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ABSTRACTS

Sina Soltani, Leyla Ghasemi

A Letter from a Safavid Architect: New Information about Master Ali-Akbar Esfahāni

At the Central Library of the University of Tehran there is a manuscript (No. 2934) titled *The Collected Works by Esmā'il Kāshef Esfahāni*. In the manuscript there is a written work under the title of “a draft written by Master Ali-Akbar Me'mār to one of his acquaintances”. A poet and tile-maker from the Safavid era, Kāshef Esfahāni was the son of an architect called Master Heydar. The former (999-1082 AH/ AD 1591-1671) lived during the reigns of Shah Abbas I, Shah Safi, Shah Abbas II and Shah Sulayman.

The extant draft in the manuscript was produced by a personage known as Master Ali-Akbar, the architect. He wrote the letter to his cousin. It was probably a response to a former angry letter drafted by the cousin on the issue of claiming inheritance left by Ali-Akbar's aunt. In this letter the master has pointed to his services to three Safavid rulers as well as to making various buildings, including mosques, schools and monasteries (houses for dervishes). Who is Master Ali-Akbar? We know a famous architect from this period, known as Ali-Akbar Esfahāni, the builder of the Abbāsi Great Mosque, whose name was inscribed there. He was probably the chief architect of Shah Safi's court and the artisan who managed to accomplish the mosque during the reign of the mentioned ruler. Master Ali-Akbar Me'mār in the above-mentioned *Collected Works* was in all probability the same as Master Ali-Akbar Esfahāni, the builder and architect of the Abbāsi Great Mosque. The letter would provide us with some new information about the master and his historical personage.

Sajad Zoleykani

Cultural Continuity and Persistency in Tabarestān on the Basis of Words Extracted from Resket and Western Rādkān Tombs Inscriptions

“Khātīr” and “Moshkzā” are two words identified in the Western Rādkān and Resket tombs inscriptions, respectively. The words served as the foundation in the present study to investigate cultural continuity and persistency in Tabarestān. It is possible to claim that they have found their ways to the cultural life of Tabari people and are still employed. In the first step of the study, the construction time of the tombs was assessed. This step was followed by the examination of the inscriptions as well as the words signifying cultural continuity and persistency. Frequent field surveys, periodic visits to the tombs, careful scrutiny of historic texts, and consideration on the viewpoints of previous researchers as well as the due oral heritage of the region constitute the body of methodology. Findings suggest that “Khātīr”, extracted from the inscription of western Rādkān tomb, is still utilized in “last names” and “geographical toponym”. Similarly, “Moshkzā”, extracted from Resket tomb inscription, has lived on in “geographical toponym”. Indicating cultural continuity and persistency, it is highly assumed that these findings are related to the cultural and social background of the Bāvandiān dynasty in Tabarestān cultural context.

Zatollah Nikzad

Atiq Jameh Mosque of Shiraz during the Qajar Era

Located at the old central part of Shiraz, the Jameh Mosque of the city was built under the reign of Amr-e Laith Saffari in the 3rd AH/ AD 9th century. The mosque has undergone many changes such as expansion, destruction, restoration and transformation in the course of time. The changes made to the building could not be easily distinguished. The place was as large as other famous mosques of the Islamic world

in the 5th AH/ 11th AD century. In the 8th AH/ 14th AD century and at the same time with the construction of *Khodāy-khāneh* or *Dār al-Moshaf* section, it could accommodate about 1000 prayers. As *iwans* and other architectural organs were erected during the Safavid period, the mosque transformed into its most accomplished spatial phase, and its ornamentation increased.

Besides political changes and urban development, huge earthquakes happened in Shiraz, particularly during the Qajar era, which resulted in the demolition of many buildings. The Jameh Mosque of Shiraz was no exception in these disasters. With the rise of Qajars, the mosque already bore many historical facts. Thus far, the history of the place during this period is by no means clear. Except for some few dispersed data and hints, no comprehensive study has yet been carried out on this issue. Therefore, the present essay aims to offer a coherent narrative of the mosque during the Qajar era. The objective of the research is to review documents relating to building projects done in the mosque and to give a clear view of the building in the mentioned historical epoch.

Restorations and renovations made during the recent century have been so extensive that it would be difficult to search for tangible evidence; however, pictorial documents and travelers’ accounts of the place may give some insights into its former appearance and structure. Meanwhile, the role of Ebrāhim Khān Kalāntar Shirāzi, the kalantar of the city of Shiraz and later as the first grand vizier of Qajar Iran, in the process of restoration of the mosque has to be underlined.

Mahdi Sahragard

Regional Stylistics of Eastern Kufic Script: Features of the Kufic in a Newly Found Quran from Ray

Little is known about regional transcriptions and manuscripts of early Islamic centuries in Iran, because the very few remained ones bear neither

colophons nor any other information regarding their exact date and place of production. Hence, there is no factual basis for the recognition and evaluation of different styles of Quran transcription. Accordingly, the cases with accurate dating and location provide us with basis criteria for further studies, such as a recently discovered Quran manuscript by Ibn al-Bawwāb dating back to 391 AH/ AD 1001, which was found among the papers and folios at the Astan-e Quds Razavi Library, Mashhad. The manuscript contains valuable information about the date and place of production as well as names of the patron, scribe and illuminator. As mentioned in the manuscript, it was produced by Abbās Ibn Mohammad Ibn Abbās Mosāhafi-ye Qazvini in 391 AH/ AD 1001 at Ray for *Khazānat al-Kotob* (Library) of Seyyedeh Khātun, the Fakhr al-Dawleh's wife. A detailed examination of the colophon besides other features is indicative of stylistic relations of the manuscript with the Quranic manuscripts from Isfahan, for instance the one by Kashwād Shawād Ibn Amlās (327 AH/ AD 939). Further, the local illumination style reveals affinities with the Sassanian architectural ornaments remained at Ray. Eventually, Mosāhafi-ye Qazvini should be considered as the last paper manufacturers or bookmakers who undertook all the processes of transcription and illumination by himself.

Salman Malek-Abbasi

The Influence of Religious Tendencies on the Formation and Transformation of Rayy's Neighborhoods during the Seljuk Period

Kerman's historic urban design has undergone drastic changes during past years. Such transformations include construction of various routes and passages, undertaking non-standard building projects, making coarse and ill-shaped facades, and destruction of

historic buildings together with their entrances. The deformation of urban spaces has occurred very fast, and this has been caused by negligence on the part of both the related officials and people. Despite what happened to this city, we surprisingly witness some other regions and places with similar ecological features preserving such valuable urban heritage.

The present research deals with the issue of different types of building entrances in Kerman during last century. Each entrance is composed of different sections and is called *darāyghāh*. *Darāyghāh* forms the required sections for enter and exit. The typology offered here is based on different political rules. In other words, the coming and going of each reign or government has exerted influence on the types of entrances. The entrances during the past century had decorations and they enjoyed distinctive characteristics. Such a distinct feature has faded with the passage of time. The present research aims to offer different types of the mentioned architectural element as well as to point out their major features.

Alireza Esmaili

Miniature Painting under the Reign of Shah Tahmasp

Having had their origin in mysticism, the Safavids adopted a balanced approach towards painting. As a result, the Safavid dynasty is considered a glorious period in respect of visual arts development. In this epoch the arts of book, particularly transcription and illustration flourished. The miniature painting and fine manuscript production came to their climax under Shah Tahmasp. It was in this period that some marvelous works appeared which are now preserved in different museums and libraries all over the world. Such an

attitude towards the arts, however, did not last forever. Under his long reign, about 53 years, Shah Tahmasp did not implement a same approach to arts. His attitude would actually be divided into two distinct sections: first, patronage of arts; second, the time of decline and rejection.

This essay aims to study the features of miniature painting in the mentioned periods. Evaluating some valuable works, it is supposed to answer the following questions: Why did Shah Tahmasp turn his face away from arts? What were the consequences of such an attitude shift?

Ali-Asghar Mirzayimehr

A New Edition of *Golestān-e Honar* by Seyyed Kamal Haj-Seyyed-Javadi: A Critical Review

Golestān-e Honar is the first and most important book compiled in Iran on the Safavid and earlier arts and artists. A poet, calligrapher and man of letters, Qāzi Ahmad Monshi Qomi as the author wrote the book in 1005 AH/ AD 1597 and he made some amendments later on. Owing to the significance of this historical work in the Persian art history, calligraphy, miniature painting and arts of book, many Iranian scholars as well as foreigners, particularly those in the field of visual arts, have inevitably devoted serious attention to it.

Golestān-e Honar was formerly edited by Ahmad Soheyli Khansari in Iran. Receiving a warm welcome from readers and addressees, the book soon became scarce until recently when a critical edition by Dr. Kamal Haj-Seyyed-Javadi was published by Matn Publishers in 554 pages with useful indexes and other annotations. This piece of writing is to present a review of the newly released version.

Nahid Amiri

The *Tārikh-e Rawzat as-Safā* Manuscript (1012 AH/ AD 1603-4), Preserved at the Berlin Museum