

Sepah (Shohada), a historical avenue, as a joint axis in city of Qazvin's Integration theory

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Abstract

Shohada (Sepah) avenue in Qazvin, a historic city, is a part of Safavid era infrastructure of the city. It connects various important cites and poles like Jame' mosque, Imamzadeh Hosein, Dowlat-Khaneh and the Traditional Bazaar complex to one another. This axis in KhomarTashi, in Kabir Jame' mosque - preservation and restoration of Jame' mosque complex as principle core of the city which is engraved in Kufi epigraph under the mosque's dome, is located on the western side of this avenue. This is a valid document that shows neighborhood organization of a Saljuqi city. This epigraph describes management terms of the city, income resource and has references on civil society with shared responsibilities like a covenant. Sepah Avenue has a pivotal role in this historic context and is remnant of pre-Safavid era. Therefore, studying its historical evolution is necessary to define its position in contemporary historic city. This article contains direct findings of a research accomplished by the authors in a field study in Sepah Avenue and evaluates restoration and revitalization goals of Sepah Avenue.

Key Terms: Historic city, Qazvin historic texture, Historic garden, Urban restoration .

1. Introduction

Old urban texture has a worthy, valuable, historical, cultural, social, and economical or mixed use texture. Its natural context and the other textures have potential abilities and facilities. To update the old textures and make them a lively part of the city's texture and to provide the minimum necessary conditions for the usage of residents of their urban life environment and to upgrade the quality of urban space, is the subject of development programs and will be an effective element in promoting the civic life. The realization of these goals is prerequisite to subjects such as capital, science, technology and labor force on different levels. As a result, by setting up appropriate organizations in different levels, such as functional, administrable and convergence of operational activities in relation with urban works and with the help of governmental investment in infrastructures, foreign and local loans in order to implement plans with anticipated goals, special policies could be put in place. Preparing appropriate and favorable context for participation of citizens

in urban renovation and restructuring in a way that it leads to endurance in the whole urban society is a necessity. People's interest in this context is because of two conditions:

1. Feeling of ownership
2. Choosing to make changes in the correct manner

2. Public spaces in Iran historic cities

Mosque's and madras'es courtyards acted as an urban space in Iran's historic cities and each element of traditional bazaar that shaped the principle skeleton of the historic city was a social spaces, such as, Raste, Mian Sara, Charsoogh. Shopping, commerce, praying, having fun, taking a bath and education are done in an urban society. Nowadays, structural changes have occurred in cities. Neighborhood and its concept is changing, and traditional concept of home and housing is changing. Bazaar can no longer be called the principal skeleton of contemporary and developed city. Heterogeneous growth of commercial centers and new shopping centers on one hand, and overload pressure of compression in traditional bazaar surrounding on the other hand, and sometimes lack of the necessary services, threatens this social, cultural, sanitarian and commercial phenomena. However, mankind, today, has not lost his/her natural and instinctual elements despite the changes. He needs quiet, peace and a scale. He evaluates the scale of development and growth with his potential power as his goal.

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Therefore, urban nature cannot and must not ignore human goals. The statistics shown by disciplinary force in urban societies verify that abnormality and immoral behaviors occur more in disarranged environments. Existing urban spaces in historical core of Iran's cities, like Sepah Avenue in Qazvin, with a historical background, physical identity and the existence of religious and cultural poles like mosques, Madres and other historical elements and close spaces, are very appropriate spaces for men to reach their goals in an urban space.

On the other hand, the avenue with Jame' Mosque, has an inseparable connection with two valuable poles. One of them is Sa'adat Abad garden with its elements, and the other is Qazvin's historic city's Traditional Bazaar. These three poles have high potentials, but unfortunately, the changes were always temporary and didn't follow a unique goal and integration in urban scale. Lack of urban planning and general goals, has caused irrational and sometimes destroying acts in historical space.

3. Ghazvin in Safavid Era

Evidences of city of Qazvin in Safavid Era, reveals that goals of Safavid designs and were utopian. Although the design theme of Safavid Era for Qazvin were extracted from previous Islamic experiences in Iran, its innovations and characteristics are of especial designs in the history of architecture and urbanism.

The creators of Qazvin's design theme in Safavid era cared for some very important elements. One of these elements was nature and the other was culture and urban life. These designers have acted actively in the use of this phenomenon. They have created necessary tools in reaching their goals and have used them intelligently. City of Qazvin must have an up-to-date, active and organized interaction with nature. Integration of nature in Safavid city structure and its evidences could be found in that era. The city's nodes of inter action tecture and nature could be seen. Accordingly, Sa'adat Abaad garden or Ja'afar Abad reveals its real purpose and role in relation with spaces like Sepah avenue or square called horse by connecting other urban poles like Bazaar and river.

Development of the concept of garden as a natural element gives a regulating subject in connection with Sepah Avenue and gives a spirit like a garden city to city leading north and to mountains.

Safavid governmental spaces were located on and around Shahi avenue, Dowlat-Khaneh, Gheysariye Bazaar, Aali ghapoo (e.g., "Fig. 1"), which are in a way connected to urban history of currently existing city, are all pre-calculated and pre thought designs. "Safavid Bazaar acted as cite in which the ceremonies for welcoming and sending away of political group and different foreign dignitaries from Far East to Europe was held there. The country's economical prosperity could be seen in Bazaar. The square, in front of Aali Ghapoo, was a space that king officially or unofficially visited people for various ceremonies" [4]. Evidences show that the Qajar Dynasty was able to properly use this wealthy context in historic city of Qazvin. Most changes in historic city of Qazvin are related to the late first Pahlavi.

Today, restructuring historic part of Qazvin and creating connectivity between existing landmarks takes place in like

Sa'adat Abad historic garden, city's Traditional Bazaar Complex and Sepah Avenue are connected with other historic potentials related to them such as Imamzade Husein Cemetery Complex and Sepah Avenue. Attached places to it are a part of this large design and its renovation as a connecting intersection of these elements to revive its uniformity is important, because this avenue is an urban, social, cultural and natural phenomenon that should not only have conceptualholism but also should bear the historical identity of the city as a connecting factor of existing and lost elements. Moreover, it should act as an active, alive and controlled element without additional loads on its facade and as a strong element in creating connection between surrounding Bazaar such as Sepah Bazaarche, mosque, school and attached residential environment and historical garden, city's traditional museum and Bazaar.

Today it's our duty to give the word Qazvin, with all changes during the history and with its spiritual space as a dynamic museum, different meaning. In such an understanding of the city museum, urban life exists, full of life, in the heart of history and each time with connection to the past. A review of it, will reach back to the present time, and if higher zone designs don't reach this idea that historic part of the city shouldn't be the victim of sudden designs, it should aim at a balanced and sustainable growth for its development.

4. Historical studies about Shohada Avenue (Sepah)

There are some necessary questions which should be answered in order to clarify the problem of Sepah Avenue:

What was the date of creation of the avenue?

Has the avenue been built in one phase or does it have different construction phases?

Has the avenue been constructed on an existing urban axis?

Has the avenue been constructed in a concise urban texture?

How can the length of the old avenue be recognized?

How can the width of the old avenue be recognized?

Has the width of the avenue been changed during the period following the construction, and what is the degree of these changes?

What are the characteristics of the avenue at its start and finish point?

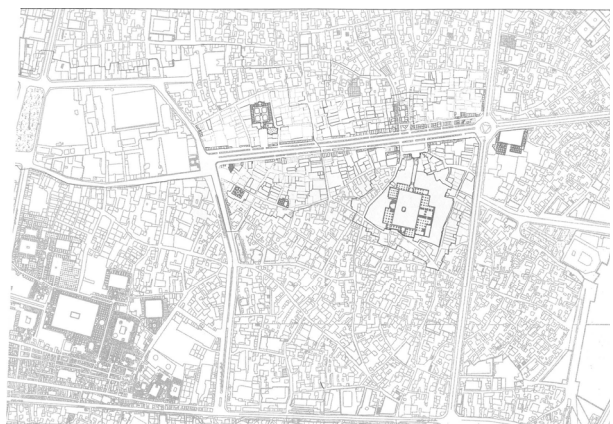


Fig.1. Traditional Bazaar, historical garden (Dowlatkhaneh), Jame' mosque and Shahzadeh Husein [9]

What was the important historical axis of the city which crossed Sepah Avenue and what was their importance?

How was the vegetation of Sepah Avenue?

To answer these questions and finally reach the historical character of Sepah, it is important to provide some drawing as follows:

City of Qazvin's historical development plan, neighborhood plan, Qajar maps that important urban gates and axis are identifiable on it. Absence of drawing on old urban neighborhood creates problem in analyzing possibility of neighborhoods. Although the name and approximate location of neighborhoods are identified on the map, borders are not defined clearly in any map. Therefore, according to necessity and with the theory of accuracy, this map is prepared. The most significant and problem solving point in Qazvin's neighborhoods is saving their names from the past era like Saljuqi Era till the present time; whereas, in cities like Tabriz, only few of the neighborhoods have kept their old names. Maybe the reason is the existence of Katibeh of Qazvin's Jame' mosque. In this Katibeh, water share of each neighborhood is specified.

By studying Qazvin's maps and location (e.g., "Fig. 2, 3, 4&5") indicator elements in different eras on current city map answering to those 10 questions becomes possible as follow:

Sepah Avenue has been constructed in 1545 in the era of Shah Tahmaseb the first.

2. It seems that this avenue has been constructed in two stages. First stage has been from the Aali Ghapoo entrance to

the beginning of Mohammadiyah axis. At this time, an entrance was built at the end of the avenue and this is visible in Kampfer map (e.g., "Fig. 6").

Not long after that, the avenue was extended to the front of Jame' mosque. According to Safavid, entrance of Jame' mosque, was strengthened by the construction of second part of the avenue (e.g., "Fig. 7").

3. The name of the avenue means the path of river and existence of one or two big rivers in such axis, have provided water of Ja'afar Abad garden and the city's southern gardens, so it is guessed that the avenue has been constructed on current axis and probably the name of the neighborhood surrounding the avenue (Mahalleye Khiaban) is related to Pre-Safavid Era, although there is no name of it in Saljuqi Katibeh.

4. Sepah Avenue is located inside the city's borders, and it had no development outside the borders. The avenue is constructed in a place where some parts of it contained the oldest parts of the city and along with existence of Ray gate, Jame' mosque, Bazaar, Tabriz and Rasht gate, it seems that texture density in this construction area has not been high. Moreover, existence of gardens in this site has been major. Ja'afar Abad garden is the best example of it. It seems that aristocrats have constructed buildings in these gardens. These buildings should have been constructed like Koushk in gardens and their exterior look is a garden wall with ornamented entrances and trees that were seen from the outside. Therefore, general image of Sepah Avenue could have been like a governmental avenue with a row of trees,



Fig. 2. Ghazvin city primary core [5]

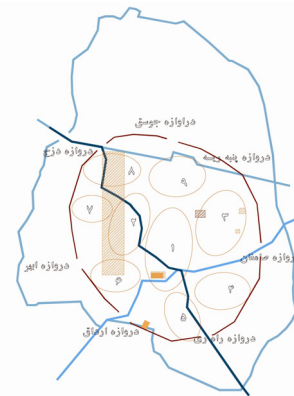


Fig. 4. Ghazvin city in Ilkhani era [5]



Fig. 3. Ghazvin city in Ghajar era [5]



Fig. 5. Ghazvin city in Safavid era [5]

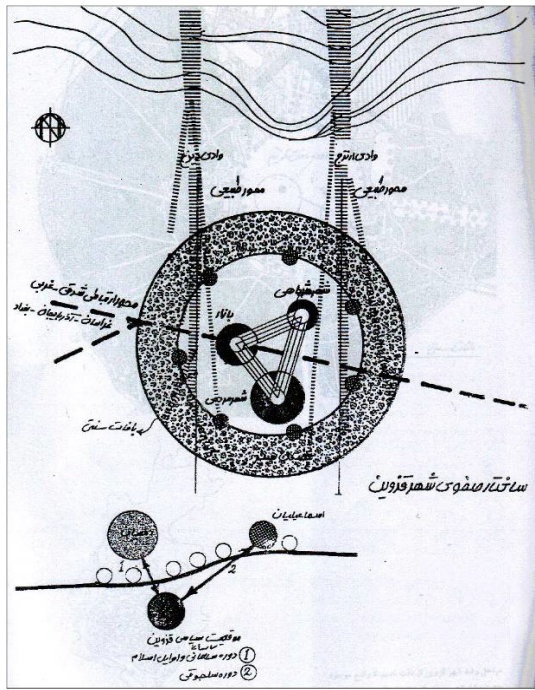


Fig. 6. Governmental castle and Ghazvin city in Safavid Era [4]

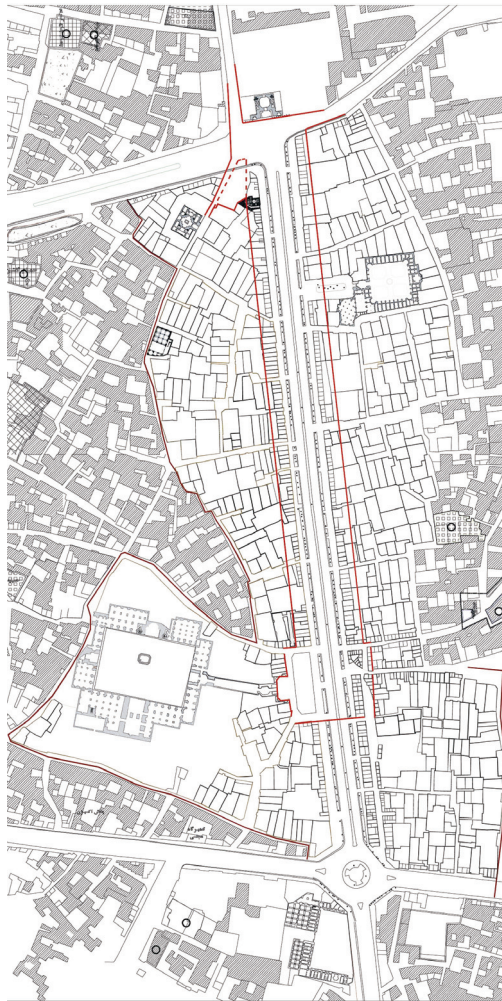


Fig. 7. Environment of sepah avenue in safavid era² [10]

continuous walls with great entrances in a silhouette full of green space located in a semi-paradise like environment in which everything concentrated around Aali Ghapoo entrance. Special evidences showed shops on its two sides were not ready, but it is probable that its southern door and the door gate in front of Jame' mosque and in the beginning of Ray door gate had some shops or Bazaarche (e.g., "Fig. 8").

5. Length of the avenue could be estimated to have been from Aali Ghapoo's entrance to the end of the open space in front of Jame' mosque. These dimensions matches what tourists have noted, like 700 feet. According to Qajar's maps and the location of Qajar guest rooms at the end of the avenue, it could surely besaid that these guest rooms couldn't have been constructed in the middle of such an avenue which was an urban axis, and surely, the end of the avenue must have been the northern façade of the guest rooms.

6. Probably the avenue's axis was the same as Aali Ghapoo's entrance, on the other side of existing water storage belonging to Safavid Era on southwestern side of the avenue. This has identified half of the avenue and its symmetry in the front. It also signifies the avenue's width. With this conclusion, the maximum width of the avenue is determined, but finding its minimum width needs other measures. According to the fact that some shops have been constructed in eastern and western parts of the avenue in Qajar Era and depth of most of these shops, which are the same, it could be guessed that in Qajar Era, because of reasons like weakness of the central government or like Tabriz in Naseri Era, some parts of the avenue were allocated to commercial use with permission of the government. Therefore, probably, the width of the avenue behind these shops is the least in Safavid Era. This has just few meters of difference with the maximum width. According to this conclusion, it could be said that approximate width of the avenue in Safavid era is determined.

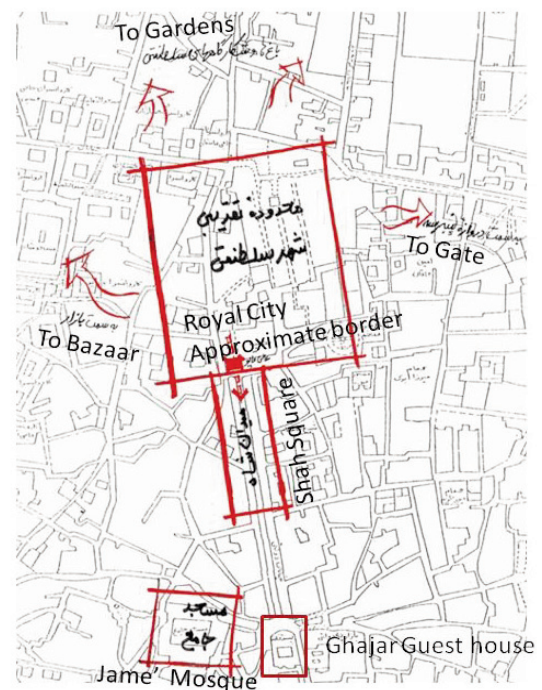


Fig. 8. Adaptation of governmental urban area and Shah square with Ghajar city [10]

7. As explained before, in Qajar Era, because of urban development towards Tehran, the avenue loses its aristocratic and governmental aspects a lot and potential of constructing commercial units gets more. Thus, along with construction of shops and gardens, the area is divided into smaller urban lots leading to change of the texture around the avenue. The texture becomes denser and the width of the avenue is decreased. This decrease was as much as the area of one commercial unit from each side. However, the last projection of the avenue's width took place in the First Pahlavi's Era.

On the eastern façade of the avenue, approximately 50 meters after Ali Ghapoo entrance, a projection of 3 meters took place on Qajar façade, which according to existence of Iran hotel, this coincides with noted amount and according to Bazaarche entrance located in front of Jame' mosque that is approximately 3 meters back and also pedestrian access narrowing on eastern part, without a shred of doubt verifies this matter.

8. There is no doubt that there had been a square type opening at the beginning and end point of the avenue, as these openings are still visible on Qajar map. These openings' physical structures are visible on southern part too. On one side, there is Jame' mosque entrance; and on the other side, the extension of the axis to the fruit shopping center (Bazaar Tarebar) is constructed. Even, until a few years ago, there were no stores between the avenue and this axis. On the southern part and on the place that Qajar guest room was constructed later on, the location was southern façade, and finally, water storage entrance also signifies the northern façade entrance which was on the path of Bazaarche in front of Jame' mosque.

There is no clear information about the wide space located on the northern part of the avenue, but if we accept that horse square was located on the west part of the governmental palaces to the eastern Bazaar, as tourists have noted that they went to square by the avenue's eastern side, it could be concluded that this avenue and the western side of the Horse Square were parallel or were located a lot closer to each other on the other hand western margin of Peighambariyeh avenue.

About southern limit of this opening, we can refer to beginning of some Qajar shops on the north eastern avenue and also to a triangle shaped opening on southern square that is visible on Qajar map. Northern limit is also Aali Ghapoo entrance, so square limits could be determined with reliable dimensions (e.g., "Fig. 9").

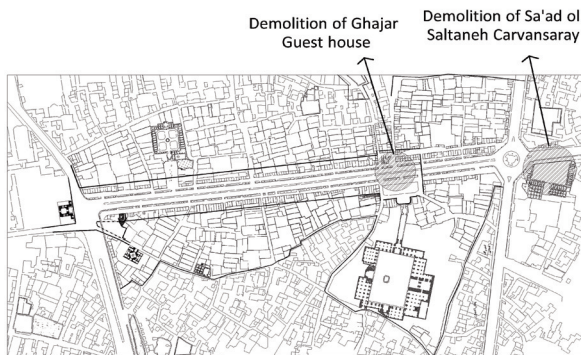


Fig. 9. Advancement of sepah avenue in pahlavi era (demolition of ghajar guest house and a part of sa'ad ol saltaneh carvansary) [9]

It should be noted that these are all guesses relied on history and logic, but no matter what, in Sepah Avenue's renovation plan, this uncertainty concept should be applied with architectural preparations.

9. About major urban axis the following points are available. Although the important axis that continued to Ray entrance was practically destroyed by the avenues, its first point that was the Fruit Bazaar completely exists and is preferable to. This extension that is in the direction of the avenue, is divided in two directions at the open space in front of Jame' mosque which one extends towards Bazaar and reaches Dizej gate and the other reaches Ray Entrance after passing Governmental Arg and the adjacent avenues. On the southern side, the open space is located in front of the mosque or on the same historical meydanche that was explained before, where Imamzadeh Husein connection axis was located. The extension, PanbehRiseh gate towards Aradagh gate was another important urban historical axis that, in fact, Jame' Mosque and its main gate were shaped according to this movement and two roofed bazaarche were shaped on this axis. Muhammadiye street axis is practically another semi extension that starts from Panbeh Riseh and is divided into two branches that one continues towards gate and the other towards Shahzadeh Husein and Aradagh gate. The last important urban axis related to the avenue, which had been the connecting axis of Arg to Bazaar, probably crossed horse square of the Safavid Era.

It looks like that the most important axis, before construction of the avenue, had been on one side of the Ray gate axis, Jame' mosque, Bazaar and Panbeh Riseh gate, and on the other side, Jame' mosque, Shahzadeh Husein and Aradagh gate. With construction of the governmental Arg in Safavid Era, the avenue had the role of connecting this Arg to Jame' mosque and Ray gate, and horse square was the connecting ring of Arg and Bazaar that accordingly the open space in front of Jame' mosque- kind of Kohneh square- had been the connecting all important point of the urban axis (e.g., "Fig. 10").

Gathering from Abdi Beik poems and itineraries about the avenue's vegetation, it's obvious that the main trees on this avenue had been button-wood tree. Also, referring to the remaining tree from Qajar Era, two rows of the old button-wood tree's age could



Fig. 10. Ghazvin city map drawn by Russians on 1915 [3]

be traced back to the Safavid Era (e.g., "Fig. 11").

Sepah (Shohada) avenue, according to the existing physical and written evidences in texts and related elements, is a big renovation project with urban scale. Therefore, it needs a look that analyzes the problem in scale of building, complex and urban texture. Its success is related to urban programming, urban renovation and urban planning.

Having semi-integration, Sepah avenue and its related elements could be an exclusive type of international example, because there can be less examples like this which calls for integration of these elements and complexes that were a part of historical structure of Qazvin. It should be noted that renovation of this avenue is not limited to a street called the Avenue, and its success is based on renovation of historic garden of Ja'afar Abad and the Traditional Bazaar (e.g., "Fig. 12") and on the other side, on existing Bazaarche axis on the east side of the avenue.



Fig. 11. Sepah avenue in pahlavi era [1]

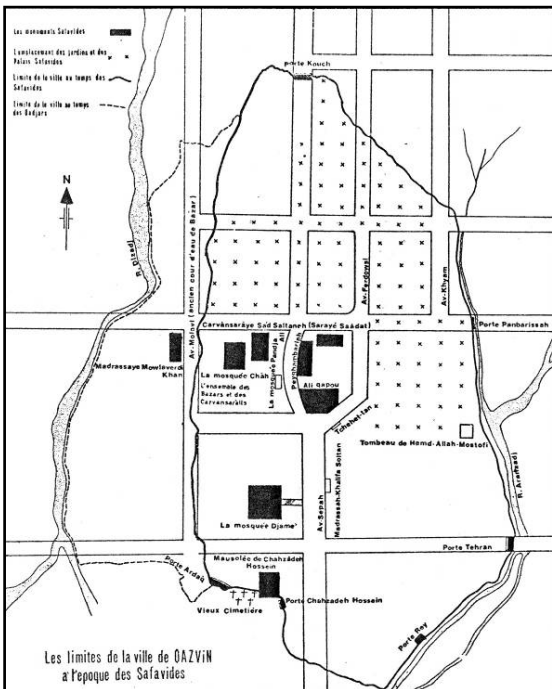


Fig. 12. Ghazvin city map and environment [2]

The enrichment calls for care on global and international regulation at the time of intervention.

In Sepah Avenue, a complex of values was on the different layers of insignificant structure according to its inappropriate form, volume, material and land use. The existence and availability of values in such inharmonic structure from the past and the present is reachable in limited scale.

Because of environmental violation, dominating values and conflicting systems in this axis which prohibit legibility of valuable historical concepts, recognition of valuable matters like historical, cultural, structural and economical layers and faults by clearing the dust from values, protection, and finally, making them legible is the first priority, so that the viewer could be able to feel the position of these values and have the necessary imagination for their connection to the environment (e.g., "Fig. 13, 14 & 15").

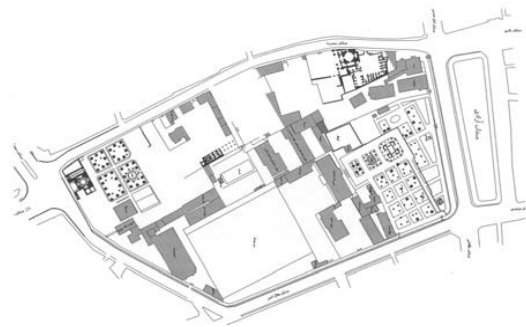


Fig. 13. Sa'adat abad garden (existing condition)

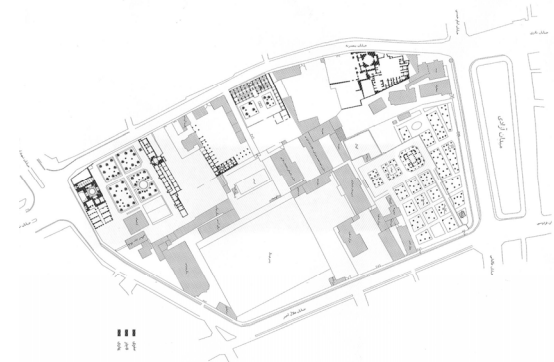


Fig. 14. Sa'adat abad garden (Ghajar Era)

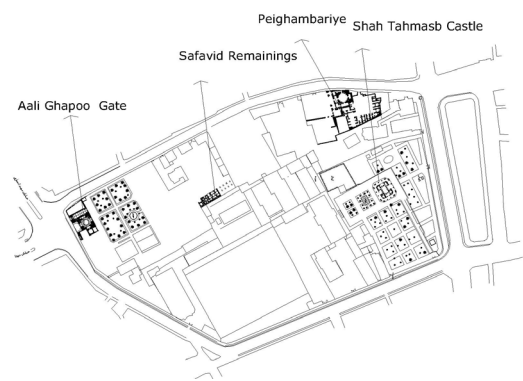


Fig. 15. Sa'adat abad garden (Safavid era)

To reach these goals, it is necessary to Point out the given values with emphasis on formal differences, history and define their strategic roles in design goal for the whole complex, in order to reach maximum efficiency from existing condition. After designing a multi-purpose method, all the subjects that are considered valuable, low value and without value, should be studied and the elements which could be eliminated in the observational study selected so that the damage to the complex could be minimized.

Ultimately, social, cultural and economical context of Sepah Avenue is our guide in achieving these goals: 1- eliminating daily needs of the avenue that are mostly functional. 2- Instrumental look that sees the avenue and its abilities as a tool for achieving higher goals than daily functions and acts for this axis's elements, and notices cultural, sportive and walkway functions (e.g., "Fig. 16"). This is the goal in creating additional value that has been available not by creating density but by proper land use and attracting large social groups and revitalization act in historical parts.

Practically, a searchable matter in Sepah Avenue is the historical pavement with main level of the avenue. Accordingly, it should be said that most parts of these pavements were shaped in current decades. On the other hand surface water discarding system, sewerage, was also regulated according to this. Therefore, it was necessary to search the lower layers (e.g., "Fig. 17& 18") before interfering with the existing levels. If existence of construction layers besides Jame' Mosque and other layer, namely existing water pass on

this place is verified, then, it will be necessary to perform these layers with architectural and renovation provisions.

Other noticeable problem in Safavid, Qajar, the First Pahlavi Era, which are evaluated as valuable architectural era- were signified, renovated and made legible.

Sky line is also a noticeable matter in the subject, so its analysis in the complex, protecting the existing original characteristics and eliminating the elements which interfere with renovation of the historical space of the complex is necessary.

The final problem that is of much importance in studying this avenue is land use problem. The most important strength point of this avenue that has changed its form from an avenue to a lively urban complex and has connected it to daily life is the existence of the Eastern Bazaar (e.g., "Fig. 19") of Sepah Avenue.

On the other hand, this dynamic life with existing movement can be a threat to historic Sepah Avenue. In order to change this threat to an opportunity, doing certain things on the back side of the Eastern axis will be necessary so that loading; unloading and vehicle access from the back of the Eastern axis is facilitated. Moreover, at the same time, pedestrian entrances from the historical Sepah avenue axis by fixing its outer appearance and the side-walks, would double its dynamism and make it a hopping location in the city, once again. Although lively and dynamic elements like Jame' mosque (e.g., "Fig. 20 & 21") and SheikholEslam school- mosque on Sepah Avenue Ensures human traffic, especially in the mornings, renovation of the historic garden and provision of



Fig. 16. View of sepah avenue towards south



Fig. 18. Searching with suggestion and supervision of the author



Fig. 17. searching with suggestion and supervision of the author

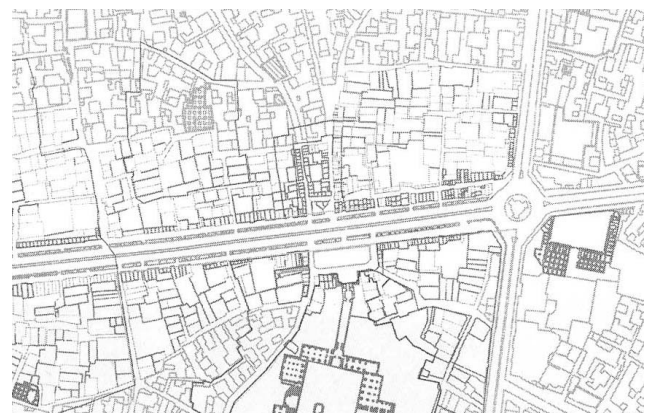


Fig. 19. Sepah Bazarche in eastern part of the avenue



Fig. 20. Jame' mosque in sepah avenue



Fig. 21. Main entrance of jame' mosque in sepah avenue

necessary services for eastern axis, renovation of Sa'dolsaltane Caravansary on southern side of Sepah Avenue and The Traditional Bazaar would give it a much needed dynamism and return it to glory days. Moreover, through traffic management, vehicle traffic load could be decreased and structured. Part of the existing load could be eliminated by banning vehicle traffic between certain hours of the day and night, and instead, certain provisions could be made to improve facilities for the pedestrians and making it easier for them to get from point 'A' to point 'B' on Sepah Avenue.

On the other hand, in the process of renovating this avenue, some improper and inefficient land use should be eliminated. Certain short, mid and long term plans should be put in place so that the Avenue is turned into a beautiful and lively commerce and tourism center of the city. The final goal of the renovation activities is renovation of Ja'afar Abad garden, the Traditional Bazaar of Qazvin and organization of the Eastern Bazaarche of Sepah Avenue and renovation of Sa'dol sultana Caravansary.

It is obvious that midterm plans will follow a unique and unifying design by presenting an appropriate choice of design for each store which is to be renovated.

Final goal in this study is the renovation of the historical avenue with the identity of one main and legible pole in historic periods that presents its different flooring layers, take place in function and social life of domestic and non-domestic civilians. This physical, cultural, religious and economical appearance will be structured on strong bases, because of the connection with the past. In such an avenue, human tendency to move around as pedestrians is naturally strengthened and encouraged. In this process, physical interferences in different aspects of urban design, urban planning and urban renovation is inevitable.

5. Conclusion

1. Strengthening integration of whole definition in old Qazvin city and Sepah Avenue environment:

Creation of integration between Sepah's three poles with its elements consisting of Jame' mosque, Sheikholeslam school-mosque, Caravansary, Sepah Bazaarche ... Traditional Bazaar, Dowlat khaneh (historical garden).

Accordingly, anticipation of provisions to integrate these three poles is necessary.

1.1. Prohibiting designs that just count on necessity of traffic.

1.2. Strengthening urban role of Sepah Avenue:

Strengthening urban role of Sepah Avenue as an urban space prerequisites of these items:

1.2.1. Planning for its provision as urban space

1.2.2. Urban design

1.2.3. Urban renovation

1.2.4. Architectural renovation There are as four important pillars in urban space.

1.3. Elimination of interfering land uses in long term.

1.4. Density control as a major principle in approved design of old urban texture and especial zone of Sepah Avenue.

1.5. Quality control of designs in the environment of the avenue with professional committees. Establishment of professional committee composed of:

1. One aware citizen in city of Qazvin

2. One professional professor from Qazvin architecture and urbanism faculty

3. Mayor's Representative

4. Famous historians in Qazvin

5. Re presentative of cultural heritage preservation.

These designs should have traditional Iranian architectural theme and should obey regulations on the facade.

1.6. Definition of the facade of Sepah Avenue and its valuable buildings environment and proclamation of the frontage from cultural heritage and tourism organization and controlling of main designs and obeying these politics.

1.7. Design and construction of entrance for Sepah Bazaarche loading place from the back of the Bazaarche (their elimination from Sepah Avenue and their provision from eastern side of Bazaarche).

1.8. Provision of parking area at the beginning and end point of the avenue to keep the cars from parking on the avenue.

1.9. Applying traffic management in a way that in some part of the year, week or day and night, vehicle traffic will be closed and pedestrian access is reinforced.

1.10. Cultural, sportive, religious, night life strengthen in Sepah Avenue.

2. Traffic and pedestrian management methods applying creation of the least amount of tension between the store owners.

2.1. New definition of dead space on the avenue.

2.2. Strengthening pedestrian movement in pedestrian access areas by providing paving, coverage of rills, defining the limits for vegetation with pedestrian refulgence design tools.

2.3. Revealing the found results from Qajar's inn building on Sepah Avenue.

2.4. Physical and visual association of open spaces in southern part of Jame' mosque.

2.5. Physical and visual association of open spaces in southern part of Aali Ghapoo.

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