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Original Research Article

The Challenge of the Authenticity of the Work and the Environment Around it in Open-air Museums (Guilan Rural Heritage Museum)

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Abstract

Problem statement: Today, the status and values of architecture and indigenous habitats and their conservation have become increasingly important, and for this reason, the idea of creating open-air museums is expanding. Despite the variety of topics, these museums have one thing in common, and that is the transfer of structures from the original location to the museum. This study is concerned with the main problem as the manner of conserving hidden values such as authenticity when moving the piece from the original location to the open-air museum. Also, with what changes would be made in the authenticity of the work and the environment around it, in terms of principles of architectural conservation, by dismantling and transportation of house components from the original location and reconstructing them in the new space and the museum?

Research objective: The study aims to investigate the authenticity of the works in open-air museums and the impact of the surrounding environment on the authenticity of their spirit.

Research method: This article uses a descriptive-analytical method with documentary and field tools, and experiences obtained from the project of Guilan Rural Heritage Museum. Considering the importance of the subject, this is a fundamental-applied article.

Conclusion: The study found that although by separating an architectural work from its original climate and environment, the authenticity of the work's spirit and the surrounding environment is distorted, but based on the comprehensive view of the theory of the authenticity of existence (Existentialism), the continuity of the integrated existential movement of the work towards perfection is still sought after. Also, the creation of facilities to preserve and save the body of the work in another place, providing the opportunity for people to get acquainted with architecture, customs and unwritten knowledge of architecture, and its material and spiritual information, thus justifies the change of materials and even the change of use and spatial context of the work.

Keywords: *Open-air museum, Rural Heritage Museum, Transportation of structure, the authenticity of the work, Authenticity of the surrounding environment.*

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Introduction and statement of the problem

In open-air museums (under various names, called for example The Museum of Life or The Open-Air Museum), the structures are reconstructed after being dismantled and transferred from the original location to the museum space. In most open-air museums, the transfer of architectural work is based on standard methods and a similar process, and the main material of the structures is wood.

The issue of open-air museums is a new topic in Iran. The only kind of this museum in Iran is the Guilan Rural Heritage Museum (The Golestan Rural Heritage Museum in Gorgan is starting and it is passing its early stages). Due to the lack of resources and experience, it is necessary to discuss conservation issues in open-air museums and conduct fundamental studies on these museums. Here, the conservation of hidden values of the work, such as authenticity, when moving from the original location and establishing in the open-air museum is presented as the main issue, and the quality of the authenticity of the work and its surroundings in Guilan Rural Heritage Museum is proposed as the study's aims. In this study, by evaluating the possibility of generalizing the existing international principles and criteria in the field of authenticity, the issues related to conservation have been proposed. Review of international agreements, theoretical texts, and critiques based on existing criteria for evaluating authenticity, as well as proposing concepts appropriate to Mulla Sadra's transcendent theory, has provided new possibilities to propose Mulla Sadra's "originality of existence" and its evaluation. These possibilities come from a perspective related to the specific cultural situation of the works that were transported to the open-air museum.

In the text of the article, after expressing the questions and the method of conducting the research, the theoretical foundations and background of the research are examined, and then by describing the history of open-air museums, the challenge of the authenticity of the work and the environment around it is discussed and reaches conclusion at the end.

Research questions

Through examining the effective components in recognizing the authenticity in the field of cultural heritage, this study specifically seeks to answer the following questions. In terms of the principles of architectural conservation, to what extent dismantling and transporting the houses from the original location, and reconstructing them in the open-air museum is effective in their physical conservation? And in this regard, what changes are taking place in the authenticity of the work and its surrounding environment?

Research method

The present study is qualitative, and it is a combination of analytical-descriptive methods and citation research methods. Based on this, using library methods and authoritative written sources (books and articles), a wide range of sources related to the definitions of authenticity, and the surrounding environment in open-air museums have been studied, and through comparative studies, the content of the examples and definitions of authenticity, the surrounding environment, and finally the relationship between them in open-air museums are analyzed in an inferential and inductive way.

Theory & Background

Today, "cultural heritage" has taken on a newer meaning, which is a complex blend of nature, history, customs, language, and traditions" (Ray Yell, 2005, 74). "No heritage takes precedence to another and is not considered superior; therefore, all the achievements of civilization and history must be preserved and conserved. The methods of conservation, preservation, and display of cultural heritage vary depending on the capacity of the site, the culture, the facilities, and the knowledge available" (Nazari Adli, 2010, 61). "Cultural heritage, in the new sense, is the result of the evolution of a new society, its values, and needs. In the past, most attention was paid to special works of art or important monuments" (Fielden & Jokilehto, 2003, 34). "The new concept of cultural heritage is related to the whole environment created by human hands and should

be looked at in the context of ecology. Today, there is a desire to understand cultural heritage in its broadest sense, that is, what contains all the demonstrative signs of the activities of human beings and their achievements over time” (*ibid.*, 35).

The International Council of Museums affiliated with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) states in articles 3 and 4 of its statute (adopted by the Eleventh General Assembly of ICOM 1974): A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for education, study and enjoyment. Section B of Article 3 of the ICOM Statute, in addition to the museums designated as above, also recognizes the following as included in the definition of Article 3: Archaeological, natural, anthropological and historical sites and monuments that due to their activities in the field of collection, preservation, and display of antiquities are of a museum nature. In 2007, the council also designated the museum as a place to preserve, research, communicate, and display the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity, and to teach, study, and enjoy its important purposes. Based on the decision of the 139th Executive Committee of the International Council of Museums, which was held on July 22-21, 2019 in Paris, France, a new definition of the museum was presented: “Museums are democratizing, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artifacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people. Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality, and planetary wellbeing.”

“The science of museums and museology entered a

new phase in its development in the nineteenth century, with the spread of concepts and classifications, and now the objects on display encompass all traditional and industrial achievements. In the twentieth century, the museum is moving towards a new cultural space and has become a kind of mentality” (*Ashrafi, 2010, 62*). Over time, and in different places, such museums have taken on different names, such as the Neighborhood Museum, the Natural Parks, and the Open-Air Museum, and in recent years they have become known as Ecomuseums” (*ibid.*). “Ecomuseum, in the lexical definition, means museums that are formed in a vast space and real size” (*Talebi, 2005, 3*). Ecomuseum is at the heart of nature and nothing is added to it, and only by defining boundaries can it be conserved.

The Association of European Open-Air Museums (AEOM) defines open-air museums as follows: “scientific collections in the open air of various types of structures, which as constructional and functional entities, illustrate settlement patterns, dwellings, economy, and technology.” At the Fourth International Council of Museums (ECOM) (Geneva-1956), dismantling, transporting, and reconstructing historical structures and maintaining them in an appropriate site and with their original equipment, has been described as the task of open-air museums. These buildings should be authentic architectural groups or elements, which are characteristic of types of life, of dwellings, of agricultural activities, of crafts, etc., of disappearing cultures ([icom, icom.museum/the-governance/general-assembly/resolutions-adopted-by-icom-general-assemblies-1946-todate-geneva-1956/](https://icom.museum/the-governance/general-assembly/resolutions-adopted-by-icom-general-assemblies-1946-todate-geneva-1956/)). Rural heritage museums are a special type of open-air museum, which their main job is to conserve, preserve, and display the surviving rural heritage. Rural heritage museums are a subset of open-air museums that reflect the appearance of rural civilization and culture in the natural environment. The construction of such museums is the result of a popular approach to the history and public culture of the past. Rural museums are formed by transferring works and buildings on a real scale and placing them in a bed similar to the original situation (*ibid.*).

Rural Heritage Museums refer to a group of museums that display a collection of rural historical monuments outside of their original location (Pawlikowska & Ostrowska, 2015). The Rural Heritage Museum is a place to preserve endangered structures (Louise Larivee, 2008).

Heritage conservation is defined as: “The purpose of conservation is to safeguard the quality and values of storage, supporting its material nature and maintaining its cohesion for future generations” (Fielden & Jokilehto, 2003, 38). The concept of conservation is not limited to the conservation of living customs and traditions and their recognition, which only leads to the physical preservation of physical elements and the presentation of spiritual elements in the present time, “conservation of cultural heritage reserves is an important cultural challenge. This is partly due to the complexity of the issues involved and the role of its many different professions. conservative activities are not subject to a simple formula. Rather, these measures are more dependent on a proper understanding of heritage storage values” (ibid., 122). “The main concern of any action focused on conservation is the survival of the subject of conservation (historical monument) for the current generation and future generations” (Pedram, Olia & Vahidzadeh, 2011, 2). Conservation of the authenticity of heritage is the ultimate goal of conservation work. It is also necessary to identify and explain the concept of authenticity and evaluate it in the context of different types of heritage due to awareness of the threat of authenticity (Araoz, 2008, 36).

“Authenticity means full compliance, trustworthy status, honest, credible, real, valid, unique, and so on. Authenticity in the word is a word derived from the origin, and the origin of everything is what the existence of that thing depends on it, just as the father is the origin of the child, and the origin of everything is the truth of that thing” (Dehkoda, 1932).

“Material inviolability is a criterion that the Venice statute recommends for evaluating the observance of authenticity in conservative measures. Observance of this criterion conflicts with the usual process of maintaining a large group of historical monuments

that have a dynamic presence in the traditional life of different ethnic groups” (Pedram, et al., 2011). According to the spirit of the “Nara Charter” (1994), authenticity is not only in the body of architecture, but also the culture of making the work is worthy of the word authenticity, and it emphasizes the importance of socio-cultural values of the bedding as a key criterion in explaining the concept of authenticity and the conservation process.

What emerges from the review of published charters, statements, and documents over the past two decades shows how the term conservation, which in the past generally emphasized the mere maintenance and promotion of historic structures, has been used with the concept of change management in historical environments in the recent decades (English Heritage, 2008). Conservation means the process of managing the change of a valuable and important place in the urban context, in such a way that its heritage values remain the best. it is in such circumstances that there are opportunities to identify and enrich values for present and future generations (ibid., 7). This process began with a purely physical view, therefore, the initial charters and recommendations emphasize the conservation of the authenticity and historical values of the architectural body and materials, but gradually from the Venice charter (1964) to the Burra charter (1999), fundamental attention is paid to the place, and with the development of the concept of conservation, the socio-cultural vision enters this field and develops it, so that in the documents and charters of the last two decades, especially the New Zealand ICOMOS charter (1993), Nara document (1994), Burra charter (1999), and ICOMOS charter 2003 and 2008, a dramatic change in the definition of principles, guidelines, and criteria for the use of cultural-historical sites as a source of sustainable economic and social development, with respect for authenticity, integrity, and preservation of cultural prominence and dignity of these places has been created (Hanachi & Fadaei Nejad, 2011, 18).

The purpose of creating such museums is to preserve the connection or relationship between man and

the environment, nature, and culture, in the sense of an ecosystem, and make it comprehensible to visitors. The initiative to establish new museums and to transfer constructions to an area called the Ecomuseum of Heirs is the result of the thinking and presence of open-air museums. As Adriaan Dejong writes about these museums: The transportation and reconstruction of buildings have not been done by chance; however, the transfer of some constructions in museums in order to conserve them for the future, and to portray the culture before industrialization of rural populations at the end of the nineteenth century was a real initiative (Dejong, 1992,). The Open Air Museum, like other museums, is a non-profit organization at service for the general public and its development, and its purpose is to collect, maintain, research, introduce and teach tangible and intangible documents of the people of a region and its environment” (Habibizad, 2010, 6).

In this study, the stages of transporting the body structure of rural houses to the new location and ecosystem, monitoring and relocation from the perspective of the value of the authenticity of the building and the surrounding environment are examined, which distinguishes this article from similar cases.

History of open-air museums

The open-air museum founded by Arthur Hatsley and opened on October 11, 1891, on Scanson Island, holds great importance for it is the world’s first open-air museum in its true sense of the word (Gschewnd & Huwyler, 2010, 47). But “according to some experts, such as Mark Maure, ten years before the Scanson Museum, there was a collection of King Oscar II in Oslo with these features. He considers Norway to be the top location for the development of the open-air museums in the world” (Maure, 2002).

The first open-air museums focused on rural buildings and culture. But gradually, from 1909 onwards, the subject of urban culture, and the 1960s, industrial landscapes, were added. Today, there are many open-air museums in

many European countries, as well as in North America, Japan, Australia, and other countries. The Association of European Open Air Museums is an ICOM-affiliated association, composed of European museum leaders, that works with individuals and organizations around the world. The purpose of this association is to exchange scientific, technical, practical, and organizational experience about open-air museums, and to promote its activities.

In Iran, since (1972), the establishment of open-air anthropological museums, to introduce various cultural areas of Iran, was included in the work plan of the Anthropological Research Center. This idea was put into practice in 1975. Initially, samples of rural and nomadic dwellings were to be displayed as a museum or permanent exhibition, along with tools and equipment of their work and life. As a first step, it was planned to use the pavilions in Chitgar Park to transport or remake the house samples there, which was never implemented. After that, in various anthropological exhibitions and celebrations of people’s culture, which were held in 1977, 1978, and 1979, the idea of transferring samples of rural and nomadic houses was pursued again. Several houses were bought in different parts of Guilan and Mazandaran, and the research and implementation team of the Iranian Anthropology Center numbered the components of the houses and then, with the cooperation of local masters, separated the building parts from the original location and transferred them by truck. They were taken to the desired location in Isfahan, but unfortunately today there are no traces of the building’s parts (Habibizad, 2013, 19).

After the earthquake of 1990 in Guilan province, the idea of creating this museum was formed again. In 2005, the first open-air museum in Iran, the Guilan Rural Heritage Museum, officially entered the country’s museology field. Fig. 1 shows the current status of the Guilan Rural Heritage Museum site, 9 cultural and architectural areas transported to the museum, and its service departments.

The challenge of the authenticity of the work and the surrounding environment in the Museum of Rural Heritage

A heritage reserve will be authentic if it has genuinely kept its authenticity, or if it is original and real (as it was at the time of its original construction) and has changed and aged over time (Fielden & Jokilehto, 2003). Despite the existence of many open-air museums around the world, we should recognize that what is the need to create such museums? And why are some structures, that are old or have architectural value, moved from their original location to another location? In this case, it remains to be seen whether there is a way for these buildings to survive in their original place, or not? Looking at these buildings, it can be seen that these works have had fundamental problems in the original place; these problems included the aging of the buildings and lack of timely maintenance that resulted in their abandoning, change in their functionality and lack of proper use, heterogeneous additions because of the changing needs of the residents, as well as the unwillingness of the villagers to live in the old buildings, and therefore building a new house and leaving the old building behind. Sometimes drastic changes in rural buildings have led to the complete loss of buildings that were considered historically and culturally valuable. Older buildings, even in rural areas, are at risk of losing their functionality over time

and no longer meet the expectations of their residents. So, people make changes to meet their needs. For this reason, they often lose their authenticity and historical nature. The environment around the house plays an important role in the lives of the villagers. Each village house is defined by its area. The area is the boundary between the outside and the inside and does not separate the space between nature and the architectural space. The boundary between the area and the outside is a transparent layer that gives meaning to the building and causes the interaction between architecture and the environment. The house finds its identity with the place where it is built and changes from a volume status to a living space. In the reconstruction of the building, it is attempted not to destroy the connection between the place and the building. Reconstruction is, in fact, the link between the past and the present, giving the building a new identity in a new place. Not only, this new location does not decrease the sensitivity of the building as a place to live, but also increases it, and gives the forgotten building its dynamism and life. The buildings of the open-air museum have this good fortune that is reconstructed as their initial form and their original condition in their sites (Figs. 2 & 3). The dismantling process is a way to find the details of a building that have evolved and changed over time. It is a new knowledge and experience in construction; to obtain an understanding of material culture (the physical aspect



Fig. 1. The current situation of Guilan Rural Heritage Museum site. Source: Guilan Rural Heritage Museum Archive -2017.

of buildings), as well as social history (its builders and inhabitants) (Harris, 2005). Based on this argument, and considering the rich and hidden knowledge in these houses, the transportation of these works can help their physical conservation, in addition to restoring the buildings to their original form. A possibility that could not be realized at this time in the original location (Figs 4 & 5). By removing the additions and restoring the

historical nature of the work, and to better conserve it, the process of registering the buildings of the open-air museum in the list of national monuments, and then periodically controlling them begins. The methods of conservation, preservation, and display of cultural heritage vary according to the capacity of the site, the culture, the facilities, and the existing knowledge. In the transportation of indigenous architecture, it

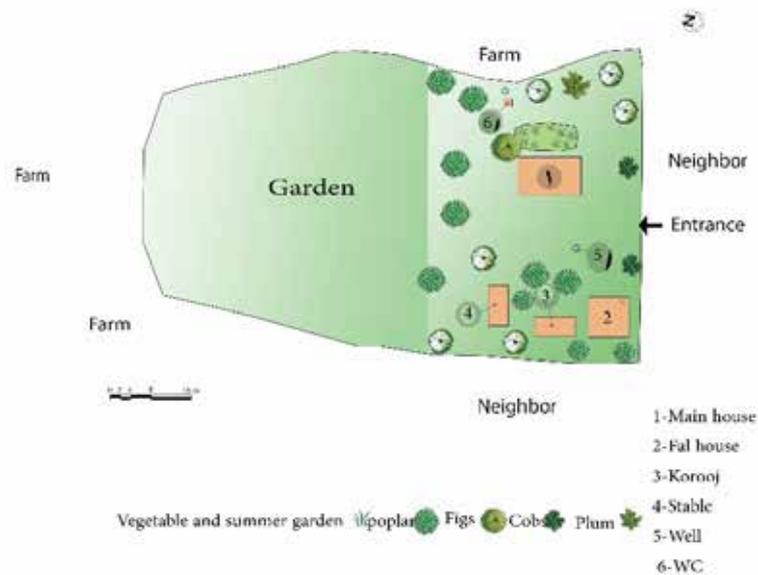


Fig. 2. Previous status of Danesh's house site in the central plateau of Guilan. Source: Museum Archive.

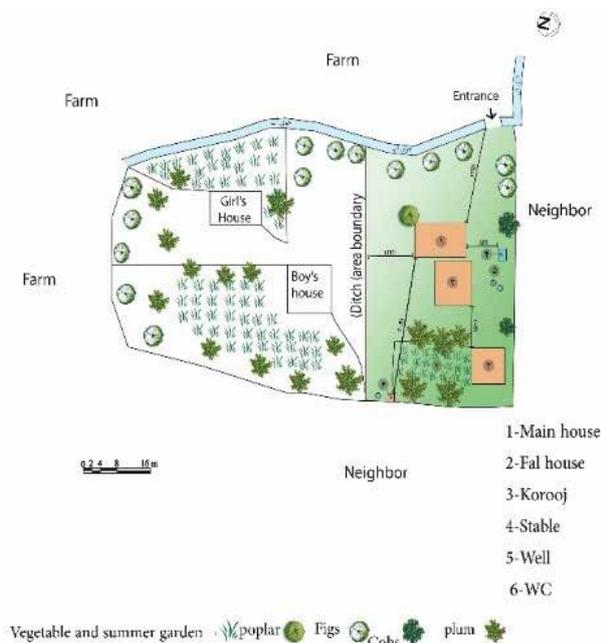


Fig. 3. The status during transport (reconstructed in Guilan Rural Heritage Museum). Source: Museum Archive.



Fig. 4. Mirsyar's house. Before being transported to Guilan Rural Heritage Museum. Source: Chehre Ara Ziabari, 2015.



Fig. 5. Mirsyar's house. After reconstruction at the Museum. Source: Chehre Azar Zibari, 2015.

should be noted that the integrity of the structure and its surroundings are seen as a coherent whole, whose balance and specific nature depend on the connection of its constituent components. In open-air museums, a village that didn't exist before is reconstructed, by transporting architectural artifacts from different places (along with the culture that governs them) to another area with near-original conditions. In rural heritage museums, people do not have any ideas about the main location of the village or the houses; by placing the houses in special conservative conditions and creating a secondary nature around the work, it would be helpful for the people to get familiar with the buildings, and ultimately conserve them in a controllable complex. This possibility was not achievable in their original place due to the geographical extent and unknown architecture of the ordinary part of society.

Regarding the concept of authenticity, it should be

acknowledged that understanding authenticity in all scientific studies, conservation and cultural heritage-related projects, plays a key role as well as the review processes used for global heritage and other cultural properties. "The diversity of the criteria of human societies for the observance of authenticity, in the process of conserving the historical heritage, has been considered as an indicator of global cultural diversity" (Pedram, et al., 2011). "In evaluating the values attributed to cultural works, the authenticity considered in this process and confirmed in the Venice charter is considered a fundamental factor. evaluating the authenticity of cultural heritage, depending on the nature, context, and evolution of them over time depends on the richness and the scope of information sources related to the work. These resources can include a variety of materials such as design, shape, materials, land use and function, traditions and techniques, locality and components, the spirit of the work and the emotions associated with it, and other internal and external factors related to it" (Rezapour Moghadam, 2004).

In their book, *Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites*, Fielden & Jokihelto (2003) see authenticity as a decisive matter in evaluating heritage issues, and attribute authenticity to a historical source that has conserved its original integrity, as it was created or has evolved. They see authenticity in terms of practical guidelines in design, materials, build quality, and location. Therefore, to preserve the authenticity of the work, the respect for the history of the work, the structural materials, the signs and technology of construction, the land use, and the features of the location and context of the work are important and no harm should be done to any of these aspects.

From the theoretical teachings and practical records of conservation, it is found that the seven ancient criteria of authenticity include the following: material intactness, visual inviolability (form), continuity of functionality, the sustainability of symbolic values, reproduction or the desire to keeping the work new, the continuation of environmental action and the

continuation of production techniques (Pedram, et al., 2011). Environmental action continuity implies respect for the surrounding environment, continuity of production techniques on human integration, the environment, and the maintenance of skills and knowledge related to the emergence of the work. The necessity of paying attention to the indigenous values of the works is emphasized in all of them. Criteria such as ritual continuity and symbolic existence of the work, Emphasize more on the place of the work in the collective memory, than the body. In each of these responses, the work, as an integrated whole that in addition to having a material body, also possesses cultural functions and mutual relationships with the awareness of human groups, is not paid attention to, and inevitably a part of the work is ignored and sacrificed for another part (s) that has been highlighted by the evaluation criterion. Meanwhile, the lack of a comprehensive view that can preserve the work with maximum authenticity (Introduction, the 1964 Venice Charter) is still felt. Article 1, paragraph 4, of the Burra Charter, states that "Conservation means all the processes of looking after a place to retain its cultural significance, and must, therefore, be a source of security, maintenance, and future for the place". "Cultural significance" means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social, or spiritual value for past, present, or future generations. Article 7 of the Venice Charter emphasizes the prohibition of the moving of a historical building, and Article 8 of the same Charter emphasizes not to move the related components of historical artifacts. In both Articles 7 and 8, special conditions are excluded and it can be stated that in case of the possibility of endangering the work and its related additions, transportation can be done. According to Falamaki, "Every historical monument offers a special environmental behavior derived from indigenous values to the audience" (Falamaki, 1996, 55-53). Equalizing the authenticity of the work with the truth of the matter has led to another crisis in the field

of conservation of works at the Nara Conference (1994). Assessing authenticity based on fidelity to reality (as opposed to material intactness) is highly complex and dependent on subjective judgment. In the theoretical framework of transcendent wisdom, the blind knot in the 1994 Nara Document is the authenticity of nature. Nature is nothing but the answer that everyone gives to the question of the "truth of a being. It is obvious that in this case, nature is nothing but a mental matter and lacks authenticity (Ashtiani, 1999, 127). The notion of a fixed essence for work alone is the product of a particular way of the human minds' functioning. Mulla Sadra, in contrast to trying to understand the object through the abstraction of its mental concepts, considers the possibility of another type of perception through the direct experience of the object or the union between the reason and the reasonable (Ha'iri Yazdi, 1992). In face of the truth of an object or identity, He presents the concept of existence as an objective and truly present matter in the exterior world (Pedram & et al., 2011) Conceptual (Fig. 6). Based on the above, we can explain that the reason for moving these houses has been the approach that continued the integrated existential movement of the works towards perfection, instead of cutting the work away from the roots of its cultural life (tangible aspects of the work), or illogical intervening in the works' historical journey (intangible identity). As a result, changing materials, designs, ancient techniques, and even changing the land use and spatial context of the work, in itself, would not mean that forgery or corruption would occur. By conservating the architectural examples of native houses, conservation of special examples such as noble houses, preserving indigenous values and continuing production techniques and conservating the skills and knowledge used in these houses, and a word, saving the body of the work, the approach of continuing the integrated existential movement of the work towards perfection goes on. Moving houses from their original context require careful knowledge, the study of unknown knowledge

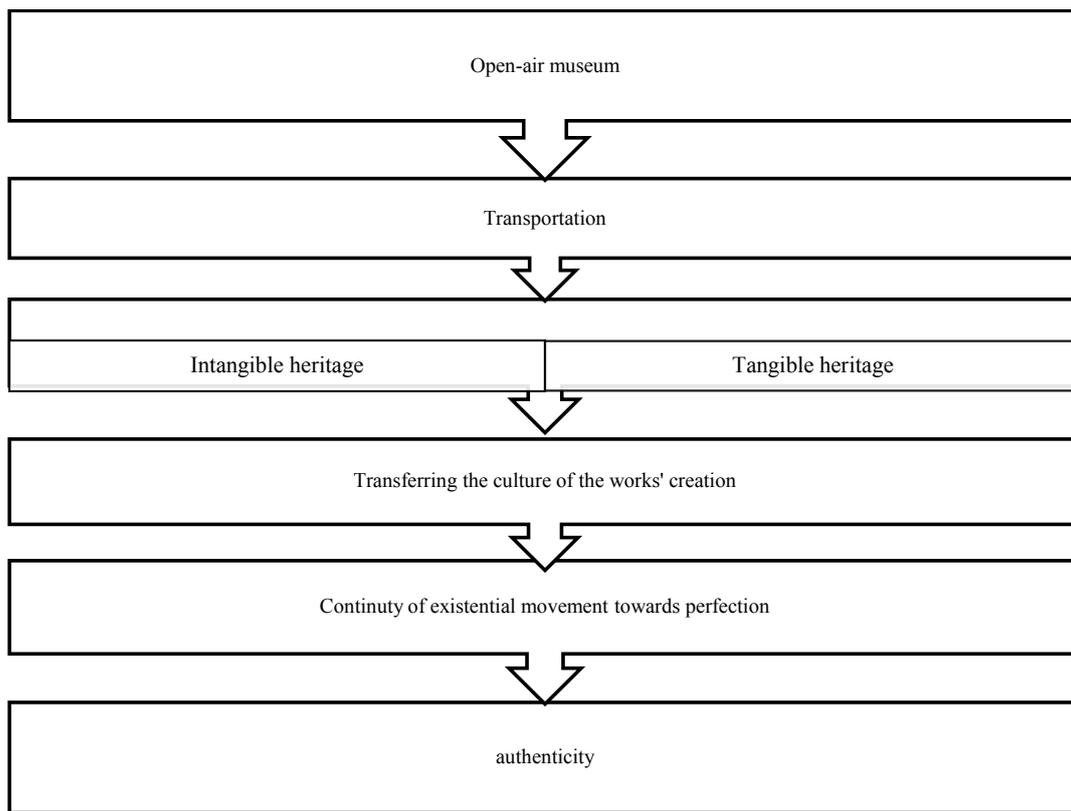


Fig. 6. Conceptual diagram of authenticity and surrounding environment in open-air museums. Source: authors,

and skills hidden in them, and respect for nature and the original location of the work because the building is identified in interaction with its surroundings. Understanding the characteristics of the building, such as anthropological studies, architecture, and studying the location of the building, helps to gain an understanding of the nature of the building, and the proper way to transport it to the new location.

“Living in a house means settling in the world. But this settlement is not easy; it must be reached through the back roads of history, and the gate that separates the outside from the inside” (Norberg-Schultz, 2001). “Nature has always been present in traditional houses with three primary, secondary, and abstract facets. In defining the primary and secondary nature, Speern says: by the opinions of authors from Cicero to Marx, initial nature is the concept of nature that man has not changed and has not turned into secondary nature. Cicero writes: “We plant corn and trees, we fertilize the soil with irrigation, and with our hands, we create a second nature in the world” (Daeipour, 2014).

Guilan’s rural houses are based on three axes: human, nature, and architecture. Man, as the creator of the building, nature as the bedrock and the source of the materials used, and the architecture that creates the balance between man and nature. The border between nature and the building is intangible and transparent. In such a way that one would think the house invites light, wind, and plants inside. The flow of life is like a fluid movement in the area and around the building that has a way inside. This perfect harmony with nature can be seen in the type of materials and even in their form. But for various reasons, the same buildings are separated from their original location in different geographical areas and reconstructed in a complex called the open-air museum. The philosophy behind these museums is one or more of the following:

- Conservation of endangered architectural pieces, with raising awareness, attracting attention and education of people.
- The conservation and revitalization of the forgotten material and spiritual history and national heritage.

- Protecting old traditions in the face of concerns about the rapid growth of industrialization.
- The desire to understand cultural heritage in the most comprehensive sense and for various generations.
- Conservation of objects that belong to ordinary people of the society and their display.
- Conservation of customs and traditions, architecture and so on, against destructive factors.

“Architecture comes into being when a perfect environment emerges. In general, this means to make the spirit of the place tangible” (Norberg-Schultz, 2001). Places are locations where there are elements with meaning. They are difficult to make because, over time and through history, memories, and myths are produced (Rotenberg, 2012, 241).

“Creating a sense of place and preserving it, requires strengthening historical awareness and preserving historical places to create a special identity. Today, when our cognitions are conscious and our visions are expanded, there is no escaping the attempt to create a sense of place, and consequently locational belonging” (FoTavan, 2005).

Understanding the meaning and physical structure in an architectural work leads to the right experience from space for people and thus helps to understand the strong sense of place. Abandonment of places is the beginning of their destruction, and destruction is tantamount to erasing the past and ultimately destroying memory, and it is so that places, and consequently spaces, become unfamiliar and consequently unidentified (Fadaei Nejad & Karampour, 2006, 97).

Raw materials of the identity of a place are factors such as physical appearance, activities, and meanings. The identity of a place is formed upon the mutual interaction of human with these factors and thus activating sensory, emotional, operationally, and inferentially perception. Therefore, it can be concluded that although, by separating work from its original climate, the authenticity of the building and its spirit is damaged and also, due to the lack of memory from the original environment, the sense of place is distorted, and people’s correct experience of the space is destroyed, and the viewer’s mental

connection with the new environment becomes difficult. But due to the inadequacy of the original location to conserve these houses, the transfer can be chosen as the last resort. The transfer can create conditions to preserve and save the work in another place, and provide the opportunity to acquaint people and later generations with the architecture, culture, customs, and unwritten knowledge; Conditions that may not have occurred in the original location, due to abandonment and the resulting damage, or the difficulty caused by the scattering and geographical expansion, and the next generation would be deprived and alienated from seeing the past of their native architecture. Figure 7 shows the steps of dismantling one of the houses at the foot of the western foothills (Tarbi’s house) and its reconstruction in the western foothills of the Guilan Rural Heritage Museum.

Conclusions

In this article, while compiling information about open-air museums, the hidden values of the work such as authenticity as one of the key components of conservation in transferring of values, and its semantic dimension in the process of moving the houses and the manner of preparing their surrounding environment were interpreted and analyzed.

The result of this study confirms that although, in terms of the principles of conservation, dismantling and relocation of houses from the original location and reconstructing them in the museum, makes changes in the authenticity of the houses and their surrounding environment. And also, the viewer’s mental relationship with the new environment becomes difficult due to the lack of memory from the original environment. But it provides the conditions to conserve and save work in another place and provide people with an opportunity to get acquainted with architecture, culture, customs, and unwritten knowledge. All that might not have been realized in the original place, due to them being unused and thus the resulting damage, or the difficulty caused by the scattering and geographical expansion, that could, therefore, leave the next generation deprived of them.

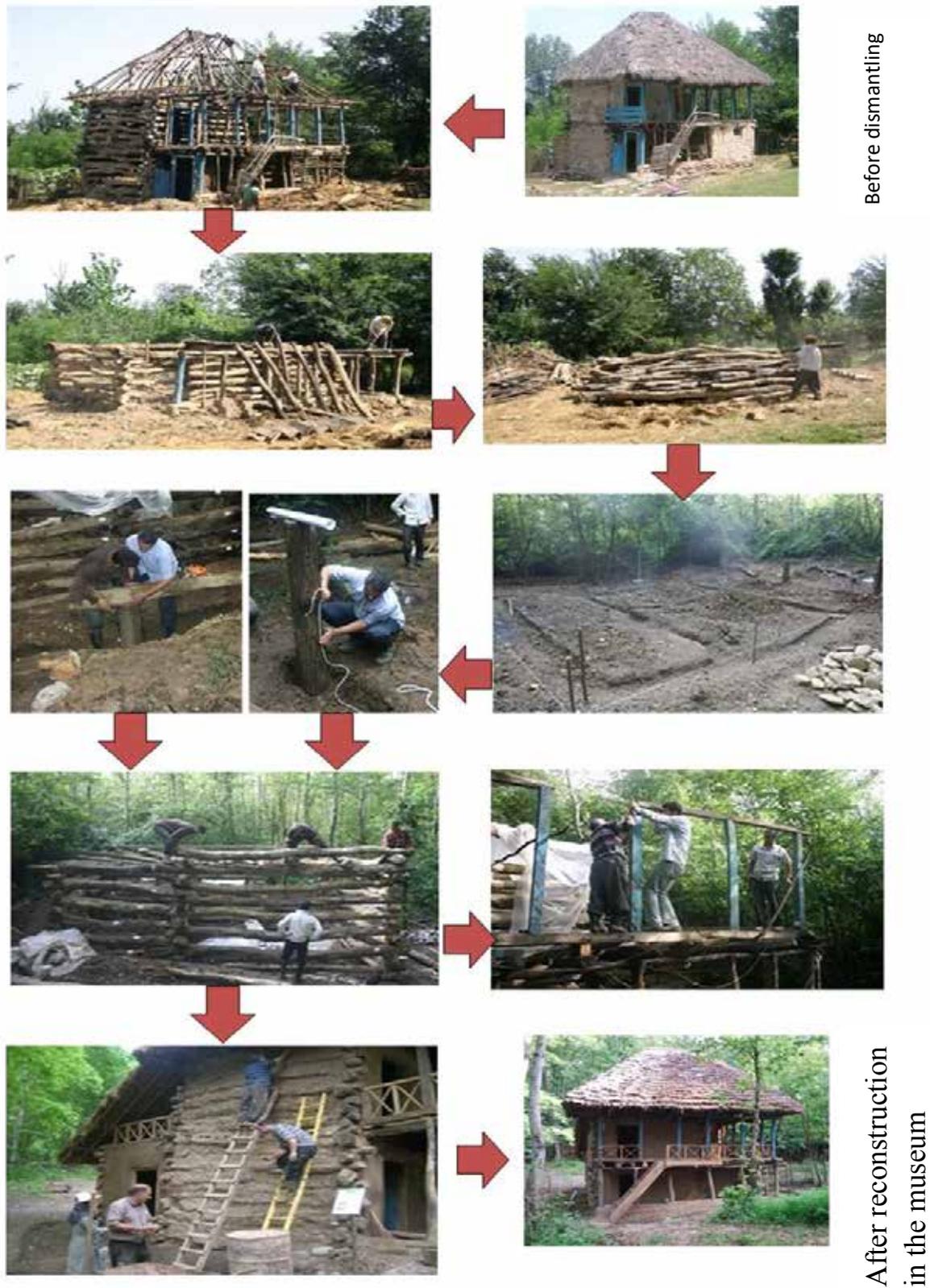


Fig. 7. dismantling one of the houses of western foothills (Tarbi House) and its reconstruction in the western foothill village of Gilan Rural Heritage Museum
Source: Gilan Rural Heritage Museum Archive - 2011.

Although by transferring the buildings to the museums and registering them in the list of national and world monuments and reviving and revitalizing the native culture, through accommodation, land use and proper planning, the main geographical location of the houses have changed, it has caused physical survival and conservation of cultural values that revolve around it.

On this basis, the new generations will become acquainted with their recent past, and this connection will eventually lead to the permanent conservation of the material and spiritual heritage in their original climate and place.

By abandoning the essentialist approach, Sadra's view considers the material body of the work and the consciousness arising from it as a single subject for conservation.

The culture of the work's creation can be one of the criteria that provides a comprehensive view of the theory of the originality of existence, as a specific approach to interacting with the material environment or an ecological habit, and not just a technical, skillful one. Instead of cutting the work away from the roots of its cultural life (emphasizing tangible dimensions) or irrational interference in the historical course of the work (insisting on intangible identity), this approach pursues the continuity of its integrated existential movement towards perfection. As a result, changing materials, designs, ancient techniques, and even changing the land use and spatial context of the work, in itself, would not mean that forgery or corruption would occur.

Therefore, according to this theory, open-air museums cause the transfer of the culture of creation by transporting and relocating houses in danger of destruction and establishing them in a new place, preserving the material and spiritual life of these works, and by continuing their integrated existential movement towards perfection, and interaction with the material environment, this will lead to the conservation of the work's authenticity and its surroundings in open-air museums.

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