we need to have new ideas about new needs.

Now let us make a list of good points in traditional and contemporary houses. For example, it is better to have kitchens inside rather than outside.

SH: *it is good to have joint reception and living areas.*

Or 100 years ago people would go to the public bathrooms but now every house has its own bathroom. So these are some good changes, but there is also a good point which has been ignored.

M: *having water in the house.*

SH: *sunlight.*

M: *large windows and convenient materials.*

Or having different levels in ceilings for different spaces with different functions.

SH: *I remember the hall in my childhood house had a tall height and cleaning its ceiling was always a problem. They used to do these works themselves but the next generation refused to do that anymore.*

part4

Before starting designing I am going to show some examples which were built recently but tried to be more familiar with Iranian traditional architecture.

This is a residential project in Shoshtar. It was built around 1970.

M: *are these courtyards and the houses are connected?*

No, the houses are not connected.

M: *I think my sister saw this city. Can you talk about it?*

MA: *I think that was not a live city. It was not a well-designed and dynamic city.*

I do not want to judge this, as there were complications by the end of the construction and it could not work as it was designed to.

M: *I do not like this.*

These are several modern courtyards in other countries.

M: *these are very small, and do not have a feeling of a courtyard.*

These are small sizes.

M: *in Japan they had a building around the yard but that is not a courtyard.*

In Japan they still have their traditional relation and materials which is nice. Exactly the opposite of Iran - they keep things.

AB: *also their eating style is still traditional.*

This is a modern building in Tehran but it has some traditional aspects in it. These are some other images of modern houses. Please look at them, you may find something interesting in them as we are going to do some sketches for a new Iranian house. We are not designing a complete house, just the relation between spaces, materials or specifics for and elements which may relate the house to Iranian culture. Now most of our houses can be in every other place in the world. How can we make them more Iranian?

M: *The design and materials are both important to make it Iranian. It would be good to use material from that region. Also consider the climate, for example in Kerman, houses should have sunlight in winter and need to be protected from sunlight in summer. These are all luxury and modern houses and it seems nice to live in them. But it is not just the architecture of the house which is important, the function is so important too. For example, maybe the clothes we wear are not good enough or some dishes which we use and it seems they cause cancer. It is not just in architecture which people have changed, it is about all other aspects of life too. Or brand, it is not always the quality or design. Sometimes the brand is more important and this is the situation all over the world. In some places they use new materials which are more suitable for people and their ways of living, and in others they just use the modern and new forms or materials without considering people's comfort. I think simplicity is something which is really good for today. Why do we need lots of arcs?*

In this building they had lots of trees which they did not cut, and they designed their building according to the trees.

M: *this is nice, greenery and passing paths.*

AB: *this is not a traditional building. It is completely modern.*

Yes, but there are some traditional aspects in this, like the water and green area.

AB: *these are some fixed items which are not related to any specific period. Greenery and water always make people feel good. It was nice in the past, now and it would be nice in the future too.*

The point is, in one period these were ignored, but recently, after a long time of not using those, people felt the lack of those things. We need to find the good values in traditional architecture which can be used today. There are some objects in people's house that help you recognize where they belong to. For example, an Iranian who is living abroad has something from his country which shows his identity. Now we have these things in people's houses but there is nothing in our architecture which shows this.

M: *there are some objects which they used in the past and now we put them as decorations. Maybe these can be used today with their modern function and the traditional form.*

AB: *there are some old lights which are still used to make a sense of the past, but I think they are not nice at all.*

SH: *in one period all restaurants had modern furniture. Now most of them are furnished in a kind of traditional style. In the house which my dad built with flat ceilings, there was no water in the yard and the yard was smaller. The roofs changed to flat ones but there was not proper insulation for them. It takes time to understand how they should build them.*

These are things which were mentioned last session: water, greenery, large windows, materials, comfortable spaces without unnecessary steps. Now let us start with the entrance. You can choose your favourite pictures from these pictures. As you remember we talked about this before, where we need to take shoes off, or having a washable floor.

M: *it has been mentioned that we can curve the entrance in order to control the privacy. Having a door after the entrance door.*

A separate closed space as the first space while entering the house.

M: *a shoe case here and a mirror. Then, after this part, guests will come into the house. In the past this space was called a vestibule, we can have something like that.*

I remember that you said that you prefer to keep all shoes at the entrance, not in the bedroom.

M: *I saw a TV show, about renovating old houses. A decorative cupboard was built on one side of the corridor for shoes, and there were also some spaces to put other decorations too. It was a luxurious and modern corridor which also solved the problem of shoes.*

It is useful to change the walls from this flat surface to a functional and decorative surface. What else do you want to add?

M: *a hanger for clothes, and the ability to stay for a while and talk with someone. There is a space in our shoe case which we used to put our foot there and wear the shoes. Or we would come outside in the yard and use a chair. I did not see any house which has a special space for this beside the shoe case.*

This was about the entrance inside the house. What do you need for the one beside the street?

M: *in the street a flower box and a bench to sit on.*

This has a green area, a water surface and here a sitting space. Do you want to connect it directly to the street? You mentioned before it is not common to have people in front of the door. Also, it helps the city to be

more alive when this sitting place is connected to the street, and can be used by pedestrians too.

M: *it is good for sitting pedestrians and also the resident may want to sit outside to get fresh air, not for sitting with a guest.*

So you want to have this space before the private part of the house. Sir SH, do you have anything to say?

SH: *it depends on how the house is related to the street. For houses which you have to enter the yard from the street, it would be good to have a porch in front of the building. It would be a good space to take shoes off and also shoes will be protected from the rain and sunshine. For other houses, which reach the building directly from the street, it is good to have an entrance space before entering the main part of the house. It would be closed.*

AB: *what do you need in that space? Do you want something like this which is a corridor with a cupboard on one side and then reach the main part? Do you need anything else here? What about area and proportion?*

M: *I think it is good to add a cupboard on this side too. It helps to change the wall from a flat surface too. It means having cupboards on both sides and this one can be used for decorative objects.*

How is this space, is it completely closed or just a sight controlled zone?

M: *I just want to have a space where, when the door is open, the inside of the house cannot be seen. I prefer that space to not be closed.*

So you can have a wall with 180cm height, and it is not necessary to have a wall until the ceiling.

AB: *is it good?*

M: *yes, but it is not necessary to be this wide. It can be just to put shoes.*

SH: *also it can be used for sitting.*

Also you want to have decorative objects here too. Do you prefer to have a door the same as all other doors of the house or do you want to have a kind of moving wall which has the ability to close the space but also to open it when needed?

M: *in the past there was a curtain, which made it possible to remove it easily.*

It was just controlling the sight.

M: it could be controlled by the resident.

AB: *what about transparency?*

M: *light is important too. Also, by opening 2 doors it helps to have air circulation. I prefer something which can be changed at different times. I am talking about the houses which are connected directly to the street. In the ones that are connected by the yard to the street they can talk in the yard and the inside of the house would not be seen. Also, it is helpful in terms of heating and cooling spaces. I prefer something like this. This can be a cupboard or a bench to put your shoes for wearing shoes, or a space for shoe polishing things.*

What is your idea about material?

M: *it should have harmony with the rest of the house.*

AB: *do you prefer a hole or a bench to put your foot on in order to put shoes on?*

M: *these can all be cupboards for shoes, and there must be a specific bench to put your foot on. It is not good to put feet everywhere. It can be good to have a hole in the wall. I prefer to have shoes stored on this side and on the other side the place which helps you to put shoes on.*

AB: *do you want to add anything here so that when you are talking to someone it could be possible to sit for a while there.*

M: *no one will put a chair at the entrance!*

SH: *for example, in the morning when I am leaving home you tell me do these jobs. If there was a place to sit, I would sit and make a note of what you were asking me to do.*

It could be useful sometimes when you are waiting for someone and so it is good to have a sitting place at the entrance. It can be just a cupboard where the lower part is for shoe storage and on top it is possible to sit for a while. This is not for having guests.

M: *it could have the ability to be sat on but not just be a sitting place.*

Now let us talk about the relation of this part to the rest of the house. Would you like to have different paths to the private and public parts of the house?

M: *it would be good if the guests could come to the public part without seeing the private part. It would be good to have 2 doors: one to the public part and*

the other to the private part. I always liked to have a living area which has good sunlight and which is beside the yard with large windows overlooking the yard. Also, the bedroom should be in this part too. So having the bedroom and living area beside the yard. It would be good to have the kitchen here too, but it is not a big deal. The kitchen can be on the other side and have a small back yard. Greenery can be added to the back yard to make the kitchen pleasant.

Do you want the back yard behind the kitchen just for greenery or would it have another function too?

M: it is very good to relate the kitchen to the open air for both ventilation and sunlight. Also, it can be used for drying washed clothes.

Let us have a look back to the entrance part again. You said you want it as a space between the public and private part.

AB: *do you like to have doors?*

M: what else is possible?

AB: *what is your idea?*

M: in traditional houses, there is a curve which helps control the visibility.

AB: *do you like to have a decorative wall which has holes in some parts, and it can have greenery too?*

M: the greenery will ruin the wall!

AB: *do not worry about the details. What about a vertical stone wall with water?*

M: having water inside of the house creates problems. Kids will touch it and make a mess.

AB: *what about flowers?*

M: again, it needs water and sunlight.

AB: *what about birds?*

M: these all have some difficulties.

The main point here is to control the visualization.

AB: *also, there can be several short walls at the entrance. Would you like something like this at the entrance?*

Or those walls he said can be some moving walls which have the flexibility to be opened and closed. Some people like to have a wide space when entering.

M: *it is more luxurious when it is open and wide. But I prefer to have things more comfortable than luxurious. In my mom's house, as well as in our own house, in the winter we have to put a thick curtain behind the door, which is very ugly, to protect from the cold weather.*

It would be more logical if there was a door.

SH: *A door is old fashioned. There used to be a door but people removed it.*

What was the reason that the door was removed? Was it just fashion or something else?

SH: *it was fashion as well as the desire about having a wide space while entering.*

AB: *I believe things will be old fashioned when something better comes. It had a problem that has been replaced with something else.*

The replacement is not always a better solution.

AB: *I think it is better that we are not seeing the previous one anymore.*

M: *because it was more luxurious.*

AB: *that is not just being luxurious, it also has a better function. All the entrances we have now are better than the previous ones with 2 doors.*

There are some other options as heating and cooling also were considered.

SH: *people used to stay for a minute behind the door and it gave the lady time to put on her hijab. Now you will immediately enter the home.*

M: *it is terrible that there is nothing between to control sight.*

AB: *we are talking about a good point and the one that has been removed. There must be a problem which ended this.*

M: *ok, what was the problem?*

AB: *there was a small area with 2 doors. When they were open it was disturbing. When there were lots of people it was very bad. They just were used when someone came to the door.*

Also heating control.

AB: I have a client who said I want to have a house where, when you open the door, the entire house can be seen.

M: it was important for him to show off.

AB: yes. It means now this is more important than the function.

M: we can do something else; the doors should not be all in the same direction. This will control the sight.

AB: you want to have 2 doors anyway?

M: no, I do not. The opposite of your client - I do not want my house being seen at the beginning. I agree with you that those small spaces had problems when there were lots of people.

SH: this is personal. Everybody has his own desires.

AB: I think some will see something and then think this is nice. I know it was not functional but he wanted that.

SH: as an architect you should mention the problems and convince the client.

M: he will say I do not care, I want this.

SH: but the architect should convince him.

What is your idea about the doors which can be opened in both directions?

M: very bad, someone may be at the back and the door could hit him.

AB: also they will not protect sight.

A good point about a door is it can be open and closed so you have 2 options. But walls cannot be this flexible. It is not necessary to have doors to the ceiling.

M: again the heating problem still remains.

AB: there are other ways to solve that.

About the living area and how this should be related to the reception and private part of the house -if we categorize the spaces as bedrooms are in

the private part and the living area and reception are one space, what is your idea?

M: *it depends on area. It would be good if there was enough space to have the reception and dining area here which can have an entrance from the main entrance, and a living area on this side with windows and sunlight.*

So you want to have a separate reception and living area?

M: *yes, it would be great if possible.*

So in the public space you need a special space for families.

M: *for example, a TV room, with a comfortable sofa. But in the reception you will put more formal furniture.*

AB: *now you are wasting a space for guests against what you have previously said!*

M: *no, it depends on the financial situation. If it is possible to have a separate space, it is good. But I should not ignore my own needs because of guests.*

It was common in the past having 2 separate parts: one formal and one informal for daily use. Then these spaces were joined.

M: *now another space has been added: a TV room or private living area.*

Now we have one space, people will furnish one part formally and the other part informally. These can be completely separated. Which one do you prefer?

M: *you mean separate them with a wall?*

Yes.

M: *they can be in one space.*

AB: *so you do not want to separate the living area and reception?*

SH: *today, in modern architecture, they are all in one space.*

So with today's ways of living you prefer to have them in one space?

M: *actually that is not really good, because kids may want to watch TV while the adults are talking and they will disturb each other.*

SH: *having them in a completely separate room may cause other problems as you cannot watch them.*

M: *ok, it can be "L shaped". This one as the living area and the other one the reception.*

SH: *now when your daughter is in her room you are worried about what she is doing and prefer her to be in the living area.*

M: *in this one they are a bit separated but with visibility.*

SH: *our living area and reception have a wall between them so they can see each other when needed. So there can be a short wall in between.*

M: *it would be better to have it L shaped rather than rectangular.*

SH: *if it was possible we would remove the wall between the spaces and make them one space.*

What are the good points then? Having a large space.

SH: *yes, and it is more luxurious.*

But again we will try to categorize the space in other ways.

SH: *some people make this separation with steps. In one house the dining area was lower than the reception.*

M: *A person in the reception could see things on the dining table.*

Was that good?

M: *it was not bad for the one on the upper level but it was bad for the one who was in the lower part.*

SH: *it was built by an architect and I believe it was nice.*

AB: *Do you want something like this? This is the entrance and this is the reception and this one is the living area. And they are connected. Is it good?*

SH: *yes.*

M: *it is important how these are connected. And the entrance comes directly to the hall. Also, I really want that cupboard.*

Which cupboard?

SH: *she is worried about her shoes. Try to reduce your shoes, problem solved.*

M: *here can be a mirror on both sides. A tall mirror.*

AB: *here the reception and living area are not separated completely but also are not connected completely. It is not correct. If you want to make a mess they need to be completely separated.*

M: *our house is now like this. They are connected and separated at the same time.*

AB: *but you lost that large space. They should be completely separated or connected.*

M: *I want them to be separated and connected at the same time. I have seen a house that separated space with 2 steps. But I do not like to have steps in the house. It is nice but not comfortable.*

AB: *do you think that steps are a luxury element?*

M: *yes, exactly.*

Why are you saying that they should be completely separated?

AB: *if they are not completely separated you cannot have a private living area. You want to be comfortable and maybe make a mess there.*

M: *today, people will not go to others' houses without calling. And when we have guests we will not sit in the living area or lay down. So that space is organized when someone comes. And it is good that we have a larger space in the living room.*

AB: *I think in your house if the living area, dining area and also the reception were one large space it would feel better. Now you cannot have it as a private living area and it must always be clean. Also, you do not have that nice large area either. There must be a reason to separate spaces.*

M: *my reason is when guests come with kids they can go to that part with some distance from us.*

AB: *I have an idea. You can put the reception here, and here is the entrance and there is access from the entrance to the reception. Here will be the kitchen and the living area will be here. The reception and living area are now connected via the entrance.*

M: *no, I want them to be seen. Also, the kitchen in the middle is a disaster. The kitchen must be in the back so that it can get sunlight and be connected to the open air. In this one the cooking smell will be all over the house.*

AB: *what if we can have sunlight on this side as well?*

SH: *my sister's kitchen is now connected directly to the living area and reception.*

M: *I do not like that.*

AB: *but this is functional.*

M: *No, it is not functional.*

AB: *yes, it is, because it makes them 2 separate spaces. The TV room is a small room with a limited sofa.*

M: *I do not like to be in a small space. I like the living area to be linked to the reception.*

AB: *then that is not a private living area that is just a living area.*

M: *anything with less formal furniture.*

SH: *now our living area and reception are 2 separate spaces.*

M: *I do not want to separate them with a wall. I do not want to have a completely separate reception.*

AB: *in apartments, you have seen that there is a space in front of the bedrooms which is called a private living area. Sometimes they put sofas in it. It does not have sunlight.*

M: *recently, people put their exercise instruments there. Anyway, that is unless space.*

SH: *also, the bedrooms cannot directly connect to the living area. For example, there might be a guest and someone wants to wake up and go to the bathroom. He should not be seen from the living area. That space is good for this. It means if someone opens his room's door the others will not see that.*

The problem is that this space is neither a corridor nor a useful space.

M: *My daughter's room is beside the living area and when the door is open the entire room can be seen. I keep telling her your room should always be organized. Our room is in a place which cannot be seen. It is a bit complicated.*

We want to have connected space and have privacy as well! I did not see a house in which these had been solved.

AB: *there are some people who do not want to make any changes in their house, as they feel comfortable.*

M: *sometimes you always wear one set of clothes and you do not know that there might be a more comfortable set too.*

AB: *this can be true.*

SH: *another point is that at some ages it is hard to move and make changes. I would do it 10 years ago easier than now. My parents would never move now. My aunt moved to Tehran but she wanted to come back to her own house as she felt she was lost. I want to have a real home. All these places I have seen are not really homes. They are just houses.*

In the 1970s, the living area and reception were connected with a door which contained glass tiles. And it made it possible to have flexibility. Now there are lots of other materials for these things. Instead of steps, having panels with different heights on different levels.

M: *in the past, people used to have gatherings with just men, so they did not want their lady to be able to be seen. But now it is not like this anymore. But I think the house should be for your comfort and you should not be the house's slave.*

SH: *in the past, people used to have a separate space for smoking. Now they want a separate space for exercise.*

M: *now the number of gatherings is smaller compared to the past.*

You mentioned the living area should have sunlight and a nice view. What about the more formal part?

M: *I think now people have guests more during the evening and there is no sunlight so it is not necessary. Furniture and decorations are more important there. It can have electrical lights.*

There is no time to see outside; it is more chatting and eating. Would you please talk about the relation between the kitchen, living area, reception and dining room?

M: the kitchen should be near the dining area and also the reception. The kitchen must make it easy to serve guests. Also, there must be protection from the food smell.

What about the living area and kitchen?

M: we eat in the kitchen so we do not eat in the living area. We may eat with closer family and friends in the kitchen as well but with others in the dining area.

Do you want to add any other elements in these areas? Like fireplaces etc.

M: the important things in a living area are sunlight and the view. It would be great to have a green area outside that can be seen from the living area.

What about an open space or semi-open space? Some semi-open spaces like the old porches. Where these should be located, beside which space? Or the porch you have in your house.

M: this porch is very good. We sometimes in summer have our breakfast there. But it is just for the ground floor and it does not work for the upper levels.

It would be possible to use it more if it had boundaries.

SH: in a friend's house they had a large balcony which was surrounded by tall walls about 150cm high. It was usable since no one could see you from outside while you were sitting there.

Do you want to have this in front of the living area?

M: yes. Also, it should be beside the entrance. I have seen an apartment with balconies on 3 sides.

Do you prefer to have several small balconies or one large one?

M: it had 3 balconies in different sizes. Now the largest one has been changed to the hidden kitchen.

What about ceiling heights? Do you like to have a taller height for the reception than the dining area?

M: I think it would be good to have a tall height for the reception and a shorter one for the dining area. But these different levels should be in the ceiling not in the floor. Just it should be easy to clean the ceiling.

Another important space, which always been changed by time, the store room.

SH: *the store room is very bad.*

M: *one of our bedrooms is now a store room. It is difficult to clean it.*

AB: *what is its problem?*

SH: *when you have a store room you will keep unnecessary things. If there was not one you would throw them out.*

AB: *this is an important point!*

What about having a space on top of the dining area to keep some necessary things?

M: *it is good but hard to access. There is a similar space in my mom's house over the bathroom. They used to keep things which they did not use anymore, like old magazines. But it is hard to go there as you have to bend. We have to put a ladder there and then take it out.*

If these problems could be solved with a special detailing would you agree with this?

M: *yes, it is good.*

As it is not in daily use it is not necessary to be exactly comfortable.

SH: *half of our store room is sleeping stuff for guests who will never come.*

M: *there are sometimes guests.*

This is one of those things that you should have but it is always a problem.

SH: *there are other things like blankets and a back rest, which we kept from when we started our marriage. Luckily my wife finally sent out the back rest this year. No one used this back rest and it was just stored in the store room.*

M: *there are lots of things like suitcases, winter clothes, the big pots, my drawings, some old books and some other things which I want to keep. These all need a store room.*

What about the bedroom?

SH: *the lady should talk about the bed room.*

M: *I was thinking that it maybe does not need a proper light. But as I talked with my husband I think it does need a light.*

Should the bedroom be connected to the open air?

M: *yes, it should be.*

SH: *like the movies - in the morning they open the curtains to get sunlight.*

Can you mention your main points about the bedroom?

SH: *a cool place in the summer and hot in winter.*

M: *it should be calm and quiet.*

Do you like to have a fireplace in the bedroom?

M: *no, it is not safe. Also, the light is annoying during sleep time.*

Thanks.