

## Original Research Article

## A Sociological and Critical Analysis of Power and Space Relationship and its Role in Formation of the Architecture in the First Pahlavi Era\*

Reza Qader Beigzadeh<sup>1\*\*</sup>, Mojtaba Ansari<sup>2</sup>, Foad Habibi<sup>3</sup>

1. Ph.D. Student in Architecture, Department of Architecture, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj Branch, Sanandaj, Iran.
2. Associate Professor, Department of Architecture, Faculty of Arts, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran.
3. Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Humanities, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj Branch, Sanandaj, Iran.

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### Abstract

**Problem statement:** Architecture has been recognized as one of the most social arts due to its 'social', 'functional', 'media'-driven characteristics, and its ability in symbolizing concepts. This has given a rise to an instrumental view of architecture in political relations and power management of ruling systems. This research employs a critical approach to examine the sociology of architecture as an art. In this research, the case study includes governmental buildings and the urban space of Tehran city in the first Pahlavi era, which is one of the most significant and influential periods in social and political studies and architecture and urbanism in Iran.

**Research objective:** The main purpose of research is to identify and discover the most hidden factors in creating space and architecture that are directly related to the power structure. This aim will be fulfilled by answering these questions: 1- What political and social reasons are behind the structural and spatial changes of architecture during the first Pahlavi era? 2. Is there any connection between the power structure and the creation of space during this time?

**Research method:** This study is fundamental research in terms of purpose, and is based on the data in qualitative research. The data were analyzed based on the critical method and in an interpretive-explanatory format in which artworks, elements, and space creators, were evaluated as data, based on the power relations, apart from their physical characteristics and descriptions.

**Conclusion:** The research findings indicate a purposeful use of architecture and space production during the first Pahlavi era to reinforce the ideology of ruling power and to establish the related discourse. The space production during this time is the consequence of power relations, and the will of the ruling system to secure its legitimacy and hegemony through a militaristic and authoritarian attitude, besides using a smooth power, controlling the spatial representations, and connecting the architecture to the major discourse of regime to be able to reproduce its power and authority by the mediation of space and architecture.

**Keywords:** *Sociology of Art, Critical Paradigm, Architecture, Politics, Discourse, First Pahlavi Era.*

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the supervision of Dr. Mojtaba Ansari and the advisement of Dr. Foad Habibi in the Department of Architecture, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj Branch.

\* Corresponding Author: rqbz2014@gmail.com,+989370191901

## Introduction and Problem Statement

Among the arts, architecture is considered as one of the most social arts, as nearly all individual actions and social relations are fulfilled directly in a context of 'space' and, consequently, in 'architecture'. The human communication with space and architecture is rather different from his perception of and connection with other kinds of arts such as painting, sculpture, music, and other related arts; it is because the human life experience is manifested in architecture and space more dynamically and actively. Given that in lack of space and architecture, no idea would be realized in relation to these actions and social relations, the art of architecture is considered as one of the most social arts. On this basis, Umberto Eco (1997, 182) states that "we commonly do experience architecture as communication, even while recognizing its functionality". This communicative and symbolic feature of architecture has turned it into a social and multipurpose phenomenon that can represent social, political, cultural, and ritual content, and implications through its visual form and other features as well, beyond a mere functional or aesthetic attitude. Since architecture is an art that addresses a huge number of people, then it has a political nature (Benjamin, 1998). This art is like a silent language that relies on gestures and characters as this apparently mute and soundless phenomenon could have a much more actual sound compared to the other phenomena when it comes to decoding its hidden contents (Ranciere, 2014). Therefore, the creation of space and architecture can represent a political act to fulfill the ideological goals, the authority of certain groups of people, and to determine the political and social boundaries, and be a representation of social values.

The research subject is to analyze the relation between power and space creation, which tries to explain 'why and how a work of art (architecture) is produced and presented by applying an ordinary description, and also by the use of critical analysis method; it triggers its purposeful connection with broadcasting the ideology and consolidating the foundations of the ruling power. This study aims to investigate the dialectical relation

between power and space and the role of power in space creation (architecture); the research procedure followed by addressing the role of space in generating power. According to the critical approach of research, it is placed in the area of "critical sociology of art" in which the most significant issues are the intellectual dominance and physical control of the masses through art, and the role of art in controlling society. In this approach, it is believed that when art is being generated and broadcasted by the dominant social groups, then its relevant contents have to maintain the ruling power and reflect the social order followed by the target groups.

The research case study is from the first Pahlavi era; this course of time, despite its political and social characteristics, is one of the most significant and influential courses of time affecting the post time after. This has caused various changes in the field of architecture and transformations in generating space. In this regard, the main research questions are as follow:

1. What political and social reasons are behind the structural and spatial changes of architecture during the first Pahlavi era?
2. Is there any relationship between the power structure and the creation of space during this time?

Since this research study is directly influenced by sociological, political, and historical fields of studies, it is considered an interdisciplinary area. Such studies are performed to create a lateral and wide connection between different sciences, which are very effective in facilitating the comprehension of subjects in various dimensions and help researchers to reconstruct their cognitive and epistemological aspects (Rege Colet, 2009). Moreover, few studies by addressing critical approach and political attitude have been done in the field of art and architecture in Iran, therefore, the necessity of conducting such research studies which address both the scope of architecture and the related influential factors - often imperceptible and hidden - in creating an architectural work are significant.

## Research background

The research background falls into two sections: contextual and case studies. Some research studies

with common context, which are addressing the significance of representing power through space and architecture are as below:

Sabrina Ismail and Movahed Rasadi (2010) in an article point to the construction of mosques by two famous Malaysian Prime Ministers, Abdul Rahman and Mahathir Mohamad at the national level and address the relationship between the architecture of these mosques and the dominant ideology, power function and cultural sphere of society; they believe that since any social class is looking for a space proportionate to its ideological goals, the Malaysian government has also planned to politically exploit of these architectural buildings, beyond the construction of a mere public worship place. In other words, these mosques are a spatial representation and expression of the Malaysian government's political orders with the aim of social controlling and gaining legitimacy, whether at the national or international level in the Islamic world.

Hagen and Ostergan (2005) studied the connection between the three concepts of 'drama', 'architecture', and 'location' in Nazi Germany, and the construction of buildings and complexes for rallies and parade ceremonies in the city of Nuremberg. They explain the transformation of 'location' into 'symbol' as one of the basic goals of the Nazis, in creating space, to provide a kind of landscape and architecture full of intimidation and physical & mental domination to manifest the government authority and do control mass society.

Afhami (2006), in his PhD research thesis, published in domestic journals deals with the designs and stone carvings of stairs in Apadana Hall of Persepolis, to show the importance of these buildings in representing the role of power in changing the public consciousness level and gaining legitimacy by controlling the visual influences. According to him, power by the mediation of art and architecture directs the vision and consciousness level of society and systemizes its visual culture to legitimate the discourse of régime.

Afshar (2017) in a notable research study, points

to the significance of buildings and architecture of the Qajar era (especially during the Nasserite era) in forms of photographs, pictures, and images in newspapers of those time; he also indicates that the régime action toward these buildings during the Pahlavi I, is an attitude not only influenced by the government but is also an outcome of such representations during the Qajar era; he considers this happening as the "possibility conditions and embodied aspects", shows the early experience of the contemporary architecture in Iran. He believes that at the beginning of the Qajar dynasty, the buildings and architecture were at the border of attention of rituals and ceremonies, but later became the main focus of attention; he added, the ruling power by emphasizing the role of architecture, redefined its identity in confrontation with public spaces and society; as this request of representing authority through images, later manifested itself in the post-Qajar regimes from both physical and objective dimensions.

Several case studies have characterized the architectural features in Tehran and other cities of Iran during the first Pahlavi era, which all deal with the stylistic classifications, general and specific features of buildings, and introducing the influential architects. There are some other researches available, which refer to the social, economic, historical, and political contexts of architecture and urban planning during this time, with interpretive or historical approaches with a broader perspective; despite focusing more on the descriptive aspect, these studies are important, as descriptions are the preface of any critique or analysis; some of the most important cases are presented in Table 1.

The multiplicity and diversity of research on the architecture of the first Pahlavi era represent the significant part of this era in the cultural, social, and political relations of Iran, and its impact on the architectural and urban development of the country even during the current age. However, despite the scientific value of these studies, most of them have either addressed this issue in a

Table 1. The most significant researches in the field of architecture during the first Pahlavi era; results are presented in chronological order. Source: Authors.

Type	Subject	Research Author	Research findings
Book	The Iranian architecture in the Pahlavi era	Rajabi (1976)	In this work, as the first publications on Pahlavi architecture, the author, generally based on a descriptive approach, introduces the most significant architectural works of this time, and classifies it into three sections of 'governmental architecture', 'the architecture of elite and special classes', and 'mass/public architecture'.
Dissertation	Building to Power: Architecture of Tehran of Pahlavi 1921-1941	Marefat (1988)	This thesis deals with the developments that happened in the city of Tehran and the modernization plans that converted the city, as the capital of the Qajar, into a modern capital. The author also considers the construction of streets, public spaces, monumental buildings, installation of frequent urban sculptures, and manifesting the past glory as the most important actions in this era.
Article	Military coup d'état of 1299 and militaristic architecture	Kiani (2000a)	The author by emphasizing architecture as a representation of thoughts and attitudes of governments points to the military nature of the first Pahlavi regime, which mirrored even in government and civilian buildings. He points to the characteristics such as the speed of construction, being unique, the constant surveillance, and the magnificence of these buildings as the outcome of the military nature of Reza Shah and his government.
Dissertation	Architecture during the first Pahlavi era; Revolution of thought; the emergence and formation of architecture over 20 years ( in Iran	Kiani (2000b)	This study refers to the effect of the thought revolution and structural modifications of society and government on spatial changes of architecture during the first Pahlavi era. Based on the subject classification, the author considers some components effective in spatial evolution such as archeological prosperity, archeology, militarism, modernism, the emergence of architects, and emerging functions in these spatial developments; In the following, he deals with the qualities of buildings and the architectural elements during this time.
Article	Factors affecting the formation of architecture and urban planning during the first Pahlavi era	Bemanian (2006)	In this study, the most influential factors on the formation of architecture and urban planning during this time are pointed as follow: The infrastructure factors include the administrative, economic, demographic, educational, scientific, and industrial developments together with urban growth, land exchange, expansion of international relations, anti-religious nature of the regime, and the emergence of new social groups.
Article	The role and influence of governmental factors in the architecture of private buildings during the first Pahlavi era	Zarkesh (2009)	The author points to the influence of governmental factors on the architecture of private buildings during this time and believes that the influence of this attitude is also visible in today's architecture of Iran; He has classified these effects into factors such as administrative, political, economic, cultural, and social programs, in addition to technical and physical dimensions.
Article	The influence of Nationalism on Government Buildings during the First Pahlavi era	Shirazi & Yonesi (2011)	While pointing to the manifestation of nationalism, the authors refer to the replacement of national and ancient interests by traditional and religious rituals in this time and deal with the impact of nationalism on architecture in two forms of: 1- Using ancient elements and symbols in buildings and 2- Constructing buildings according to ancient patterns and have implications to explain these effects.
Article	Building a nation and modern architecture in twentieth-century Iran	Grigor (2020)	The author believes that the exploitation of architecture in the early Pahlavi era is a kind of modern metaphorical item, similar to Pahlavi hat (Kolah Pahlavi) and women's clothing style; she also believes that architecture is an action committed by the ruling power for declaration of existence, and heading line of the nationalization. She believes that 'style' is a discourse that has been presented throughout history in relation to ideological purposes; she refers to the adherence of architects to the official government discourse in constructing government buildings and introduced architecture as the most significant art supported by Reza Shah.
Article	Explaining the role of architecture during the Nazis empire on the architecture of government buildings in Iran (the first Pahlavi era between 1931 and 1933).	Mirzahosseini & Soltanzaadeh (2021)	Referring to the mutual political relations between the first Pahlavi and the German government, the authors believe that the presence of German experts in Iran was an important factor in presenting the Western architectural styles to Iran; they refer to these styles in three areas of 'Functional' (plan), 'Physical' (form) and 'symbolic' which have influenced the Iranian architecture, and has led to the improvement of construction methods and utilization of modern materials in architecture during this time.

descriptive, documentary, or historical format or have been limited to social and political contexts of the architecture during this time, similar to what has been performed in a work by Kiani in a comprehensive and coherent manner.

What distinguishes this study from other researches is the explanations it provides for spatial changes in the architecture of this time from the socio-political and critical aspects which are different from other studies in terms of approach and analysis method. By using the sociological, political, critical, and spatial studies, it analysis this dialectical relationship to discuss how ruling power during this time produced space (architecture) and how this space and its representations played a role in regenerating power.

### Theoretical framework

To comprehensively understand the components related to this interdisciplinary research, the phenomenon of architecture will be studied from three perceptions of sociology, politics, and space. Although they are addressed separately, the theoretical structure of the research is formed based on the combination of these theoretical foundations, which supports the interpretation and analysis of the ruling power and the space production during the first Pahlavi in architecture area as follows:

- **Architecture and sociology**

The sociology of art aims to present a proper image of the relationship between art (artist) and society and to follow the social factors affecting the artwork production, and the impact of art on society and social developments (Ravadrad, 2005). There are two main approaches regarding the relationship between art and society, which are known as the “reflection approach” and the “shaping approach”.

The reflection approach considers works of art as a mirror that reflects the conditions of society; But the shaping approach deals with the ability of art to create or consolidate values and ideas in society that can shape the attitudes, mentalities, and even behaviors of the audience (Alexander, 2017). According to the sociological approach toward architecture, it

is supposed that the creation of architectural works is influenced by social conditions and relations; This indicates a dialectical relationship between art and society. The ability of art in shaping concepts is the main factor in converting it to an exploiting tool. But this shaping characteristic can only be achieved by characterizing the meaning, controlling the interpretation, and reaching the compatibility between the audience perception and the creator’s inception. To achieve this goal one approach is the struggling of ruling systems in establishing a purposeful discourse. Discourse is a set of propositions with a unique subject that generate similar outcomes, due to having some kind of similarities in their origin or functions (Mills, 2013), as the social meaning of artworks can be comprehended relying on the general atmosphere that these discourses create. The purpose of discourse is to shape and constrain human perception of reality through the consolidation of meaning. This form of meaning is one of the rhetorical and persuasive features of discourse.

As the social meaning of artworks that these discourses generally create can be perceived. The purpose of discourse is to shape and constrain human perception of reality through the consolidation of meaning. This kind of meaning formation is one of the rhetorical and persuasive features of discourse.

Discourse, apart from the meaning, has the potential to shape the social practices and the individual’s habitus. ‘Bourdieu’ believes that habitus regulates the perception, behavior, and individual actions that are formed under the influence of social structures and factors (Grenfell, 2014), and also organizes the way a person perceives the surrounding social world and his reaction to it. Therefore, from the sociological perspective, architecture acts as a part of discursive arrangements that are used to strengthen and let the discourse of ruling power as well as to shape ideas and beliefs.

- **Architecture and power**

An exploiting view of art and architecture ties it to the politics area and its power relations. In this case,

the concept of power has a special place in political science. According to Lasswell, political science is the study of how power is formed, structured, and shared (Alam, 2013). Leftwich (2004) similarly considers power as the key component in defining politics. The majority of scholars interpret politics as the art of consolidating power as a mechanism for influencing society and, briefly as “power management” (Hay, 2007). ‘Will of Power’ consists of a fundamental concept in critical and sociological studies. In this regard, Nietzsche (1998) considers it as life center and the seat of action, Rorty (1992) points to it as the ability to influence conditions in the desired direction, and finally, Max Weber (2013), believes it as an opportunity to impose ‘will’ on others despite their resistance.

Apart from these definitions, Michel Foucault’s conception of power has certain characteristics that are more consistent with the theoretical framework of this research. According to Foucault (2004) the will of power not merely is exerted based on direct strength, but mostly is imposed indirectly and even in undetectable forms.

Unlike the previous thinkers, who often were addressing the “quiddity”/“whatness” and “whyness” of the power concept, by referring the “manner” to exercise power, arguing that by focusing merely on the whatness and whyness of power, a series of invisible and concealed facts will be ignored (Azad Armaki & Rezaei, 2006).

According to Foucault, space plays an essential role in every aspect of exercising power, and in this regard architecture is the product and manifestation of this power; He proposed the concept of ‘knowledge and power’ bound and the issue of imposing discipline in spaces like prisons, factories, camps, and schools, which by raising the concept of ‘Panopticon’ and power oversight mechanisms finally points to the significant role of space and architecture in imposing power and the normative role of architecture in the formation of subjects and educating the “docile bodies” (Foucault, 2003).

In classical definitions, according to Max Weber,

the imposition of will on another is the criterion of power, but Foucault believes that power inevitably encounters a kind of resistance, and the power in authority always struggles an impediment that is called the ‘resistance of society’. So a system of domination is seeking to invert the society’s resistance into community satisfaction, and the imposed power into persuasion; the idea which is proposed by ‘Antonio Gramsci’ as “hegemony” and is a strategy that the ruling power apply to encourage and convince other classes for receiving the moral, political and cultural values they seek, to maintain its authority (Joll, 1977).

The generalization of Foucault and Gramsci’s opinion about space production indicates the fact that in the strategy of modifying power in a political sphere, the approach of the systems governing space and architecture is by no means neutral, as many phenomena such as architecture that looks natural in appearance, in fact, are representing the will and hegemony of power; so, according to shaping approach, the ruling governments use a variety of strategies, including the generation of space and architecture, to implement a social control through the voluntary acceptance of their views instead of imposing force.

#### • Architecture and space

In recent decades, the concept of space in architecture and urban planning has gone through fundamental changes. In the previous time, space was considered as an absolute and independent vessel in which objects are placed; This view simply was based on the objective and quantitative perceiving of space which was favored by positivist architects (Shourche, 2015). By spreading the interdisciplinary studies and raising the significant position of human, social and political sciences, this absolutist attitude was severely criticized, due to its inability in covering all aspects of space, which resulted in the prevalence of ‘relational attitude’; it considers the formation and the manifestation of spatial meaning as the outcome of the interaction between objects and phenomena and their social relations.

The relational attitude to the production of space and architecture is in line with the spirit of research since its priority is to address what external factors are produced in relation to space and the reason behind it.

The entangled concept of space production with other issues such as power relations, sociology, and history has turned it into a political item (Harvey, 2013). Henry Lefebvre similarly believes that space is the product of the ideological, social, economic, and political forces in the realm of power that follows those activities that take place 'in' and 'through' space; By emphasizing the direct role of the physical space of architecture, he limited the integration of ideology and power reproduction to the presence of a physical body 'in space' and under the influence of 'space production'; he believes that domination of church and governments without the presence of these objective spaces, in which they manifest themselves and their power, they are nothing but some abstract concepts. According to Lefebvre, it is very important for dominant powers that what meaning and concept the space should represent and what image it might create in the mind of the audience (Lefebvre, 2016). This viewpoint which is proposed under the name of "Space Representation" refers directly to the role of the architectural work, as a symbol with special meaning, and the effect on the audience.

According to Lefebvre, architecture is the construction of an implicational space; he attributes a complete understanding of space to the perception of codes that are encoded in the design of architectural works (ibid., 171). Controlling the 'space representation' in architectural works and the imaginary mind of the audience leads to the control of behaviors and practices which seek to reproduce the desired concepts of the final decision-makers about space area. Based on this, Lefebvre believes that space representation is a political issue, as every government fights to preserve its existence to make it more real and to legitimize itself more; however, to represent this victory, it needs a location (Lefebvre,

2014). The term location here directly refers to the significance of place and the space production- in its objective and physical sense - so the necessity of such spatial understanding, and revealing the hidden and obviously assumed dimensions of the space production process, which has happened deliberately, is one of the main foundations of the theoretical framework of the present study.

#### • Summary of 'theoretical findings'

The research theoretical foundation is based on the concepts that architecture, as the most important product of space and one of the most social arts, reflects the social conditions of its own time and at the same time represent the will of power, which is exploited as a material and means for regenerating power and shaping the behaviors, perceptions, and mentality of people in society. Architecture can transform ideological meaning into a form by adhering to the discursive arrangements of ruling powers through representing itself and by influencing the mentality of the audience. One of the fundamental findings of this study is the interpretation and explanation of the architectural works with a holistic approach in the social and political context, beyond their formal appearance. The research aims to extract the usually hidden layers in producing the works and to reveal their function in achieving ideological goals and reproducing the ruling power. In Frederic Jameson's view, it is a task of unveiling the works of art and showing how each art piece fulfills its ideological mission and gives legitimacy to a certain power structure (Adams, 2014, 97).

#### Research method

As an accepted scientific definition, a research 'Method' is performed based on the findings and the research hypothesis, that is obtained based on the theoretical framework of the research. However, a "Methodology", has a more comprehensive meaning, as it triggers 'whatness' and 'whyness' of a special approach taken in the research process (Ali Taghavian, 2011). Based on the methodology,

the concept of “power” and its relationship with space production justifies its belonging to a critical paradigm. In this paradigm, it is believed that power is complexly entangled with social occurrences that make it difficult to access reality (Bagheri & Ghaffari, 2020); moreover, the multiple layers of reality with hidden structures and mechanisms, makes it difficult to comprehend simply based on appearance, as a careful and in-depth analysis is required (Seyed Emami, 2012). The most significant features of the critical paradigm that are related to the function of the research analytical method are provided in Table 2; The practical commitment to them while analyzing data allows to cover the issues raised in the theoretical framework and provides the conditions for answering the research questions.

This study is fundamental research in terms of purpose, and based on the characteristic of data is a qualitative study that is represented by concepts, narratives, and categories. For data collection, the following two methods were applied: 1- The documentary and bibliographic studies in the fields of architecture, urban planning, sociology, history, and political science, and 2- The field observations on the selected case study, either in the form of pure and direct observations conducted by the researcher or relying on the textual observations of other works; it was followed by data analysis of general space and context of Tehran city and by working on particular architectural works (mostly the official and government buildings). The time course for this research was between 1920 to 1941 until Reza Shah came to power (from his military commander, as Sardar Sepah to his kingdom); The city of Tehran, as the capital of the first Pahlavi regime selected as the place of the case study. The data have been analyzed based on the critical approach in which any data including works, elements, and actions related to the space production was evaluated beyond their mere description and physical characteristics, in an interpretive-explanatory format (the evaluation of a less understood phenomenon or text and the expression of external forces influencing the desired

phenomenon). The main focus of data analysis deals with the role of power, and also the political & ideological relations in the process of production or shaping space and architecture; In this regard, an attempt has been made to have a better understanding of and a firm semantic construct in achieving the research aim and addressing the questions through classifying issues and representing the appearance (functional), semantic and ideological (political) aspects of each action.

#### • Power structure and space production during the first Pahlavi Era

During the first two decades of the 14th AH (20th AD) century, a series of political, social, economic, and cultural changes have occurred, which caused significant structural changes in all the substructures of the country and had major effects on subsequent eras. The rise to power of the Cossack brigade soldier within 26 years and his revolution into a King, “Reza Shah” was influenced by several factors. The most significant of them can be mentioned as below: 1. the Russian Bolshevik Revolution, 2. the consequences of World War I, 3. the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, 4. The revolution of Britain as the first power in the region, 5. The existence of chaos during the reign of Ahmad Shah, 6. The ethnic civil rebellions and tribal uprisings and finally 7. The emergence of misery and despair towards the Qajar government. These happenings facilitated the conditions for Reza Shah to achieve the dream of having an Iranian Mussolini or Hitler, which was quite popular and attractive in public opinion at that time, with the slogan of “National Resurrection” and the aim of saving the country from that chaos (Abrahamian, 2013); Therefore, during this time a government came to power that, dissimilar to the ethnic and tribal structure of Qajar, was formed based on the bureaucratic organization and an emergent understanding of the Nation-State, which was able to dominate the tribal, rural and urban societies. This government quickly succeeded to construct its government order based on centralized economic, political, administrative, and military ownership

Table 2. The most important features of the critical paradigm, based on the research methodology. Source: Authors.

Characteristic of Paradigm	Theoretical Basis of the Paradigm
Totality and opposition to reductionism	Acquiring knowledge of ‘wholeness’ is the only way to understand all the obvious and hidden factors shaping a phenomenon or an artwork (Lukacs, 1999)
A dialectical view of the Part-Whole relation/ Entirety-Particularity	By reading the whole entity or entirety of an affair through particular things, and recognizing the particular thing in the context of entirety dialectical thinking will be formed (Habibi, 2013).
The importance of mediation	Relying on mediation, the connection between the macro totality and the partial totalities (such as art and literature) would be possible, and also the connection between the formal connotations of artworks and their social infrastructure (Jameson, 1994).
Disclosure of the power-ideology interconnections	If the truth of things were representing what they appear to be, there was no need for science anymore; The ruling ideology in any age is the desired ideology of the ruling class (Marx, 2007)
Opposition to naturalization	The most natural things, no matter how colorless, have a political line, as it reminds the action and intention of its creator (Barthes, 2005).

behind its modernist appearance (Habibi, 2005) and was able to impose its monopoly power in all areas, even to the daily lives of citizens. The ideological programs include the purposeful composing of academic textbooks, the uniformization of clothing, the unveiling of the hijab, the creation of the ‘thought-training organization’ (Sazeman-e Parvaresh-e Afkar), and much more proceeding were examples of a will to the total power of the government. Since every state pursues to continue its survival, and its ultimate goal is to dominate all possessions (Waltz, 1979), this government, similar to other totalitarian regimes, implemented the project of “Socialization of Politics” in all areas, which is defined as an attempt to intentionally incept the political information and values in society to establish the foundations of the political power of states (Rush, 2012); The mishandling and political use of the social phenomenon of architecture is the example of this implication. According to an idea, change in power structure has an effective role in spatial and structural variations of cities (Mohammadi, 1996). Any new government, with the beginning of its rule, struggles to create a new atmosphere, based on its values and goals, which space production in its physical sense is considered part of these efforts as well. In the following, relying on a critical approach, the reason behind these actions and the quality of interconnection between space production and power relations

have been addressed during the first Pahlavi era, by interpreting the most significant actions and macro-actions in the field of architecture, at three levels of ‘militarization’, ‘discourse’ and ‘modernization’.

• **Militarization**

Reza Shah’s military background and its reflection on his government had a direct impact on space production and architectural developments. The intervention and governance of the Ministry of War in civil activities, and even the appointment of mayors such as Brigadier General Bouzarjomehri, Colonel Bahrami, and Brigadier General Gholi Hooshmand in Tehran, were the result of this situation.

Contrary to the previous government, in which the religious and social structure of governments led to the construction of squares and ‘sociopetal spaces’ with cultural and social content, this time, a new definition of space emerged with an emphasis on the security and military buildings; among them, the buildings of ‘Mashq Square Complex’ was an example of the regime’s desire for centralism based on its military character and security perception. The appearance of official and military buildings, including their huge dimensions, visual stability, and placement on a podium, represented the symbolic opposition of the government to the nation and its tendency to induce a sense of public inferiority against the ruling power, which is manifested in Shahr bani Palace (Kakh-e Shahr bani), a long-span structure in 200 meters and arms in 80 meters.

Basically, in totalitarian governments, the main emphasis is on building appearance, so in this time, a kind of spectacularization was targeting the physical and appearance of architecture. The symmetry, balance, and rhythmic elements were among the qualities that were representing the military order. The frequent number and the raised columns of the façade- resembling the strong soldiers in line - to represent more and more the solid physical body of buildings and to have psychological domination on the audience and manifest the physical embodiment of ruling power (Fig. 1).

The street construction and its imposition on the physical body of the old urban textures can also be connected to the regime's security idea. The old textures are a serious challenge to the security tactics of such regimes in potential revolutions due to their dense texture and the impossibility of easily controlling and allowing the military forces to access them. Reza Shah came to power with a coup d'état, without considering the public consent; there was always the fear of repeating the unrest happenings during the Consolidation, so serious efforts were made to impose a physical and visual control throughout the city. The security idea at that time was so effective in shaping the space to the extent that even the roofs of Tehran's alleys were removed to break the rooftop connection of houses to allow

the rapid arrest and insurgents pursuit (Mahboubi Ardakani, 1997).

The military character of the regime represented the authoritarian and imposed aspects of government in the process of space production, besides imposing a kind of "symbolic power" through spatial representations. The symbolic power, although operates imperceptibly, in some cases, it is much more effective than physical and coercive violence (Bourdieu, 2014); Therefore, it can be stated with certainty that the militaristic character, together with the exploitive look at space and architecture, had a direct impact on the architectural and urban developments during the first Pahlavi era.

#### • Creating discourse

Since intimidation and militarization resort to the imposition of will and force, the regime struggled to align the will of society with its plans through a strategy of "persuasion." Therefore, the government resorted to the strategy of creating discourse and its promotion to turn coercion into satisfaction and acquire a hegemony. The dominant discourse of this time was nationalism. Reza Shah by benefiting from the opportunity of social frustration in Iran after the Constitutional Revolution affected the creation of desired discourse. Reza Shah, with no background in nationalism, tried to return to the past glorious by consolidating the mentioned discourse and connecting his kingdom to Persian



Fig. 1. The dimensions, unity, rhythm, balance, visual extension, continuity, and visual dominance (The influence of militarism on constructing architecture). Source: Authors' Archive.

Empire to legitimate his rule. Among the significant consequences of this planned discourse, the following are considerable: 1. Establishing the 'Academy of Persian Language and Literature', 2. The archeological excavations, 3. The publication of several books on topics of ancient Iran, 4. empowering the Zoroastrian religion, 5. Ferdowsi millennial celebration and constructing his tomb, 6. The official change of the country's international name from Persia to Iran, 7. The establishment of a society for the National Heritage of Iran, 8. the composing of textbooks by focusing on the history of ancient Iran, and 9. The inclusion of ancient subjects into literature, art, and architecture texts, which together made the articulation of this network of discourse.

According to the implementation of the newfound discourse, the most important government buildings such as Shahr bani Palace, National Museum of Iran, Anoushiravan-Dadgar High School, Bank Melli Iran (Iranian National Bank) on Ferdowsi Street were constructed by representing the ancient forms and elements, especially those during the Achaemenid and Sassanid eras. Since, in politics and political identity, the construction of "us" requires defining a border with "them" (Mouffe, 2016), any discourse while having its content, acquires its identity and meaning in opposition to rival discourses, as this "alienation" and the attempt to "marginalize" the rival discourse were also applied in this regime, hence, the Islamic /Arabic discourse was recognized as a rival to the nationalist discourse. That is why the construction and development of mosques, which have always been the focus of developments in architectural style and were known as the most central built spaces in previous time lost their prosperity, and instead, the art and architecture of the Persian Empire was represented under the influence of emerging power; in this condition, architecture and the space production let the discourse of nationalism appear, control the community thoughts and legitimize the new political regime. In dictatorial states, the power bloc has a

strong desire to limit differences and integrate the affinities of society with its desires, and discourse building is one way for them to achieve this goal. Abensour (2018) believes that in these systems, architecture is equipped and prepared to create "Absolute Coherency Without Fragmentation" in the physical body of society by unification. Since the architecture of government buildings was part of the grand discourse of nationalism in the first Pahlavi regime, so a kind of similarity, consistency, and repetition of formal patterns in such buildings can be observed (Fig. 2).

#### • Modernization

Since no modernization plan has been performed without considering the issue of space production- in both objective and physical sense- so, the first Pahlavi regime correspondingly implemented its spatial totalitarian modernization, without using public participation. In this regard, the first step was to deconstruct the old outworks and entrances and to fill the moats around Tehran, which were known as Qajar symbols. The intensity of spatial verification in the physical body of old texture and placing the new rules on the architecture of buildings and other constructions, gave the impression that the developments of Tehran during the reign of Reza Shah were more prominent than the other two previous eras, Tehran of Tahmasebi (Safavid) and Tehran of Naseri (Qajar) (Kiani, 1996). The totalitarian government and the presence of militaries who were appointed to the municipality of Tehran, increased the speed of urban developments, as the most drastic changes were made in the Naseri Caliphate (Dar al-Khalafah Naseri);

For example, Sanglaj quarter in Tehran was close to complete ruin, and in the years after, if some government issues did not arise, Awdlajan and Bazaar quarters and the bazaar center could have met the same fate (Takmil Homayoun, 2002). Modernization in the spatial field was employed as a tool for the first Pahlavi government - besides trying to represent a developing country at the international level- to disconnect the religious, traditional,



Fig. 2. The characteristics of discourse unification even in architectural form; From right to left: 1. Shahr bani Palace 2. Iran pavilion in Brussels Expo, 1935 exhibition 3. Darband Police Station. Source: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.pinterest>.

and customary social networks in the texture of the old neighborhood of that time, to create new networks based on the urban middle classes; The purpose of this action was to erase the symbols and manifestations of the previous regime and also to confirm the identity of its political order by creating a new space-related to its goals. All these cases were representing the significance of space production and architecture in the field of politics and the position of power management in this regime.

### Critical data analysis

According to the characteristics of the critical analysis method, any action or quality in the field of space production and architectural construction is considered as a conscious act and a sort of data that, apart from its physical and natural appearance, refers to the power structure, and in this case, was specifically empowering the ideology of the first Pahlavi regime. In the following, the most important related data are presented in two levels of objective and civil actions, together with the qualitative and visual aspects of the space; in this regard, it has been tried to evaluate the appearance of each action or quality, which is known as ‘common sense’ in relation with their ideological and power-related content, which is pointed to as critical analysis (Tables 3 & 4).

### Conclusion

Relying on the critical approach and considering the dialectical relationship between power and space, this study had a clear opposition to the “art for art’s

sake” attitude and explained how power is imposed through the beneficiary application of space and architecture. Referring to the four major functions of the critical approach, mentioned earlier in the research methodology- as the basis for the analyzing the qualitative evaluation - and by performing data critical analysis, it is concluded that although creating space and architecture during the first Pahlavi era can be considered as the outcome of frequent objective and obvious cultural, social, technical and aesthetic factors (arising from the social and communicative nature of architecture), however, without identifying and revealing the characteristics behind the creation of the works, a comprehensive understanding of this process would not be possible (totality and opposition to reductionism). Analyzing the spatial and architectural data was performed based on one of the less analyzed, but most influential factors in creating space and architecture, known as power and political relations (Disclosure power and ideology). The results showed that in space production, the will to power was mostly invisible, influenced indirectly, and was hidden by naturalization cover (anti-naturalization). The space and architecture during the first Pahlavi era were produced as a minor issue within the wholeness of society and under its influence; this negligibility had a significant effect on strengthening the relations of this wholeness (dialectical view to entirety /particularity relation); finally, the main conclusion drawn from analysis of spatial and architectural data was that through space representations and relying on the mediation of architecture, the power, as an abstract concept, has

Table 3. The critical analysis of the practical and civil acts of the first Pahlavi regime in the field of space production and architecture. Source: Authors.

The concealed and Semantic aspect of the action	The apparent and obvious aspect of the action	Objective and practical action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Removing the obstacles to the spatial expansion of government power to not be confined by the city enclosures</li> <li>- Destroying the symbols of the previous regime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The expiration of function</li> <li>- The instability of construction</li> <li>- The possibility of city development</li> </ul>	Deconstruction of old enclosures and entrances around cities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empowering the discourse of nationalism through the mediation of architecture</li> <li>- Connecting the Pahlavi reign to the Persian Empires</li> <li>- Legitimizing authority of the government</li> <li>- Naturalization in transferring the heritage of ancient Iran</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using the historical and aesthetic aspects of ancient elements</li> <li>- Signifying government buildings compared to other public and private buildings</li> </ul>	Applying the ancient architectural elements in government buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Performing the authoritarian parades in the streets</li> <li>- Increasing the speed of reaction to possible urban riots</li> <li>- Visual control of the city and having a whole vision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The arrival of cars and considering the functional role of street</li> <li>- Addressing the establishment of commercial application of urban life</li> </ul>	Constructing the straight and long streets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Representation of centralized and bureaucratic power,</li> <li>- Clearing the administrative structure of the previous regime</li> <li>- Implementation of a newfound discipline and construction of a new space with the advent of emergent government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizing the administrative structure of the country</li> <li>- Transition from the traditional society and building a new nation-state relationship</li> </ul>	Constructing new official and government buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possibility of access into the urban textures; physical &amp; visual control of the city</li> <li>- Achieving the disciplined community strategy by imposing rules and regulations</li> <li>- Inducing the development and progress of the country in the international arenas through space production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The adaptation of the previous lifestyle to the new desires and applications</li> <li>- Implementation of Modernization</li> </ul>	Destructing major parts of old textures and setting new rules for construction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasizing on nationalist discourse desired by the Pahlavi regime in opposition to non-Iranian and Islamic personalities,</li> <li>- The impressment of country's history and literature and inducing the proposition that: "Government is the protector and inheritor of national and mythological values."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Considering the historical background of the Persian Land and respecting the national personalities</li> </ul>	Construction of historic and national tomb-sites and those of famous people

acquired a concrete appearance, as the great interest of the Pahlavi regime in architecture area, compared to other arts, originated from the desired ability of these works in reproducing an integrated power (the significance of mediator).

Addressing the main research questions, it can be said that during the first Pahlavi era, the social and political contexts have represented a direct impact on spatial and architectural developments. During this time, modernization and comprehensive spatial development plan (architecture and the city) were implemented similar to other programs, in an

impressive manner, align with the military character of the regime under the name of “modernization from above”. In this regard, the regime, while was struggling to remove the signs of the previous government, tried to represent an appearance of a developing country in international relationships. The ruling system was trying to influence and shape the perceptions, minds, and even behaviors of citizens through imposing variations on physical space. Since the realization of hegemony, acquisition of community support, and gaining the legitimacy required for the construction and consolidation of

Table 4. The critical analysis of qualitative and symbolic acts of the first Pahlavi regime in the field of space and architecture. Source: Authors.

The concealed and semantic aspect of the action	The apparent and obvious aspect of the action	The qualitative aspects of space production
Symbolic domination of space Symbolic and semantic presence of government in people's daily life Symbolic induction of the permanent and victorious presence of the king (Shah) in public	- Registration of nominal and official identity of urban spaces - Beautification of urban landscape	- Naming the streets and squares; making statues of historical figures and the king (Shah) with the epic figurative appearance
Inducing and imposing discipline by space unification Urban edges as the alert soldiers standing in a line Generalizing the military characteristics of government in society Repetition, symmetry, and qualified harmony, desirable by totalitarian systems	- Highlighting the urban edges and general rules of urban planning - Creating visual order in the urban landscape	- Uniformity of buildings located along the walls of the streets
Speed of construction, a manifestation of the regime's authority and determination Projecting the idea of all aspects of the country, with all details are monitored The military manifestation of the regime, supervising the subordinate class and representing a hierarchical order	- Rapid implementation of projects and modernization plan as, - An example of the country's bureaucratic system	- Direct surveillance and the speed of implementing projects
An anti-religion and anti-Arab attitude of the regime Mosque, a symbol of rival Islamic /Arabic discourse Regime tendency to establish ancient religions such as Zoroastrianism to strengthen the discourse of Iranian nationalism	- Devolving the management of mosques' construction to the clergy and the traditional class of society - According to the government, there were enough mosques in the country	- Ignoring the prosperity of mosques construction
Emphasizing the security and military aspects of the regime Mental and visual domination on the audience Inducing the sense of inferiority in persons while encountering the government's power Reproducing the regime's power through the representation of space and the symbolic aspect of architecture	- Empowering the governmental uses - Creating newfound landmarks in the urban landscape	- The huge, high, and magnificent government buildings
Symbolic representation of the government dignity and power Visual aristocracy and building control from inside-out Making visible building as a symbol of the regime's authority in the urban landscape	- Resolving the functional challenges in building design, including access to spaces and lighting them, providing space for government buildings due to their extroverted nature	- The lack of connection between government buildings and other urban constructions

a macro discourse, the regime's practical strategy was to construct a kind of nationalist discourse that directly encompassed the field of architecture and space production. Therefore, relying on the inspirational, symbolic, and semantic power of architecture, the official and government buildings were placed in the position to induce the continuity of the Persian Empire and legitimize the ruling power through representing the ancient architecture as a mediator. By reviewing the role of political and social contexts and according to the issue of space production during the first Pahlavi era, it is concluded that although cultural, social, artistic, and other related factors and fields affected the creation of space and architecture, however, all of them were

influenced by power field which was mainly ruled by the government.

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