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Narrative of the Other:
Approaching "The Other", Studying Iranian Contemporary Architecture
(From Architects' Point of View)*

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Abstract

Problem statement: Iranian contemporary architecture has consistently been subject to the criticism and analysis of thinkers and architects alike due to its numerous problems. One of these problems, unanimously expressed by influential figures, is the lack of identity. Dealing with the concept of "self" cannot sufficiently resolve current issues. "I" alone, may not act on its own, and requires the presence of "the other" in order to add meaning to action. Neglecting the concept of "the other" in the contemporary architecture has brought about a state of disintegration whereby the architecture seems to have lost image of itself as a manifold issue.

Aim and Research method: The present study seeks to examine the concept of "the other" in architecture and attempts to respond to the question "In architects' and theorizers' opinions, what "the others" are imagined and envisaged by Iranian contemporary architecture and via interaction with what forces are the images shaped?". The nature of the current study is qualitative, and, in terms of research purpose, it is interpretive. The methodology includes open coding and axial coding, so as to address the way we deal with "the other" and to generate new insight.

Conclusion: The findings demonstrate that the views of the majority of Iranian architects and theorizers about "the other" can be classified into six categories "namely past ideas", "people", "market", "government", "the West", "context".

Keywords: *Contemporary, Identity, Iranian Contemporary Architecture, Self, The Other.*

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

The dichotomy of "I" and "the other" is one of

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the essential conflicts in man's understanding of the world. The story of "I" or "identity" can be traced back into history, and as it could be figured out from poststructuralist teachings, identity or "my whoness" is the outcome of encounter with "other". Man, in order to separate himself from other and to find similarities and differences for

making his identity, makes comparisons which are not often flawed by impartial judgment (Fakouhi, 2002). In the present era, which can be considered a subclass of the postmodern era, the question about other seems to be more significant than it ever was. This is due to the fact that, on one hand, economic and social globalization has transformed the way different people interact, and on the other hand, it has given rise to similar interactions in other arenas. Such novel and more extensive encounters with others have brought about identity problematization, and in many cases, identity crisis (Treanor, 2006). Consequently, the traditional and conventional methods of understanding the self are no longer as efficient as they used to be. Therefore, the question of "the other" has been set as the focus of question about identity. In other words, in discussing the existing conditions of Iranian architecture and urbanization, a kind of crisis can be observed indicating the lack of a clear standpoint. This situation leaves the Iranian architecture and urbanization suspended between its past and future, desperate to find its right path. Thus, the present study seeks to explore the whatness and whoness of the concept of "the other" and to elucidate "others" who determine and form the contemporary architecture of Iran. Hence, the main question of the current study is that in interaction with what forces the contemporary architecture of Iran takes shape and what "others" are assumed for it? To respond to the major research question, the following minor questions must be answered: which "others" determine the ideal architecture of a subject called the Iranian architecture? Through what mechanism do these forces exert their influence on contemporary architecture?

Methodology

The "nature" of the current study is "qualitative" and data-driven. In terms of research "purpose", the study is "interpretive" and aims to produce new insight so that the findings can be utilized to improve the existing knowledge about the topic of interest. Hence, the "results" are "pure". The "logic" of the study is "inductive". The concept of "the other" is essentially subjective and implicational so that it is impossible to access the concept through quantitative methods and requires in-depth and semi-structured interviews. In order to answer the research questions, first, a number of architects were recruited through snowball sampling to form the sample for the interviews. Snowball sampling is a non-probability method and is often applied when the subjects of the study are not easily identifiable. In this method, the researcher identifies and selects the first cases and then uses them to find the next group of subjects. The selected participants find and introduce other appropriate cases and finally, the sample reaches the suitable size and all participants are identified and selected (Goodman, 1961). A total of 22 architects constituted the sample. It is noteworthy that in addition to the 22 participants, there were four other potential respondents who refrained from taking part in the interviews. In one particular case (Dr. Alireza Taghaboni), face-to-face interview could not be conducted; as a result, his recent speeches and conversations were used instead. After the interviews were accomplished, the contents were transcribed to undergo qualitative content analysis. About half of the interviews, which covered the greatest variety of the codes, are included in this article as samples. Next, through "open coding", the collected data were read carefully and the units of idea were assigned titles to be categorized into various concepts (first abstraction). In the following step, concepts that seemed to have some thread of commonality were collapsed into more encompassing code labels through the process of "axial coding". Consequently, the second abstraction of the data was accomplished (Fig. 1). Eventually, six themes or higher-order categories were found to represent the major meaning-carrying elements of the text.

It is worth noting that according to qualitative methodology, coding and data collection procedures overlap. In qualitative research studies, the unit of
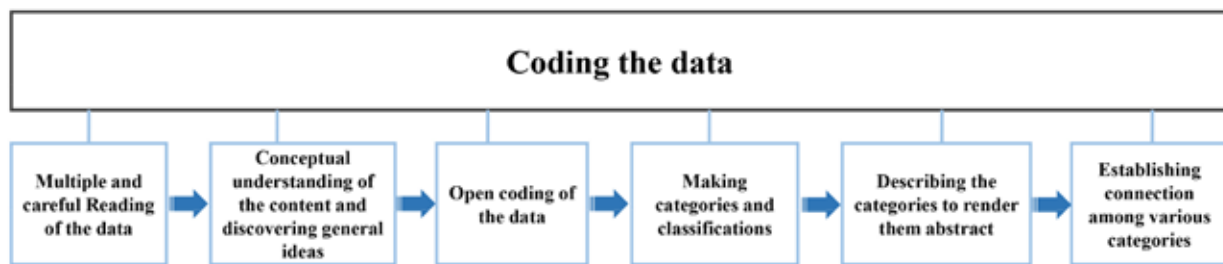
Fig. 1. Qualitative data coding stage actions. Source: Norouz Borazjani, 2018.

content analysis may differ. In the present study, idea was the unit of analysis. This means that any part of the interviews that contained an idea associated with the concept of "the other" or pointed out an architect's understanding of "the other" was taken as a unit of analysis. After completing some interviews, it was clear that the major concepts are being reiterated and revisited so that after the 10th participant was interviewed, no novel ideas or concepts could be added to the coding procedure and "theoretical saturation" was reached (Fig. 2).

Theoretical Background and Literature Review

Reviewing the related literature revealed that no study has been conducted on reconsidering the contemporary architecture of Iran from the perspective of "other". Therefore, the literature can be divided into two categories: 1. Numerous studies that have been done in recent years about "considering the contemporary architecture of Iran" from various aspects (see Table 1). A review of the literature suggests that concepts such as modernity, gap between traditions and modernity in Iran, globalization and identity crisis are among the factors which have continually influenced architects' dealing with others.

2. The literature on the concept of "the other": a glance at thinkers' opinions about "the other" indicates that self and "the other" have always depended on one another for understanding themselves and are, thus, interdependent. What can jeopardize interpretation and explication of "the other" is one's understanding of "the other" and way of approaching it. Table 3 presents the opinions of scholars of different sciences about the concept of "self".

For those thinkers residing in the school of phenomenology, other is the self and its manifestation in universal possibilities. It is only through perception and understanding of other that self could be realized. On the other hand, existentialist scholars reconstruct other as existence and primacy of existence over their nature. Lacan and Kristeva, as psychoanalysts, try to explain other in man's subconscious desires and their biological-psychological functions since birth.

The Conditions of the Internal and External Contemporary World

• Contemporariness

Contemporary, as arbitrarily set by scholars and researchers, is used to refer to the last 150 to 200 years (Kiani, 2006). Sometimes contemporary era is equated with the last two centuries. Regarding the contemporary architecture of Iran, some scholars consider the architecture of post-constitutional revolution; however, the phrase "contemporary architecture" connotes another sense that transcends the limits of the contemporary century. In other words, "twentieth century architecture" is deemed the same as our contemporary architecture (1900 up to now) (Mokhtari, 2017).

• Developments and Contemporary External Paradigms (world-wide)

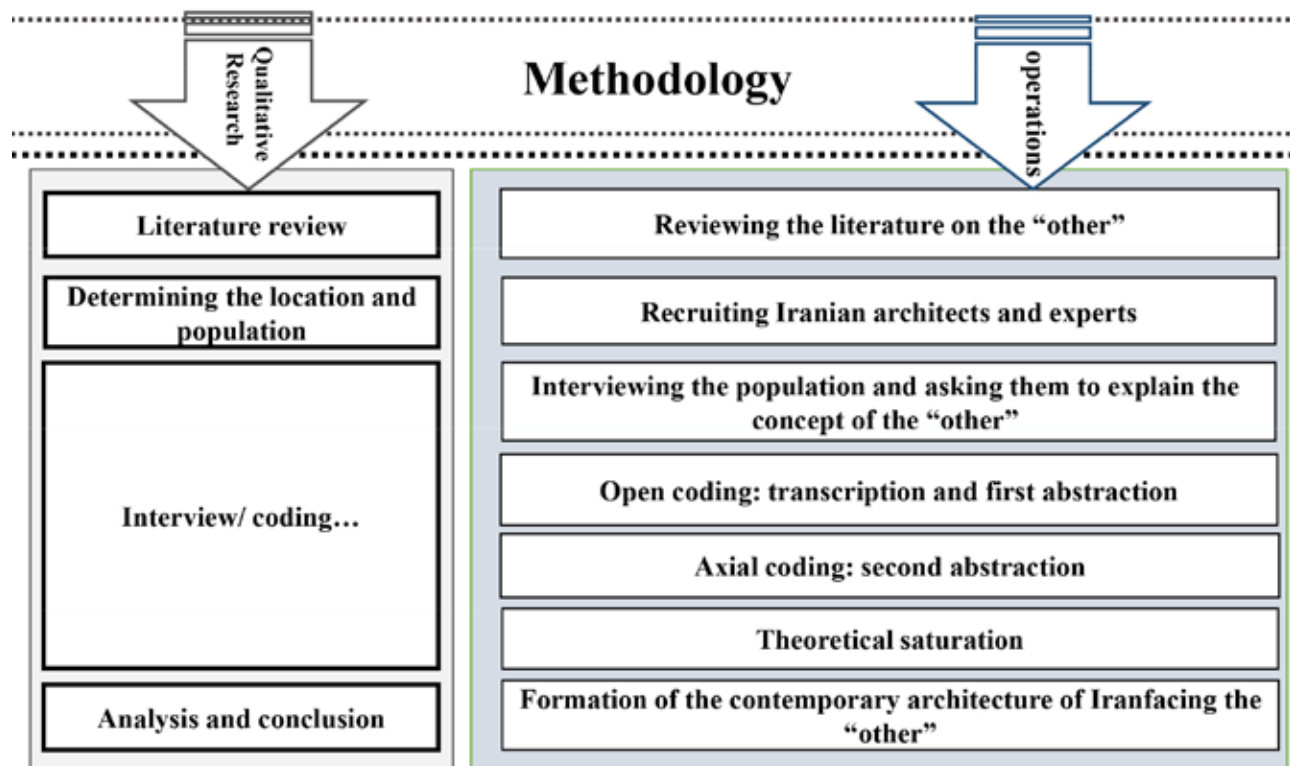The current era has undergone enormous

Fig. 2. General design of the study. Source: authors.

cultural, scientific, technological, economic, political, environmental changes in the wake of industrialization and then globalization. Even personal lives and identities of people have been affected by these phenomena (Castells, 2001). Establishment of modern governments and rise of capitalism added unprecedented dimensions to the relationship between architecture and political power. Cities became a model of governments' rule over the territory and a symbol of ruling rationality (Asgari, 2017). By starting from its own specific issues, modern architecture managed to create an ideological situation to integrate design at all levels with a comprehensive project focusing on reorganization of production, distribution and consumption in capitalist cities. Since the mid-1990s, postmodernism emerged in the form of two fields of academic enquiry namely, structuralism and post-structuralism and was articulated by using terms such as modern and postmodern. This is worth mentioning that post-structuralism gave rise to a novel situation in which discourse of skepticism,

cynicism, disbelief and incredulity engendered unprecedented meta-narrations. It can be stated that history is a multilayered narration in our time, and the coeval postmodern condition incorporates traditional, modern and postmodern attributes (Gibbons & Bourimer, 1981).

• **Developments and Contemporary Internal Paradigms (Iran)**

After entering modernity, the Iranian man, in absolute amazement, noticed the stunning progress of the West and, on the contrary, faced Iran's humiliating defeats against Russia. As a result, he suffered a kind of self-disrespect. The approach of modernity gave us a conscience split between traditions and modernity. Consequently, Iranian traditional conscience was to deal with globalization (Jahanbagloo, 2008). The first decade of the 1900s was the climax of modernist movements in architecture, so that some researchers assume it the inception of westernization in the history of Iranian architecture. This style of architecture in early modernism cut all the connections with the past and led to the current

Table 1. Exploring the literature on considering the contemporary architecture of Iran in recent years. Source: authors.

Author	Title	Focus
Mohsen Habibi	Intellectual Trends in the Contemporary Architecture of Iran and Urbanism (1979-2003)	Three lines of thought in architecture and urbanization during 1981-2001 include: 1. Culturalism; 2. Innovation; and 3. Meta-innovation (Habibi, 2006)
Sirous Bavar	The Advent of New Architecture in Iran	Postwar construction includes two parts. Regarding architecture and urbanization, Tehran, as the major center of modern civilization in Iran, is immersed in a chaos of eclecticism and absurdity. If necessary measures are not taken, the situation will worsen (Bavar, 2009)
Iraj Etesam	Architecture, harmony and globalization	The present architecture is influenced by architectural globalization. In the first globalization "national originality", in the second globalization "companies' originality" and nowadays "individual originality" are prominent issues (Etesam, 2010).
Ali-Akbar Saremi	Weaving in and out and still Architecture and My Life's Journey	The author classifies the post-revolution era on the basis of three important events: first, quest for finding Iranian and Islamic identity simultaneous with European postmodern historical era; second, after the Iran-Iraq war, uttered correctly or incorrectly, "construction era", fluctuations in land prices as investment or savings items; third, a new social class of developers or so-called "jerry-builders" (Saremi, 2010)
Mansour Falamaki	Gaps and difficulties between traditional and modern architecture of Iran	Our problem lies in the statement of problems and the methods of facing them, not in choosing between modern or traditional architecture. The author believes that models experienced in the cultural and social milieus of other countries cannot be adopted in Iran without taking account of our native culture and values (Falamaki, 2010a)
Mansour Falamaki	Roots and tendencies of contemporary architecture of Iran	It is not just our cities that are stricken and now lie in crisis. The contemporary architecture of Iran has three major visions behind it: 1) Iran's ancient and traditional architecture, 2) architecture and urbanization of central Europe, 3) experiences from "modern architecture movement" (Falamaki, 2010b)
Amir Bani-Masoud	Iranian Contemporary Architecture	Biographies of significant architects and buildings since the beginning of Qajar dynasty till now were studied and the post-revolution architectural trends were schematically classified into eight groups (Bani-Masoud, 2011)
Vahid Ghobadian	Styles and Concepts in Iranian Contemporary Architecture	This book is designed in three sections. Each section covers one historical epoch: Qajar, Pahlavi and the Islamic republic. First, the historical events and then urbanization and architectural developments are explained and analyzed (Ghobadian, 2013)
Farrokh Bavar	Center of gravity in historical memory" In: the thought of contemporary Iranian architects	The gap between Iranian traditions and modernity is not observed in other ancient countries. Their architectural continuity is absent in Iranian architecture (Bavar, 2014)
Hamid-Reza Ansari	An introduction to Contemporary Architecture of Iran	This book is an analysis of Iran's contemporary architecture from the Qajar epoch till now. It attempts to examine architecture regarding its encounter with the west (Ansari, 2016)
Eskandar Mokhtari	The modern architecture heritage of Iran	This book offers a description of Pahlavi and Islamic Republic constructions. Also, it discusses issues of conservation and mending of the buildings (Mokhtari, 2017)

Table 2. Exploring some of the non-persian studies on considering the contemporary architecture of Iran in recent years. Source: authors.

Author	Title	Focus
Darab Diba and Mozayan Dehbashi	Trends in Modern Iranian Architecture	Modern architecture movement in Iran (Diba and Dehbashi, 2004)
Saereh Zabihi	Evaluating the Effects of Modern Movement on Contemporary Residential Buildings in Iran's Capital City-Tehran	Investigating the developments after modernity entered Iran (Zabihi, 2010)
Saeid Haghir	Les Sources de L'ArchitectureContemporaine en Iran (depuis la revolution islamique 1979)	The sources of contemporary architecture in Iran, a systematic and comprehensive view to the contemporary architecture of Iran after the Islamic Revolution (Haghir, 2010)
Mohammad Mahdavinejad, Ameneh Doroudgar and Abdolbaghi Moradchelleh	The Impacts of Revivalist Trends on the Contemporary Architecture of Iran (1977-2011)	Events of contemporary architecture of Iran after the revolution, studying the identity of Iranian architecture (Mahdavinejad, Doroudgar and Moradchelleh, 2012)
Farshad Farrahi	World of Similitude: The Metamorphosis of Iranian Architecture	Metamorphosis of architecture from ancient times till now, various semantic layers, simultaneity with postmodern movement or the Islamic revolution of Iran and the slogan of "return to origins and roots", the new "world of similitudes" (Farrahi, 2012)
Sara Hamzehloo, Iraj Etesam and Azadeh Shahcheraghi	The Evolution of the Tendencies of Contemporary Architecture of Iran Confronting the Globalization Phenomenon and the Emergence of Information and Communication Technology	Identity crisis, globalization, challenges to the contemporary architecture of Iran (Hamzehloo, Etesam and Shahcheraghi, 2015)

trend in Iranian architecture (Mokhtari, 2017). Two decades later, between 1925 to 1945, fundamental changes in social and political history of Iran took place. The shift from Qajar to Pahlavi dynasty was the main manifestation of those changes. Obviously, the rapid technical, military, economic development of the West became an inspiration and had a significant impact on the social and political developments of Iran. Turning towards the West in the contemporary architecture of Iran was the outcome of a cultural approach and the modern architectural movement of Iran has been grounded on this approach (Ibid.). During the early years of the Islamic revolution, attention was turned towards Islamic notions of architecture and urbanization, as well as returning to architectural identity. Thus, the dominant discourse concentrated on directing Iranian architecture towards an architecture with independent identity which relies on the heritage of Iranian and Islamic architecture (Habibi, 2006). Three major trends could

be recognized in the post-revolution architecture of Iran: modern adoption of old models of Iranian architecture; conceptual adoption of old models of Iranian architecture including legends and cultural memories; tendency to employ up-to-date technology (Mahdavinejad, Bemanian & Khaksar, 2010).

Contemporary architecture of Iran and Identity Crisis

In a historical country like Iran with multiple ethnic and national subcultures, identity crisis becomes even more complicated. Besides, swift communication will not leave a room for introductory periods; It revolutionizes everything overnight (Qotbi, 2008). In addition to coexistence of traditional and modern elements in Iranian society, our society is being affected by postmodern approach in the age of globalization and disappearance of borders; While the cultural paradigm of Iran suffers from efficiency crisis due to internal weaknesses and the impacts of modernity and

Table 3. The concept of "the other" from the points of view of scholars in different disciplines. Source: author's.

School	Scholar	Scholar's Opinion about Other
phenomenology	Hegel	Conflict between self and other for mutual recognition- other must be accepted as a similar being- clash is the outcome of supremacy and subordination (Hegel, 2008)
	Husserl	I understand other and other understands me- other is the my reflection while he is not- other guarantees my thought and contemplation (Husserl, 2007)
	Heidegger	Existence (Dasein) means existing by other. Existence lives beside other existences. The individual publishing originality threatens existence (Maghdouri & Mostafavi, 2015)
	Merleau-Ponty	In relation to Heidegger's concept of togetherness- conscious beings are my others in experiencing the common world. Being in the world is materialized through dialogue, dialogue with a different other (Primozic, 2008)
	levinas	God is other of the universe and to move towards him, one must move towards other. Existence of subject requires the existence of other. We have an ethical responsibility about other (Jahanbagloo, 2005), (Zaimaran, 2010)
existentialism	Karl Jaspers	Existence depends on others' existence. To develop me, others are required. Perfect human forms in relation with other (Jaspers, 2010)
	Jean Paul Sartre	Meeting and facing other- a conflict escalates and one must free himself from other because freedom is more important.
	Simone de Beauvoir	Man is subject and woman is other- in masculism, woman is useless (Shahmiri, 2010)
	Gabriel Marcel	Two conditions are necessary to make self and other possible: commitment and accessibility of presence- you must not change into that (Maghdouri & Mostafavi, 2015)
psychoanalysis	Jacques Lacan	There is psychoanalytic logic behind creation of other. It is created at birth (Zaimaran, 2010) -Lacan considers signs of "the other" in decentralization relationship or "signifier" within the subconscious. In his opinion, an individual's obsessive moods always signify "the other" (Van Pelt, 2000). Indispensability from the changes in man's desire for developing interest in and recognition of others- desire and urge mean desire for "the other", and that "the other" has a determining role in individuals' sociability (Sharp, 2002).
	Julia Kristeva	One of the roots of other can be found in nationalism and nations devoid of nationalism can be the panacea (Mcafee, 2013)

modernism, architecture, as a part of Iranian culture, is engaged in identity crisis and acute confusion (Shahbazi Chegeni, Dadkhah & Moeini, 2014). Architecture of Iran, in the light of information technology and global communication, has provided facilities and an environment where different layers of meaning, via metamorphosis from ancient times to the present era, have been transformed into a distinctive world of meaning and imagination which is well beyond the limited scope of contemporary architecture of Iran (Farahi, 2012). In the early 1980s, the postmodern movement in architecture coincided with the Islamic revolution and its cause to "return to origins and roots" which had been popular for almost a decade. Although this new social and political situation brought a unique opportunity to Iranian architecture to offer a novel "world of similitudes" to international architecture; however, contemporary architecture of Iran has so far failed to develop and utilize its own theory and techniques and has been unable to evolve into a dynamic architectural movement (Ibid.).

The magnitude of criticism leveled at the current situation in architecture and urbanization has been so enormous that even a large number of architects, civil engineers, sociologists, psychologists, artists and other thinkers have joined the critics. Some of their critiques and comments are summarized in Table 4.

Apart from expressing dissatisfaction with the

Table 4. Development of our current architecture from some experts' point Of view. Source: authors.

Scholar	Development of Our Current Architecture
Nader Ardalan	Still has not found itself; lacking innovation and spatial, structural, symbolic passion; recurring familiar past faces with overemphasis on decorations to hide its own unoriginality; negligent of the possibility of integrating tradition with contemporary world technology in an innovative fashion (Hashemi, 1995)
Seyed Mohammad Beheshti	Like an orchestra comprising of engineering, land speculation, jerry-building, indifference to destruction of national wealth, interference with and invasion of the nature, all in full harmony that annoys ears with raucous sounds every now and time after time (Beheshti, 2006)
Mohammd Karim Pirnia	It has not risen from beneath the self-loss rubble of Qajar era (Hashemi, 1995)
Mahmood Tavasoli	It is bewildered (Ibid.)
Yaghoub Daneshdoust	Inheritor of a 100-year-old gap, bewildered, moody and precarious, imitator and devoid of Iranian culture (Hashemi, 1995)
Darab Diba	It has lost identity and the past spiritual and cultural air (Ibid.)
Mohammad Reza Haeri	Not architecture, but a soulless sort of construction, ignorant of spatial perception and modern architectural achievements and at the same time, negligent of the spatial perception of the past architecture (Hashemi, 1995)
Eesa Hojat	Different from the past. Inevitably, prioritizing difference would oppose sustainable identity (Hojat, 2005)
Hossein Soltanzadeh	Lacking dignity among people, suffering from debasement of aesthetic values to the level of "fashion" and shortage of serious research (Hashemi, 1995)
Aliakbar Saremi	Expresses their common emotions especially about their new developments. It means that they are similarly growing and soaring (Saremi, 2003)
Mohammad Amin Mirfenderski	Continuation of architectural imitation from the world "fashion", devoid of ideas and values (Hashemi, 1995)
Seyed Hadi Mirmiran	Mediocre and an arid imitation of world styles

present situation, some critics believe that the major cause is the reluctance of the contemporary architecture to comply with the values and cultural principles of the traditional architecture. Hence, the contemporary is entangled with chronic self-alienation and is continually striving to create different works (Moazami, 2007). In addition, some scholars point to concrete examples of the disarray, insisting that unfamiliarity with philosophy of popular western styles and amateurish, crude and irrational imitation of formal principles and images of the western architecture highlight weakness of character in our architecture (Zebarjadian, 2003). Nonetheless, a kind of passive optimism towards pluralism and plurality can be seen among Iranian experts.

• **Identity Somewhere between Self and "the Other"**

One of the key concepts in the discussion about "the other" is identity. Modern linguistic theorists believe that identity is a "social construction" and the outcome of semantic conflicts and representations (using language to produce meaning). In other words, identity always depends on the relationship between various words within a meaningful system. For instance, as Saussure explained, signification of the words day and night is made possible by their actual discrepancy. Also, Zigmunt Bauman held that identity ensures dichotomy and dualism. As a case in point, woman is the other of man; animal is the other of human (Bauman, 1991). Othering is a major function of representation

(use of language) and "the other" is always the outcome of representation. Identity, in public and political arenas, is not an individual, personal and psychological issue; rather, it is a collective phenomenon which is related to cultural, historical and belief foundations of any society. Hence, language becomes a tool to produce meaning, make an identity prominent and discard another identity (Akvani, 2012). George Herbert Mead in his book mind, self and society notes that social identities are formed through action and reaction with "the other" classes, ethnicities and groups; thus, whenever we think of ourselves, we compare us with others. The ideas of similarity and difference constitute the basis of "identity' and "alterity". Therefore, other is formed on the concept of difference and discrepancy. This aspect of identity formation and social belongingness is rooted in comparing oneself with other (Zevallos, 2011).

• **Some Micro-Narratives within the Framework of "the Other"**
If we assume modernism as the age of ideology creation, postmodernism can be called the end of ideologies. Postmodernism maintains that issues such as pluralism, multiple interpretations and pluralistic society give rise to micro-narratives that would unavoidably replace mega-narratives. Generally, postmodernism does not tolerate permanent and sustainable identities, but emphasizes plurality of identities. Therefore, after the modern era, the world would be a pluralistic arena where postmodern man can save himself from getting entangled in stability and stagnation. In postmodern terms, identity ensures selfhood. Such a perspective explains the world in association with other or alterity (Madavinejad et al., 2010). Metanarrative, in modern view, is a story that replaces plural truths with mythological relationships. In such metanarratives, philosophy, politics, theology, culture, art, literature, cultural and social theories, literary criticism and theory and other sections of humanities and social sciences are intermingled into an amazing system (Nozari, 2000). Jean-

Francois Lyotard, analyzing his theories, has repeatedly mentioned vocabularies of "mega-narratives" (Mazrouei & Gharibi Mofrad, 2014). He appeals to linguistic games theory and makes use of Kuhn's teachings in the philosophy of science. Kuhn deems scientific paradigms incomparable (Kuhn, 1970). Lyotard construes society as a combination of various realms and activities that are not regulated or governed by any set rules or criteria. In postmodern societies, no mega-narrative can be found and admission of a vision by the individuals is subject to cultural, historical, social and political reasons, hence, rationally unjustifiable. Because no vision can be preferred to another vision (Qomi, 2005).

• **"The Other", Multilingualism and Social Identity Developments**
Currently, freedom of linguistic games from metanarratives is not confined to knowledge and research; Social identities, too, convert in this framework and when metanarratives are given up, human subjects move beyond the old standardizing boundaries and, consequently, individual identities may crystalize in a variety of social, cultural, political, ethical and economic types and take on pluralistic forms.

Jacques Lacan, examining alterity and otherness, explicated semiotics of "the other" in decentralizing relationship which are based on signifiers within the subconscious arena (Van Pelt, 2000) and connected it to decentralization of the subject.Lacan's significant attention to "game theory" is especially important in this regard. Because game theory represents an earnest attempt to recognize individuals' possibilities in their specific conditions. According to him, desire and urge mean desire for "the other" and that "the other" has a determining role in individuals' socialization (Sharp, 2002). For the first time, Julia Kristeva, while discussing notions of Lacan and Bakhtin in her article "word, dialogue, novel" (Le mot, Le dialogue, Le roman), introduced the term intertextuality to the realm of literary criticism

and theory (Allen, 2013). By using the term intertextuality, she yearned to create a synthesis of the conflicting Saussurian structuralist semiotics and Bakhtin's dialogic imagination (Holquist, 1990). She believed that, as speaking animals, we are all subjects in semiotic and symbolic processes and constitute game systems (Mcafee, 2013). Ideas put forth by Lacan, Bakhtin and Kristeva

suggest that human subject and boundaries of his understanding of selfhood is reached in dialectical encounter with other, not in a state of isolation and abstraction. This understanding of selfhood, recognizable in the concept of identity, loses its conceptual coherence as a mega-narrative and is then broken down into a pluralistic network of "other's micro-narratives" (Fig. 3).
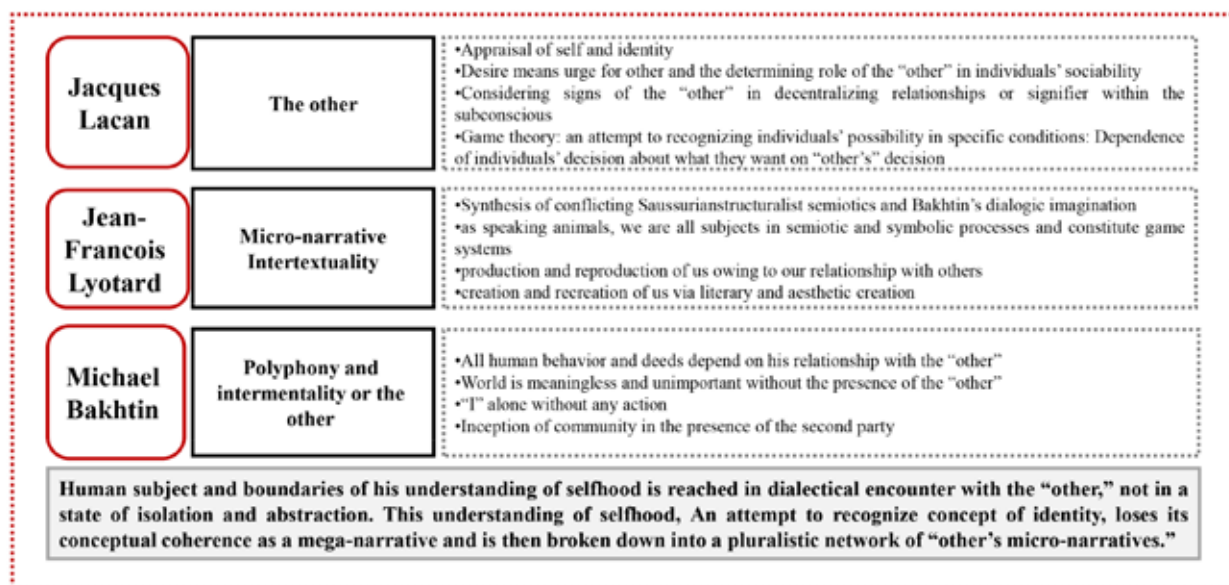

Fig. 3. Diagram of analytical notions of Lacan, Lyotard and Bakhtin and their relationship with the concepts of "the other" and " multilingualism". Source: authors.

Discussion

• "The Other" in Contemporary Architecture of Iran from Architects' Points of View

Identity is not a conscious phenomenon and requires external view and perception of audience. Therefore, contemporary architecture needs to adopt principles and adjust them to suit materials, habits, climate and traditions in order to accommodate itself to local conditions and identity. Another property of identity is its plurality. It means that identity has a great number of manifestations and cannot be responded by resorting to a single solution (Correa, 1983). To obtain architects' and experts' views about the concept of "the other", as described in the method section, interviews were conducted. The summarized results are presented in Tables 5, 6 and 7.

Since the research question centered on finding formation factorsof contemporary architecture of Iran mediated by the concept of "the other", this research study does not require selective coding for theorization. At the end of the analysis, through extracting tables and conceptual models from the above analyses, architects' views on the concept of "the other" were explicated.

Conclusion

Examination of contemporary architecture of Iran facing "the other" provokes new theoretical challenges and, as a result, warrants analysis and deliberation on contemporary architecture narratives and concept of identity. In this regard, philosophers' theoretical inquiry into concepts of "self" and "the other" have been ubiquitous.

Table 5. Architects' points of view on the concept of "the other", first coding categorization (interviewer: Seyedeh-Sedigheh Mirgozar). Source: authors.

Architect	Time/place	Statements Selected from the Text and Interviewer's Inference	Open Coding
Reza Daneshmir	April 2019/ Fluid Motion Architects	Every work of architecture must feature three dimensions: "Architectural discipline" in general: including history of architecture and its development; "Environment": including context, politics, history, capital, employer etc.; Project program: typology. "The other" is myself, architect's self. I mean there is an architectural discipline. You have to know it. It is important how you, as an architect, take position on the discipline. In other words, what is your interpretation of architectural discipline? Only then you can enter a dialogue with architectural discipline. I think the only thing which is important is architectural discipline. Of course there are other "others": context, environment, program, material, construction techniques etc.	Architect him/herself
Kourosh Rafiei	February 2019/ KouroshRafiei Design Studio	The major "the other" can be architect's self. One other lies in the architectural sphere that is there; actually, we look for confirmation and if we do not, we will be thrown out of the architectural sphere. Second, the next "the other" is world architecture which is speeding up. We would like to keep pace with world architecture and receive confirmation from it. It can be said that another "the other" is the employer. Employers are of different kinds: governmental or private. You have to work so that architecture can respond to the market and do business (economic factor). In Amaj Darman project, architecture itself was of concern to me (as a self-referent discipline). There are many more items, for example, other disciplines. When you construct a building, structural, mechanical and electrical engineers get involved. You have to respond to these "others" as well. Upstream regulations Government	Architecture (as a self-referent discipline), architectural sphere (architecture community), employer, world architecture, economy, other disciplines, upstream regulations, government
Nashid Nabian	April 2019/ Shift Design Office	I translate what you call influential forces of architecture into shaping forces of architecture. In architecture there are many forces that affect different types of projects. If we want to limit our discussion to only those forces that affect public projects or public aspects of projects, I would like to specify three out-of-discipline forces that particularly influence public projects or public aspects of private projects: One of them is "tension of public and private sectors" in Iran. Something that makes the situation in Iran drastically different from that of other countries is that the public sector is politicized by ideology. Another "the other" is the tension. between official and unofficial layers in the public sector which is still the outcome of politicization. This factor and the previous one, have a resistant dimension to them. The private sector resists against the public sector. The unofficial layer resists against the official one. Finally, there is politicizing at higher-order levels of urban management. The regulations, even for infill projects, allow only specific types to be built.	tension of Private/public sectors, official and unofficial layers of public sector, politicization at higher-order levels of urban management
Mahmood Rezaei	April 2018/ Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch	I think "the other" exists in the architectural design, the resulting product and the constructed design which refers to something. I believe that architectural design is essentially a representation of something else. In my idea, the issue of presentation is another "other". Professional networking Public network, support or contribution ideology	Representation, presentation, Professional networking, public contribution, ideology

Table 6. Architects' views on the concept of "the other", second coding categorization (interviewer: Seyedeh-Sedigheh Mirgozar). Source: authors.

Architect	Time/place	Statements selected from the text and interviewer's inference	Open coding
Alireza Taghaboni	February 2019/ University of Tehran, his speech at unveiling ceremony of the book	I would like to summarize in a trilogy the consequences of social, economic and political momenta for a city We need the point of view of "the other" to know ourselves. We can know ourselves from "other's" viewpoint. Generally, it is in dialogue with "the other" that we figure out our position and the subject we deal with. In this postmodern world, with pluralistic narratives we are constantly connected to incompletion and polycentricism. We can find our position and stance via focusing on these questions: How do we relate to these three poles? How can we initiate critical action with them? How can we extract our architectural questions from them? I believe that, today, our problem in architecture is not finding answers, but formulating correct questions and answering them. In our current situation in Iran, we appraise our condition with three important "others" and, in my opinion, our stance on them shows where our contemporary position is. On one hand, we face a "governing body" that has a clear approach, an ideological one. On the other hand, there is a "market" striving to maximize its capital, and yet, there is also the "west". West: discourse, knowledge, and instruments of power and judgment are produced by this "other". Market: it has two distinct properties: marketizing the atmosphere and looking for profit which is essentially short-term. Our relationship with the west has been a traumatic one. Throughout our history, we have had a love and hate attitude towards it. The whole Iranian intellectual action depends on it. The first intellectual question was "why have we fallen behind?" Government: government has an official interpretation of history.	Market, government (politics), west
Mohammad Yaser Mousapour	April 2019/ architectures' center	One of the theoretical instruction needs in our country is to focus on the relationship between architecture and other external discourses such as economy, politics, philosophy etc. and how architecture can be interpreted either in connection to its own native relations or concepts of other disciplines. I think the most important "the other" of architecture after 1960, is the people. It is the society. an "other" is the people. Another one is the market. But "people" form the most significant one. Even the market tries to interpret the tendencies of the people. Market mediates the desires of people, and that is why I consider them very important. Power is another "other". It has governmental layers, municipality, urban management etc.	People, market, power
Reza Asgari	April 2019/ Amayesh Engineering Group	For me, "other' can be defined in four levels: The first layer is "the other" in philosophical level (philosophical level: identity, interaction with "the other", social embodiment, public space, public territory, public sphere) The next one is psychoanalytical level (desire/ Jacques Lacan's big "the other" and small "the other", Lyotard's mega-narratives etc.) East/West (dealing with "the other" at cultural level or cultural relativity) Issues inside/outside the discipline: the inside issues may include generating ideas for sphere organization or history of architecture, typology of architecture, architectural syntax, language of architecture etc. outside issues include function, site, context, social issues, political issues etc. West, capital and market (economic state) → capitalism, government (political state), upstream regulations, ownership, construction techniques, academic sphere (intellectual state) which may incorporate architectural judgment and instruction. The way architects think about architecture, overemphasizes architectural forms: I believe formalism is itself a big "other".	West, capital and market (economic state), capitalism, government (political state), academic sphere (intellectual state), upstream regulations, ownership, construction techniques
Behrouz Marbaghi	March 2019/ Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch	In today's world, in my idea, architecture must only be assessed by itself. Patrick Schumacher offered a definition of architecture and believes that architecture isan interactive network of relationships that form a self-constructive system. If we recognize architecture as a system, coupling of architecture and market systems can create a good economic system. If such a system is nonexistent, then, architecture would diminish to sheer jerry-building. In my opinion, market, art, politics and technology are "others". These four are the most influential "others". The most effective among them is the market. Technology affects architecture, yet it is not architecture, and I think architecture is superior to "other".	Market, art, politics, technology

Table 7. Architects' views on the concept of "the other", third coding categorization (interviewer: Seyedeh-Sedigheh Mirgozar). Source: authors.

Architect	Time/place	Statements selected from the text and interviewer's inference	Open coding
Amirhossein Taheri	April 2019/ Telephone interview	I think ownership is the greatest "the other"; the major boundary of "the other" starts from ownership. "the other" in this sense: sometimes we admire it. Sometimes we want to defeat it and still sometimes, we want to prove ourselves better than it. Existence of "the other" is the statement of the problem not its confirmation. The issue of ownership (mine, yours etc.) makes the first border. This creates "the other" and then, "the other" grows stronger so that you would seek its confirmation. When "the other" grows weaker, you would crush it. You deal with it in different ways. I see this in all public buildings to a greater or lesser degree. Citizen may become another "other". Also, capital, blackmail and power form "other". Then, it is an external force.	Ownership, capital, blackmail, citizen, power
Mohammadreza Haeri	May 2019/ telephone interview	The most important "other" is the powerful real estate market which pulls everyone towards itself. I believe the events, after 1960, led to "construction without formed architecture" which has never been experienced in our architecture. Everything you draw, design or build must bear meaning and the meaning needs to originate from a cultural source. By culture, I refer to meaning, the meaning that is associated with lifestyle. Now, lifestyle has become "other". However, in 1960s, it was not. I think "social contracts", "lifestyle" and "meanings" constitute "other".	Powerful real estate market, property, social contract, lifestyle, meaning
Behrouz Mansouri	February 2019/ Engineering Group	One of the "others" is upstream urban regulations and projects. They are inevitable. The next "the other" is economy. Normally, a feasibility study is conducted before a project is started to see if the project is economically justifiable and efficacious. In my projects, the West is not an "other". In the current pluralistic era, context is more significant; I believe that the context of Iranian architecture is not formal. Rather, subjective and content concepts are preferred.	Employer, upstream urban regulations and projects, economic feasibility study, context

The realm of architecture has been no exception because dealing with "self" and "identity" alone cannot lead to a deep understanding of the current state of contemporary architecture of Iran. In their discussion of nature and identity, the majority of Iranian and Western researchers have analyzed "the other" as an isolated, abstract concept. This approach has further complicated our understanding of the current situation in Iranian architecture and in association with the West and modern architecture. Therefore, the present study sought to pose questions in order to pave the way for further elaboration and deeper understanding of bilateral interactions, particularly, in the relationship between contemporary Iranian architects and modern Western architecture. These questions may shed light on various variables resulting from the interaction between Iranian architects' identity and the alterity which originates from modern Western architects, thereby opening up new paths for further research.

Attention to and examination of recent movements such as structuralism and post-structuralism by architects may bring about a resolution of complicated problems in understanding the crisis of the present architecture. Recapitulation of the interview data demonstrates that although there are different mental labels for the concept of other, the interviewed architects were able to comprehend the state of contemporary architecture of Iran mediated by the concept of other. In spite of all disagreements in language and labeling, the concept commonly came from the same source. Consequently, common ideas from axial coding were obtained which are classified into six final categories including: "past ideas", "people", "economy", "government", "world architecture", and "background" (Fig. 4). In response to the second question, some subclasses were extracted and placed under the main categories. The major forces (six final categories) exert their impact on the contemporary architecture.

Fig. 4. Conceptual model of formation of contemporary architecture of Iran in dealing with "the other" through open and axial coding, Source: authors.

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